



Ascension In Action

Ascension Lutheran Church

November 2018

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How We Live

In the New Testament, God is greatly concerned about how we do things. We often are more concerned about the specifics of what we do. Occasionally, as the case with Paul being called to Macedonia, God is specifically directive. But more often, as the case with Jesus sending out his disciples, he sends them out with general instructions like preach the good news but without telling them specifically where they should go. In Galatians, Paul spoke how Jesus came to bring them freedom. He instructed them to use that to produce the fruit of the Spirit – love, joy, and peace. God's emphasis is first on how we live (e.g. love) than the specifics of where and how that might happen.

This emphasis on how we live applies to guiding us in our choices. God has created a world where we can have good options and choices. Of course, not all choices are good or best. Choices that lead us to be cruel and hurtful would certainly be against God's will. Some choices might be less fruitful (e.g. watching TV) than another (e.g. talking a walk). But at times we can find ourselves looking at several good choices. I have found that in the midst of the good choices we can become very concerned that we make the perfect choice. We can imagine that God has only one option for us and we better get it right. Knowing that in such cases God cares most about how we live can help us lessen our anxiety and move ahead.

In this time of political polarization, I believe this focus on how we live with each other is particularly important. The divisiveness of our time has some resorting to name calling, angry retorts, and constantly putting others in the worst light. It would be a witness and light for this nation to have God's people (who are not all in agreement) live together in love. People will see how we live. As John wrote, they will know we are Christians by our love.

Pastor Dan



Organ Notes

Pipe organs have been a prized church instrument for 500 years. And let's see, what church has been around for 500 years? That's right, the Lutheran church. So the pipe organ wouldn't be what it is today without the Lutheran church. And the Lutheran church wouldn't be what it is today without the pipe organ.

Our Lutheran liturgy, classic hymns and festival music just aren't the same without a robust, dynamic and versatile pipe organ. Can you really imagine "A Mighty Fortress" with nothing but a piano?

A great organ also makes our congregational singing, our choir, our solo singers and our solo instrumentalists sound even better than they are already. Plus, a wonderful pipe organ makes you "feel" the music. And it makes you "feel" the Holy Spirit at work in the music of our church.

It's obvious to most everyone in our congregation that music is essential to worship at Ascension. And it's obvious to many that it may be time for Ascension Lutheran to build a legacy organ. An instrument that will provide the musical anchor for our congregation for generations to come. And an organ that will provide lasting value and a generous return on investment for generations to come.

Your Organ Committee is a passionate group of lay people who understand the importance of music in our congregation. And they are currently entertaining final presentations from four incredible organ builders. Builders who understand Lutheran church music, have become intimate with our needs and space and have a tremendous desire to help us on our journey.

When the organ builder presentations are complete, around the first part of November, the Organ Committee, Worship Board and Executive Committee will determine next steps. We pray for God's guidance, and assure the congregation that all will be kept well-apprised of our thoughts and decisions.

Stay tuned.

The October 9th CPC meeting included the following actions and discussions:

- Pastor Dan Holt led a devotion with a reading from Luke that tied into our ongoing budget discussions. He encouraged us to take steps of faith to enter doors that are open while bypassing those that are closed.
- Jerry Dollar provided an update on the God's Grace in Action Estimate of Giving Campaign. At the time of the meeting, 22% of the giving estimates were submitted online using the church's website. A full report will be given at the November CPC meeting.
- In her treasurer's report, Ann Marie Hindley noted year-to-date giving is at 98% of the projected budget. The congregation continues to be generous in its funding of our ministries.
- CLC revenue and expenses were down for the month of September. This is a typical trend for the start of the new school year as children move from preschool to elementary school.
- Doris Stokes attended the meeting on behalf of the Children's Learning Center (CLC) Cabinet to provide projected budget information for 2019. She reported a city-wide reduction in daycare attendance. Additionally, the Cabinet has a targeted plan to increase CLC staff salaries to remain competitive with other daycare centers across the city. Tuition rates will be adjusted to compensate. Our rates are roughly 10% lower than the competition.
- The CLC playground equipment needs to be replaced. The current playground was installed in 2003 with a 5-10 year life expectancy. The CPC has set aside money for this expense in prior years' budgets to lessen the burden. The CLC Director, Teresa Adams, is requesting a grant to help with the cost.
- Each Board Director spoke to their respective budget projections for the coming year. The council discussed options for presenting a balanced budget at the December 2nd Congregational Meeting.
- The meeting was adjourned with prayers of concern followed by the Lord's Prayer.

CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY TO...

- **Barbara Hawkinson & family at the death of Steve Hawkinson.
- **Sharla Saunders & family at the death of her stepfather.
- **Darcy Ayen & family at the death of her sister, Sharon Budd.



What's Happening

- You've Got Mail! The new family mail slots are in use and saving a significant amount in postage. Please remember to check them when you are at church.
- Our 3-year Capital Campaign is winding down in December. Thank you to all who contributed and to those who continue to give. Your dedication and stewardship enabled needed improvements to the Children's Learning Center (CLC) and the sanctuary, along with a reduction to our mortgage.
- The CLC continues to positively impact the surrounding community. The families we serve have significant challenges and depend on the stable environment provided by our center. The 17 preschoolers and 25 school-age children who attend know that Jesus loves them. This is one ministry that specifically targets our closest neighbors as most of the families live nearby.
- Don't forget to submit your family photos for the online Church Directory. Make sure we can see your faces well enough so we can recognize you. No recent photo? Dennis Bagenstos will happily take one for you.
- Ron Mohler is collecting used camping gear for the homeless. If you have tents, sleeping bags, or other camping items laying around collecting dust, this is an excellent opportunity to help a community in need.
- Join in on the fun and help the youth of Ascension raise money for the coming year by attending the Annual Spaghetti Supper and Variety Show on **November 11th**.
- Mark your calendars now. The CPC will present its 2019 budget at the **December 2nd** Congregational Meeting. Please attend the meeting being held between services to vote on the proposal.

Let's Reminisce on 20 Years of Pastor Holt!

The Lay Ministry board invites the congregation to reminisce together about the past 20 years we have heard the Word of God preached by Reverend Dan Holt. So come between services on November 18th to eat cake and share your stories and positive memories of Dan's time with us! This is not meant to be a celebrity roast although the tales may bring gales of laughter into the fellowship hall.

Christmas Giving Opportunity

Greetings! It's November and time to prayerfully consider the Christmas Giving program for the Colorado Mental Health Institute in Pueblo! The patients are always touched by our thoughtfulness and acts of kindness. This program is just one more way for us to be God's hands to those who have so much less. The hospital has 445 beds that treat adolescents, adults and geriatric patients. Watch for their wish lists to be hanging on a tree in the fellowship hall in November. You do not need to buy everything on their list - it's just a couple of ideas for you from them. All gift bags will be picked up from the church on December 12th. The Board of Social Outreach is sponsoring this opportunity. Please contact me for questions or more information about this program. Aimee Calderon, aimeebuesing@yahoo.com.

Ascension's Card Ministry

It seems like a perfect match! Our beautiful new mailboxes and our card ministry! What a convenient way to share a "thinking about you" or other encouraging message...no stamp needed. The card rack is by the windows in Fellowship Hall and is regularly restocked with a variety of cards handmade by a group of Ascension members and one generous volunteer in Alabama. There are now also Thanksgiving and Christmas cards available. Some Christmas cards are prints of Carol Barton-Godec's stunning artwork.

Your donations (\$2 suggested per card) this year will go to buy something special for the Children's Learning Center. Last year we were able to buy a new washing machine for KPC Respite Center. Thanks for your contributions!

Ascension Book Club November 4

The next book in Ascension's *Faith Seeking Understanding Book Club* is *Does Jesus Really Love Me?: A Gay Christian's Pilgrimage in Search of God in America* by Jeff Chu. The book explores Jeff's personal wrestling with faith and the church as a gay man, as well as perspectives from many others over the previous decades. The book can be found at the library, online, and probably at a bookstore or two here in town. We'll meet for a potluck lunch and discussion on November 4 at 11:30 at Ascension. As always, all are welcome to join us, and if you have a friend you think might enjoy this book or conversation, please invite them. Hope to see you there. Questions? Ask Pastor Daniel.

