



# Ascension In Action

Ascension Lutheran Church

August 2018

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## You Give Me Hope

I'm excited.

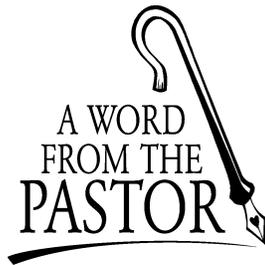
On a recent Saturday, we had two meetings here at church. In the morning we had our council orientation. A chance to learn the ropes, meet each other, and discuss the priorities over the coming years. We shared stories of our faith, learned about the faith formation, policies, values, and finances of our congregation work, and had a cup of coffee and pastry (of course).

I took a lunch break, and came back for the first meeting of our Shared Vision waypoint team. This group is tasked with taking all the information we've collected over the past year in our Purpose Mapping process and discerning what God might be calling us to be and do over the next half dozen years. They are going to be talking with leaders and members and working with other waypoint teams, like the soon to be formed Leadership team. This group will dream together, pray together, study together, share what they've learned with you, and then do it all over again.

Sound like a lot of work? Yep. Sound daunting? Yep. Sound anxiety-producing – what with the massive changes in culture, the demands of busy people, and the hard task of hearing what God might be calling us to be? Yep.

But I'm excited. Because of who attended these meetings. We are blessed with a council full of faithful, smart, creative, and collaborative people. They represent not only their boards, but also the congregation as a whole as they consider the minor and major decisions that will come their way.

You are also blessed with a Shared Vision team that is diverse, thoughtful, and committed. John Hayes is leading the team, and Carol Bramschreiber, Sadie Hjelmstad, Tom Johnson, Stephenie Kaufman, Pastor Dan, and



myself are also on the team. Don't hesitate to ask any of us about the work we're doing. Kristin Wiersma, our Purpose Mapping consultant, is walking alongside us the whole way. A guide into this unknown territory.

Ascension has a long history of 'lay leadership,' which is a fancy way of saying that the people of the congregation do the hard work of leading it. The shape of that leadership has changed over the years. Sometimes it's been slim and agile. Sometimes it's been large and deliberate. Sometimes things go according to carefully developed plans. Sometimes we seem to never know what tomorrow brings.

The shape of our leadership will likely change again. It always does. But when I look at the people leading this congregation and the people doing the ministry of this congregation, I'm confident our commitment to the 'priesthood of all believers' (Martin Luther's even fancier way to say the people of the church doing the ministry of the church) will remain.

And that makes me excited.

God bless,  
Pastor Daniel

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## Hail to the Chief! Thank you Greg!

I don't know about the rest of you but I'm a little worried about Greg Gulliksen. I mean, what is the guy going to do with his time now that he's no longer President of the church council? Since I've been attending, back in 2003, Greg has been profoundly involved in Ascension's missions. He makes things happen.

It wasn't too long after I started attending services that I saw him boxing up Alleluia Banners for Lent and then 40 days later, parading through the aisles with Sunday School kids joyously proclaiming, "Alleluia! He is risen!" I vividly remember thinking, "That man loves his job." It was later I learned he was the Sunday School Superintendent. I said a silent prayer, "Bless him."

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Greg has carried that passion through many leadership roles at Ascension. He was heavily involved in Boy Scouts and was the church sponsor of the troop that met at our church for many years. As Vice President, Greg spent many hours updating our church policies and procedures. That's pretty dry stuff. He knew it needed to be done, and by golly, he did it.

As President, Greg was instrumental in the capital campaign and improvements to our facility. The CLC was remodeled and non glamorous things like wiring were brought up to code. The sanctuary has undergone a huge transformation with new lighting, painting and blinds. Very soon you will see new carpet. Guess who orchestrated it? Yep, that was Greg!

Under Greg's tenure, we saw our presence in social media expand, the senior adult ministry blossom, and we joyously celebrated the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation. Mary's call as Director of Youth and Faith Formation grew to her current position of Diaconal Minister for Faith Formation. Pastor Daniel moved from an Associate Pastor to Co-Pastor. These things did not happen without Greg.

I wonder where we'd be without Greg's behind the scenes leadership. He guided me through the hiring of a strategic planning consultant. That accomplishment alone, will impact Ascension for years to come. He was also instrumental in the hiring of an accountant to handle many of our time-consuming finance duties.

Greg has told the story of first coming to Ascension (thank you, Marilyn) and hearing God tell him "I love you Greg but it's time to get to work." Okay, that was paraphrasing on my part but that's how I remember the story. The bottom line is Greg went to work and hasn't stopped for many years. And, we are better because of it. When you see Greg, please give him a hug or handshake and thank him for all he has done for Ascension.

