



Ascension In Action

Ascension Lutheran Church

March 2019

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Living into Our Vision

We have a draft vision statement: **Transformed by God's grace, the people of Ascension shine God's light**

into the darkness. A visual image for this vision is our Christmas Eve Candlelight service. The pastor and deacon light candles from the Christ candle on the altar. They pass that light to ushers who then pass it to those in aisle seats. People pass that light down their rows until everyone has a light. We hold them up together and shine light into the darkness.

An important question around any vision is, "How do we live into it?" What would it look like for you to shine God's light in darkness? We came up with three measures of that. I am sure we could come up with more. But three big ones are enough for us to work for in the next 7 years.

The first measure of light shining is **belonging**. Few things light us up like feeling we belong in a faith community. I understand belonging as more nuanced than a yes or no. I think putting our sense of belonging on a scale of 1 to 10 would give us a better picture. In this scale, marking 1 would mean you don't feel like you belong and marking 10 means you feel like you deeply belong. Marking 5 would mean you are in the middle between belonging and not belonging. Where are you on this scale? What might move you toward greater belonging?

The second measure is **faith support**. Faith is our trust in God's gracious love for us and God's leading of our lives. Again, I believe that a scale of 1 to 10 would help with this. Marking 1 would mean that you feel like there is no support for your faith. Marking 5 would mean that there is some support and marking 10 would be great support for your faith. Where would you be on this faith support scale? What would help us do better at supporting your faith?

The third measure in having our light shine is through **purpose-filled living**. Jesus told us to let our light so shine before others that they see our good works and



glorify our Father in heaven. Knowing that our lives have a purpose from God will bring us to shine with good works. On a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 means you don't feel like your life has any purpose and 10 being your life has great purpose from God, what number would you pick? Why? What would help you move to 6 or better?

As much as there is more to say about this vision, I find these three measures give us a good place to begin in living into it.

Pastor Dan

A Fat Tuesday Celebration

And let them eat cake ... make that PANCAKES ... and bacon and dessert! **On Tuesday March 5, at 6 pm** the Youth of Ascension invite you to a Fat Tuesday celebration and Dinner Church, led by the youth! Shrove Tuesday, also called Pancake Day, Pancake Tuesday, Fat Tuesday and Mardi Gras (which is French for "Fat Tuesday"), is the last day of feasting before Lent begins on Ash Wednesday. We'll have some fun, certainly eat pancakes, and worship God together in the process. Please bring a dessert to share. We're also bringing back conversation partners with youth over Soup Suppers. More information to come. If you're interested in getting to know and be inspired by the youth in our congregation let Deacon Mary know, m.stoneback@ascensioncos.org or (303) 475-4886.



*Ascension Lutheran Church
Endowment Fund*

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

Dave Steinhauer - Birthday



What's Happening

The CLC was awarded a \$7,500 state grant to help pay for their new playground equipment!

- The Way Point Visioning Team updated the council with a final report on its work. It presented a 5-7 year plan with a series of 90 day goals. The council will vote on the proposed actions at next month's meeting. The Council thanked John Hayes, Tom Johnson, Sadie Hjelmstad, Carol Bramschreiber, Stephanie Kaufman, Pastor Dan, and Pastor Daniel for all their work.
- Ann Marie provided a brief financial report and expressed appreciation for all who helped her through the "finance busy season."
- John Hayes provided an update on the Organ Committee's work as they seek the best way forward to replacing our current organ. He stressed the importance of congregation participation in the upcoming presentations and noted that feedback from those discussions will provide us with direction.
- Ascension will host IHN's Family Promise for 2 consecutive weeks in May. We discussed options to accommodate both the guests and other on-going ministries during that time period.

- And speaking of the CLC, did you know it was nominated for Independent Magazine's "Best of the Springs" in the Daycare Center category? Congratulations to Teresa Adams and her team!
- Ascension's Annual Report was presented in between services at the **February 10th** Congregational Meeting. We approved Tom Johnson, Gabrielle Brown, and Scott Allen to represent Ascension at the ELCA Synod Assembly May 3-5 in Albuquerque, NM. We also voted to use the capital campaign surplus toward landscaping improvements and mortgage reduction. Thanks to everyone who attended for the healthy and respectful discussion.
- Excitement is building for the Youth's Pancake dinner March 5th to kick off the Lenten season.
- Pastor Daniel will be taking a well-earned sabbatical from May 13th – August 11th.

Voices of Grief film to be shown at Ascension

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, April 13, from 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.



Gen X'ers Celebrated March 24

Do you remember the nightly news broadcasting "Day 237 of the Iranian Hostage Crisis"? Do you happen to remember when news occurred several times a day instead of on a 24/7 news cycle? Did you own *The Official Preppy Handbook*? Or perhaps a pair of moon boots? Where you a Rubik's Cube genius? Do you "Want your MTV"? Are you self-reliant, independent and value work-life balance? You might just be a Gen X'er!

On Sunday March 24 at 9:15 AM, we will be celebrating those born between January 1, 1965 and December 31, 1980. The Generation Celebrations are a fun way to lift up all the saints of Ascension and to celebrate how although times may change, and fashions come and go "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). We invite all to join in the celebration! If you have questions or want to be involved in planning the event, please contact Deacon Mary m.stoneback@ascensioncos.org or Elisa Thompson elisat92@gmail.com.