Spaghetti Supper/ Variety Show/Raffle

**Sunday,
November 11**



The annual Spaghetti Supper/Variety Show/Raffle is just around the corner! Join us at **5 p.m. on Sunday, November 11** (doors open at 4:30) for a night of fun and fellowship at Ascension Lutheran Church. Funds raised will support Middle and High School youth at Ascension, ensuring all, regardless of their financial situation, have the opportunity to participate in meaningful events. The Variety Show sign-up sheet will be posted on the Youth Board. Please contact Mary Stoneback at [\(303\) 475-4886](tel:3034754886) with any Variety Show questions. Tickets can be purchased in the Fellowship Hall between services in October. Ticket prices: Adult - \$10; Child (ages 3-10) - \$5; Family - \$30. Children under 3 are free.

Helping Youth at Ascension

The Ascension Youth are asking for your help in making their Annual Spaghetti Supper/Variety Show fundraiser on **Sunday, November 11** a success. They are requesting donated items that will be raffled off between the acts during the Variety Show. Your donation is tax-deductible and greatly appreciated. Please drop off your donations at the front office Monday – Friday between 9am – 12pm or Sunday mornings. For any questions, please contact Carie Hagen at [\(719\) 332-3301](tel:7193323301). Thank you for supporting our 2018 Spaghetti Supper, Raffle and Variety Show!

THANK YOU...

****Thank you** to all for your prayers for my sister, Sharon Budd, during her long battle with cancer, which finally got the best of her on September 23rd. We really appreciate your thoughts, prayers, and love during this difficult time for our whole family. Darcy & Bill Ayen, Kirsten Johnson & family.

****From all of the Faster Pastors:** Thank you to all who gave money to aid Syrian Refugees through Lutheran Disaster Response. Ascension gave over \$300 and the Faster Pastors as a whole raised over \$14,000. Your generosity is amazing.

****Many thanks** to our Ascension Family for all of the cards and caring expressions of sympathy after the loss of my step-dad. This has been a difficult time, and your thoughtfulness has touched us very much. Shar Saunders.

Movie Addresses Season of Grief

Are you or someone you know in a season of grief? Do you wonder why you can't "Just shake it off?" or why your loss "Still bothers you?" Get answers and support to these and other questions that surround grief. Ascension Lutheran will be offering a free showing of *The Voices of Grief: Honoring the sacred journey* on Saturday November 10, 10 AM - 12 PM. This beautiful, 45-minute movie offers a refreshing perspective on the many paths that grief takes and addresses the ways our grief-avoiding culture complicates the process. Following the film, there will be a group discussion and fellowship time. This film is all-ages friendly and we encourage you to invite friends and neighbors from the community.

For those interested in ongoing grief support, Jess Reyes, a member of Ascension, will be offering a grief support group using the Method of Grief Recovery program. Jess is a certified instructor in this method and brings her own poignant story of loss and recovery. To RSVP or for more information, please contact Elisa Thompson at 719.641.5184 or elisat92@gmail.com.

Congratulations...

** to Teresa Kissling and Scott Allen on their marriage on October 7 at Ascension.

Generation Celebration

Mark your calendars for our next celebration of the generations at Ascension. On Sunday November 4, during the fellowship hour, those born from 1929 – Dec. 1945 will be honored. This generation is often referred to as the Builders, Traditionalists or Silent Generation. Don't miss this special time. There will be two movie showings featuring this generation, 9:30 am and 10 am, as well as cupcakes, sparkling cider and more!

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 12 from the book *Having a Mary Heart in a Martha World*, by Joanna Weaver. If you are new to Ascension or just looking for a casual Bible Study group, we hope you will come and join us! Please contact Nancy Shatto for any questions at 719-426-9444 or njshatto@yahoo.com.

One Lord, One People, One Prayer?

The worship board has decided to begin printing only one version of the Lord's Prayer in the bulletin. For years Ascension has said a different version at our two services, and while this has worked out, to some outsiders the two versions look like the effects of some deep division in the congregation. It also can be confusing to children raised in the church who are still learning the Lord's Prayer. It's also confusing to those who don't always attend the same service.

So, beginning November 18, Ascension will just print one version. For those who normally come to our 10:30 service, this might be a bit jarring. A couple of recommendations: First, try the new version out for a Sunday or two, or maybe even at home! If it still doesn't feel right after a few weeks, you can still pray the version you are used to. I remember sitting next to Bishop Gonia when he visited Ascension last Spring and he prayed the Lord's Prayer in Malagasy - the language of Madagascar, where he was a missionary for years! Whichever version of the prayer you use, God will hear your prayer.