Donna Crump  
President, CPC



The new CPC met for an initial orientation on Saturday, July 14. They are a remarkable group of individuals who will do great things for Ascension. We are still looking for a Director of the Board of Education. If you feel called to serve in that capacity, please talk to Bill Ayen, Chair of the Nominating Committee, or one of the Pastors. About

half of the council directors are new to their positions. Please support them as they ease into their new responsibilities.

President – Donna Crump  
Vice President – John Hayes  
Secretary – Gabrielle Brown  
Treasurer/Finance – Ann Marie Hindley  
Church Properties – Brad Chewakin  
Evangelism – Dennis Bagenstos  
Lay Ministry – Scott Allen  
Social Outreach – Karen Askinas  
Stewardship – Jerry Dollar  
Worship – Sue Trinko  
Youth – Kirsten Johnson  
Endowment – Phil Trent



## What's Happening

- Play Ball! Ascension at the Sky Sox will be August 12. Our choir will sing the National Anthem to start the game against Nashville. Enjoying America's pastime with a little barbeque and fellowship on the picnic terrace at Security Service Field is a perfect way to spend a summer day.
- Back to School! I can hear the groans of all our youth with these words, but it's time to start planning for the fall school term. To ensure our students begin the year on the right foot, the annual Blessing of the Backpacks will happen during both services on August 12. Plan to bring your backpack, lunch box—whatever could use a blessing—to church that morning.
- Our youth returned from the National Youth Gathering in Houston inspired and full of God's love for one another and the greater world. Please take the time talk to one of them if you haven't had a chance to listen to them speak about the experience.
- Thank you to all the individual musicians for providing special music during the summer months while the choir and hand bell choir take a much-needed break.

"A Community of Grace, Called to Serve."  
Peace be with you, Donna Crump, President CPC  
719-510-7903/DACrump.dc@gmail.com

**Second Quarter Finances.** Revenue and expenses through the second quarter are very close to our budget projections, leaving us with a small surplus of \$3,535 halfway through this year. This can be attributed mostly to an increase in CLC tuition receipts to 103% of budget while general fund giving remains low at only 95% of budget. Although the Council will monitor general fund giving closely, our operating activity is in much better shape than in the first half of last year.

Going into the second half of the final year of the three-year Capital Campaign, \$444,726 in contributions have reached 95.7% of total pledges. Thank you for your generosity and support of Ascension's missions.

### Financial Statement of 2018 Operating Activity

Operating Activity	Through	Compared with Budget & Previous Year			
	Jun-18	Budget	%	Jun-17	%
Revenues	\$409,501	\$412,262	99.3	\$388,990	105
Less Expenses	-\$405,966	\$412,262	98.5	\$381,793	106
Surplus/(Deficit)	\$3,535	\$0		\$7,197	
Operating Funds	\$116,642			\$127,567	91
Capital Campaign	\$72,371			\$64,906	111

### THANK YOU...

\*\*from Carol Caldwell - Thanks to all of you for your support and many kind words. I love our community.

### Notes from the Music Room



This August, the Men's and Women's Ensembles will be sharing their voices with us one last time before we head into the fall choir season. And as we prepare to reunite as a group, I think about the unique environment that choral singing creates.

In a choir, there is a leader to keep us pointed toward our goal, but every voice is heard. Each part sings something different, but they come together to make a better result. Each singer must listen to the others to know where their part fits and to stay attuned to both the pitch and tone of the other singers to blend and unify the sound that makes up our message. We work together in teams on each voice part, and maybe we each think that our part is the most important, but, in the end, we work together for the good of all.

I sometimes wish that our communities could better resemble a choir.

So, this fall, I will look forward to the fellowship and work that is choir. Consider whether you'd like to join in this fellowship. And we look forward to sharing with you in worship!

Soli Deo Gloria! Megan



### Happy Birthday Fellowship Hour!

On Sunday, August 19, 9:15 am we will celebrate all those who are 55 and older in our community and who have had birthdays over the summer months (June, July and August). We want to celebrate you and what God is up to in your life!

### CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY TO...

\*\*Floyd Buhler and family and friends at the death of Grace on June 16.

\*\*the family and friends of Clara Remele at her death on July 1, at age 99.