A Longer Advent

Advent is the season of the church year when we not only prepare for the festivities of Christmas, but look for the coming of Christ into our world. It is a time of reflection, expectation, and hope. It's also really short! Only 3-4 weeks long, Advent goes by quickly. And at church, Advent can feel overwhelmed by Christmas traditions we hold dear and celebrate a little before Christmas, like the Sunday School Christmas program (Dec. 9) and Christmas Cantata (Dec. 16).

So, this year, we're going to try having a longer Advent. After our All Saint's Sunday (Nov. 4) and Healing/Christ the King Sunday (Nov. 11), Advent will begin on November 18 and last 6 Sundays. Over those Sundays we'll slowly introduce the elements of Christmas that usually burst on the scene at the end of November like our beloved carol-based liturgy and our Christmas tree. We hope this lengthened season of Advent better helps us to live in hope and look for the many ways Christ is coming into our world.

Dining Out: You're Invited!

You're invited to join other Ascension adults at our monthly *Dining Out*. Here are the details: Friday, Nov. 16 @ 6 PM at Pueblo Viejo, 5598 N. Academy, 80918. Happy Hour: 3-6. RSVP to the Trents by Wednesday, Nov. 14: 548-8987 or ptpups@comcast.net.

God's Grace in Action 2019 Estimate of Giving Program—Thank You!

The God's Grace in Action; 2019 Estimate of Giving Program will come to a formal close on October 28th. Please join us in celebrating your thoughtful support of this program between services on Sunday, the 28th of October. You are invited to partake of fellowship and goodies with your Board of Stewardship!

It is still not too late to support The God's Grace in Action Estimate of Giving Program. If you have not already done so; we urge you to complete your Estimate card. Once completed, your card can be: (1) returned to the office, (2) placed in the offering plate, (3) mailed back to Ascension, or (4) deposited in the Stewardship mail slot.

You can now complete your 2019 Estimate Card online! Visit www.ascensioncos.org, click on the **Give** tab, and then click on the **2019 Estimate of Giving** sub-tab. This electronic form is a simple and secure way to complete your God's Grace in Action estimate! Thank you!

Your Stew Crew—Karen Rackley, Sharon Versaw, Tom Johnson, Robbi Dollar, Fred Schauer, and Jerry Dollar

Luke 6:38 *"Give, and it will be given to you. They will pour into your lap a good measure--pressed down, shaken together, and running over. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return."*

Homelessness in Colorado Springs

A few weeks ago the city released a draft Homeless Action Plan. The plan includes eight goals, including a homeless outreach court, expanded shelter beds, and information campaigns. As members of a congregation that has long served those who are homeless, we are called to understand and comment on the plan, as well as support our city's efforts to care for our fellow citizens who are homeless.

You are invited to learn more about the plan this month. Pastor Daniel will lead a discussion of the plan at 9:30 on November 18. Then join us for the Faith Table Forum on Homelessness on November 19 at 6:30pm at Grace Lutheran Church (1128 E Boulder St.) with special guest Andy Phelps, the Homelessness Prevention and Response Coordinator for Colorado Springs. Andy was instrumental in forming the plan and can tell us a lot about it.

Bridge Group

Our Bridge Group will meet on November 17th at 5:30 PM 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](tel:(719)572-1052) or at kittypawz@aol.com if you have any questions about this group.



*Ascension Lutheran Church
Endowment Fund*

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

Betty Hatcher – Birthday

Bob & Ferne Dillow - Birthdays & Anniversary

George Wachs - Birthday



**Notes from
the Music
Room**

What is a cantata anyway? We have one every year at Christmas, but what is it? Cantata just means "sung" in Italian. The term first appeared in the Baroque parallel to the "sonata," a word that means "played." So, these were pieces of music for singers or pieces for instruments. Cantata came to mean a longer, usually multi-part piece of music for singers with instrumental accompaniment. The first Italian cantatas were almost mini-operas, so the sacred cantata became almost a church opera! Like opera, they were composed of some combination recitatives (sung passages that imitate the rhythm and limited range of speech to allow the text to come across clearly and more quickly), arias (solo songs), and choruses. When we think of sacred cantatas, esp. as Lutherans, we always turn back to Bach. Bach's cantatas were written for the Biblical text of the day. The words were written a combination of scripture, hymns, and contemporary poetry and commentary on the scripture at hand.

Contemporary church cantatas and musicals take Bach's lead and retell scripture, comment on how we should live out the scriptures, and ask the congregation to join in on familiar hymns and carols. On December 16th, Ascension Lutheran Chancel Choir will present a Christmas cantata for services. This November, choir will be celebrating our long season of Advent preparing for Jesus' coming in song. Consider whether joining us would be a welcome devotion in your life. Choir meets Thursday evenings at 7:15pm. Every year we love to welcome singers in for this special celebration, even if you can't sing all year long. Contact me if you have any questions: music@ascensioncos.org. And enjoy this season of thanks and preparation!

Soli Deo Gloria, Megan Miller

Advent Concert Dec. 9

The Roman Catholic Chamber Choir offers "Behold!" An Advent Concert on Sunday, December 9 at 3 pm, at St. Mary Cathedral. Megan Miller and Susan Curtis sing with this group.

~~US & THEM WE:~~

I was fortunate to be able to attend two wonderful events hosted by Ascension for the benefit of others during the month of Oct. One was the LFS Innkeepers Dinner that was featuring KPC Respite Center. This was truly special and resulted in nearly \$10,000 pledged to KPC from all of those in attendance from Lutheran churches in the Colorado Springs area. Help for so many families that depend on KPC's caring services are graciously continuing with this support from the area. Mark your calendars to celebrate with them on April 4th. Event details to come later.

I was also able to attend the breakfast in honor of the Mosaic organization. It is an affiliate of the ELCA that Ascension has supported in our own area that provides critical assistance to people with disabilities and provides opportunities for them to enjoy a full life. Did you know that waiting lists for disability assistance in our state are often years long? This organization was started by a single church in Nebraska in 1913 to help others in their area and now has ministries in 8 states throughout the Midwest and Southwest and even some international work in Latvia, Romania, and Tanzania. It's a true testament to what people coming together to help others can do. I was blessed to be able to go to the event and see how their amazing work impacts those that depend on our help. We, at Ascension are fortunate to provide financial support and have helped at times like during the afternoon of God's Work Our Hands.

Thank you to all of you at Ascension for supporting our community. These are just 2 examples of how God's work is helping others.

Bless you, Karen Askinas

Mercy's Gate Food Pantry in Need

Please remember **Mercy's Gate** when you're shopping. This month, they are especially requesting the following items which you can put in the cabinet by the kiosk in the fellowship area. Thank you so much for your generosity and thoughtfulness.

Food Items:

- Powdered or Canned Milk
- Fresh items (produce, milk, butter, cheese)
- Jelly
- Canned or powdered gravy
- Mashed potato mix
- Canned Sweet potatoes

Non Food Items:

- Toothbrushes • Toothpaste
- Conditioner • Size 2 Diapers
- Toilet paper • Shampoo

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.

****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. 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: gently used men's clothing (sizes Large and higher), women's clothing (large and Plus sizes), sweat pants and tops (large 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.



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2505 N. Circle Drive
Colorado Springs, CO 80909

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CHURCH STAFF

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

Pastor Dan Holt – off on Friday

Pastor Daniel Smith

Music Director – Megan Miller

Diaconal Minister of Faith Formation – Mary Stoneback

Office Administrator – Arlayne McKee

Consultant for Health Care – Dr. Dennis Caldwell

Child Learning Center Director – Teresa Adams

E-mail addresses: office@ascensioncos.org

d.holt@ascensioncos.org (Pastor Holt)

d.smith@ascensioncos.org (Pastor Smith)

m.stoneback@ascensioncos.org (Mary Stoneback)

music@ascensioncos.org (Megan Miller)

takmusic530@outlook.com (Teresa Kissling)

t.adams@ascensioncos.org (Teresa Adams)

clc@ascensioncos.org (CLC)

ts.trinko@gmail.com (newsletter articles)

Our Website: www.ascensioncos.org

December newsletter deadline: Oct. 18

*In Our Thoughts
& Prayers*

Beth Ayen (Daughter-in-law of Darcy & Bill Ayen), Brad Buhler, Dennis Caldwell, Tom & Sandy George, Steve Hahn (Grandson of Joan Magee), Jane Paradis, Hazel Quindt, Jeff Sebben, Jerry Smith, Phylis Smith, Virginia Stanley, Bruce Yocum, and all of our men and women serving overseas.