### LADIES' LUNCH BUNCH

### WHAT!?! No more Red Hats??

Yes, the Red Hat Flashes are tossing their red hats but still meeting once a month to enjoy each other's company over lunch at Mackenzie Place, still on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday, but at 11am. The Ladies' Lunch Bunch would like to invite all ladies of Ascension to join us, no age requirement, but let Judy Conroy know by the Sunday before, [jnconroy@comcast.net](mailto:jnconroy@comcast.net) or 481-9605. Our first gathering will be on August 21, so come and join us for fellowship and good food with other Ascension ladies.

## Connecting Ascension Riders and Drivers (CARD) Program

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 Scott Allen at (719) 469-2910 or at [patrickstar1352003@yahoo.com](mailto:patrickstar1352003@yahoo.com). Drivers would need to use their own cars and have their own auto insurance.

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## Cubbyhole Correspondence Distribution System

A huge thanks go out to Marty Essigmann and Jeff Courtright for building a cubbyhole correspondence distribution system for Ascension. It is beautiful. It will become our primary way of handling church correspondence for those members who regularly attend services at Ascension. We'll start using it as soon as we get nametags in place for the slots. On addition, we will soon begin using nametags at church so our new members can more easily remember our names as they join our church family. The nametags can be stored in the cubbyholes after each service.

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## Church Directory Update

We are updating our Ascension Church Directory. The Boards of Evangelism and Lay Ministry are working together to produce an updated church directory by the end of this summer. We will create, store, and access the church directory through a password-protected web site that our members can access from their home computer or smart phone. Several of our members will be available before, between, and after our Sunday services to take pictures of our members. If you have your own soft copy pictures that you'd rather use, please send them to Dennis Bagenstos at [dennisbagenstos@gmail.com](mailto:dennisbagenstos@gmail.com), or to Scott Allen at [patrickstar1352003@yahoo.com](mailto:patrickstar1352003@yahoo.com), or to John Hayes at [blazehayes@aol.com](mailto:blazehayes@aol.com), or to the church office at [office@ascensioncos.org](mailto:office@ascensioncos.org). There will be no cost (and no pressure to buy photo packages) for accessing our church directory on-line and for those who have not joined the Internet Age, we will be able to print free copies of the directory for them.

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*Ascension Lutheran Church  
Endowment Fund*

Thank you and God's blessings for the following gift-away to the Endowment Fund:

Birthdays:  
Carolyn Smith  
Phyllis Smith  
Dee Yocum

In Memory of Clara Remele:

Cheryl Johnson  
Mikki Anderson  
Kay Richardson  
Nancy Shatto  
Phil & Sandy Trent

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## Parish Education Update

The Parish Board of Education would like to thank everyone at Ascension for their contributions to the Blessing of the Backpacks. With your support we helped many children from the Children's Learning Center get the supplies needed to head back to school this year. We look forward to sending off the students and teachers of our congregation with the Blessing of the Backpacks, at both services, on August 12.

Registration for Sunday School will start Sunday, August 19. Mark your calendar for September 9 for Rally Day to start up the new year for Sunday School. If you have any questions or are interested in helping out in our Sunday School program, please contact Tina Krieg, at 678-850-6793 or by email at [petetiangirls@gmail.com](mailto:petetiangirls@gmail.com).

Blessings,  
Tina Krieg, Sunday School Superintendent

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## RUTH CIRCLE

All ladies of Ascension are invited to join us on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month at 9:30am for fellowship and casual Bible Study. Our next meeting is August 9, 2018 at 9:30 and we will be discussing Chapter 10 from the book *Having a Mary Heart in a Martha World*, by Joanna Weaver. You can join at any time. If you are new Ascension or just looking for a casual Bible Study group, we hope you will come and join us! Please see Nancy Shatto for addition information, or call 719-426-9444, or [njshatto@yahoo.com](mailto:njshatto@yahoo.com).

## **CAPITAL CAMPAIGN – SANCTUARY FINISHES**

The carpet installation was the last major piece of the sanctuary finishes. Thank you to all who helped move furniture during our sanctuary finishes portion of the capital campaign. With your help, the task of moving sanctuary furnishings went smooth.

The balance of the capital campaign funds are budgeted to go towards reducing our mortgage. We will have a report after the first of the year. The capital campaign is scheduled to be completed end of 2018.

Hopefully the new lights, shades, paint, and carpet will enhance your worship experience.

Thanks again for all your help.

Blessings—Capital Campaign Completion Team

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## **BECOME INVOLVED...**

**\*\*COFFEE 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.

**\*\*Ascension's Free Pantry:** Remember to pick up groceries for the pantry when you do your own grocery shopping. They can be placed directly in the pantry outside the CLC or in the cupboard in the Fellowship Hall. It's making a difference.

**\*\*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](mailto: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 hats and scarves 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. We are also working on some great gifts to be sold at the annual Church Bazaar in October. 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](mailto: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.

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## **Bridge Group**

Our Bridge Group will meet on a TBD date in August at 5:30PM 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](mailto:kittypawz@aol.com) if you have any questions about this group.

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## Your Stew Crew – A Commitment to Servant Leadership

As we enter our next two-year cycle of serving the Ascension Lutheran Church congregation; the Board of Stewardship continues to undertake an approach that benefits all. We are proud to subscribe to the ideal of Servant Leadership. It is our steadfast belief that leading is the direct result of serving.

A brief recap of the Servant Leadership model follows:

**Listening** Traditionally, leaders have been valued for their communication and decision making skills. Servant leaders must reinforce these important skills by making a deep commitment to listening intently to others. Servant-leaders seek to identify and clarify the will of a group.

**Empathy** Servant-leaders strive to understand and empathize with others. People need to be accepted and recognized for their special and unique spirit. One must assume the good intentions of members/partners and not reject them as people.

**Healing** Learning to heal is a powerful force for transformation and integration. One of the great strengths of servant-leadership is the potential for healing one's self and others. There is something subtle communicated to those being served and led.

**Awareness** General awareness, and especially self-awareness, strengthens the servant-leader. Servant leaders have a strong sense of what is going on around them. They are always looking for cues from their opinions and decisions. They know what's going on and will rarely be fooled.

**Persuasion** Servant-leaders rely on persuasion, rather than positional authority in making decisions. Servant-leaders seek to convince others, rather than coerce compliance. The servant leader is effective at building consensus within groups.

**Conceptualization** Servant-leaders seek to nurture their abilities to "dream great dreams." They have the ability to look at the organization, and any issues within the organization, from a conceptualizing perspective. This means the leader must think beyond day-to-day realities.

**Foresight** Critical to servant leadership is foresight. It is a characteristic that enables servant-leaders to understand lessons from the past, the realities of the present, and the likely consequence of a decision in the future. It is deeply rooted in the intuitive mind

**Stewardship** Servant leaders are often characterized by a strong sense of stewardship. A steward in an organization is responsible for preparing it for its destiny. When we describe a leader as having a strong sense of stewardship, we refer to a desire to prepare the organization to contribute to the greater good.

**Growth** Servant leaders have a strong commitment to the growth of people. They believe that all have something to offer beyond their tangible contributions. Servant leaders work hard to help others connect to their developmental needs and actively find ways to help them reach their true potential.

**Building Community** Servant leaders have a strong sense of community spirit and work hard to foster it in an organization. They believe the organization needs to function as a community and work hard to build community within. Servant-leaders seek to identify a means for building community.

**Calling** Servant leaders have a natural desire to serve others. This notion of having a calling to serve is deeply rooted and values-based. The servant leaders desire to make a difference for others within the organization and will pursue opportunities to make a difference and to impact the lives of others.

**Nurturing the Spirit** The servant leader is someone who understands the deep human need to contribute to personally meaningful enterprises. The servant-leader nurtures the individual's spirit through honest praise and supportive recognition. Criticisms and suggestions are not personal or harsh.

We look forward to being of service to all of you. Thank you! Your Stew Crew

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## Youth Happenings @ ALC

### Confirmation

Mark your calendar! We'll have an orientation meeting for all parents and youth of those going into 6th grade to 8th grade on Wednesday August 29, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm. We are excited to connect again with the youth and leadership from Grace Lutheran Church and Christ the King Lutheran Church.



For I know the plans I have for you,  
declares the Lord, plans to prosper you  
and not to harm you, plans to give you  
hope and a future.

**Jeremiah 29:11**



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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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**Our Website: [www.ascensioncos.org](http://www.ascensioncos.org)**

**September newsletter deadline: Aug. 19**



Beth Ayen (Daughter-in-law of Darcy & Bill Ayen), Shayla Blancett (Granddaughter of Karen (Blancett) Johnson), Sharon Budd (Sister of Darcy Ayen), Brad Buhler, Michelle Courtright (Daughter of Jeff & Renee Courtright), Jacquelyn Ellison (Granddaughter of Marilyn & Troy Goodenough), Tom & Sandy George, Steve Hahn (Grandson of Joan Magee), Jeff Sebben, Jerry Smith, Virginia Stanley, Bruce Yocum, and all of our men and women serving overseas.