Ascension Organ Replacement Status

We need to replace our existing pipe organ. Last summer, we formed an Organ Evaluation Team led by Jim Melzer to evaluate our current organ to determine its continued viability. They determined that it is on its last legs and cannot be effectively repaired. The electronics in the organ have failed. This includes the electronic speakers and electronic component responsible for tuning the electronic bass sound added to the ranks of pipes. It also includes the electronics in the console that control the signal to the pipes, pedalboard and keyboard. The pipes have not failed. The pipes are the same as they were when they were installed. They are a collection of 5 ranks of pipes from various organs not meant to speak together as an ensemble. Because the number of pipes is not adequate for the size of our sanctuary, the pipes were voiced very aggressively and raw to fill the space required for congregational singing. The pipes we have are used over and over again to create sounds in various octaves. This creates a tuning problem and the organ sounding "loud" when it is really just trying to fill the room with its limited capability. The other tuning issues stem from blowing air into the pipes from a separate room (the choir room) that does not have the same temperature as the room where the pipes are housed (the sanctuary) and a very low quality oboe that does not retain tuning.



We've now formed a new team called the Organ Replacement Team to develop replacement options for our current pipe organ. This new team, led by Rich Johnson, includes Jim Melzer and Gail Tucker from the original Organ Evaluation Team as well as Rich Gaona, Dennis Bagenstos, Sandra Bankes, Alice DeLoughry, and Sue Trinko. This team plans to present their options to our congregation in early May. Following these presentations, they will work with our congregation to determine which option best meets our needs and our budget.

Current thoughts are to fund our replacement organ through a fundraising campaign that would begin in the Fall of 2019. We'll form a third team at that time to lead the fundraising effort.

Decisions surrounding our music programs have the potential to get very passionate. We are taking a deliberate approach to this process so we can look at all options and get a clear understanding of our congregation's needs, concerns, and willingness to fund a new organ. Please stay engaged in this process and let your desires and concerns be known to the Organ Replacement Committee and our church Council.

Annual Church Garage Sale

When: March 23rd from 8am to 2pm (early bird at 7:30am)

Where: Lower level of Ascension Lutheran

How? The youth will be holding this garage sale as a

fundraiser for Minneapolis youth gathering in 2021. We are collecting items NOW until Friday, March 22nd at 5:00pm. Items can be brought to the lower level of the church. We will start with collecting them in the back Sunday school room - look for signs! This is a great time to clean out those cupboards and closets. Questions or need help getting items to church? Please contact Kirsten Johnson at 440-5896. Please NO chemicals, TVs, mattresses, lightbulbs, computers, or other hazardous materials as we will be taking items to arc after the garage sale.



KPC Respite Center 5th Anniversary Celebration Scheduled



LUTHERAN FAMILY SERVICES
of Colorado

Join us on the evening of April 11th as we celebrate the anniversary of Lutheran Family Services Rocky Mountains re-starting this important ministry. Tour the Respite Center, enjoy some food, and participate in this recognition. More information will follow in the coming weeks.

CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY TO...

**Rich & Cindy Gaona at the death of their nephew.
**family & friends of Luella Gulbranson at her death.

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 have started a new book, *Fierce* by Alice Connor. Our hostess for March 14, 2019, is Cheryl Johnson who will lead our discussion on Rahab and Bathsheba. If you are new Ascension or just looking for a casual Bible Study group, we hope you will come and join us! Please contact Nancy Shatto for questions or a book: 719-426-9444 or njshatto@yahoo.com.

~~US & THEM~~ WE:

It's almost time! It's almost here! What do you think it will be this year? Bees? Goats? Water? Chicks? Yup. That's right! Our annual ELCA World Hunger Offering Campaign is almost upon us! Every year, we choose a theme, and then, your Board of Social Outreach does our best to ahem, ahem, "encourage" our Ascension family to join us in seeing how much money we can raise for people in need.

This year, Lent will begin March 6 (that's Ash Wednesday, for those of you who haven't checked yet), and continue through April 21 - Easter. That's over 6 weeks to think about how you would like to contribute! So. Start saving that pocket change. Find your favorite check-writing pen. Get ready to be inspired with amazing stories of how bees or water or goats or chicks (or....?) can help make a valuable difference in someone else's life. Then, stay tuned, because we will be making our announcement SOON!

Blessings,
Sharla Saunders - Board of Social Outreach

CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY TO...

**Rich & Cindy Gaona at the death of their nephew.
**family & friends of Luella Gulbranson at her death.

Lenten Soup Supper Sign-ups in Fellowship Hall

Hosting one of our Lenten Soup Suppers is a great activity for your board or small group! The Worship Board is looking for hosts for Ascension's Lenten Soup Suppers **March 13, 20, 27** and **April 3**. You can sign up on the board in the Narthex.



So what does hosting the soup supper entail? Chairs and tables need to be set up, supplies set out and drinks prepared. Paper products and drink mixes are provided. Following supper everything needs to be cleaned and put away and the trash taken out. You can find a detailed list on the sign-up board. Thanks for participating in this fellowship! Questions? Call Sue Trinko at 719-648-8336, email ts.trinko@gmail.com.

Faith Seeking Understanding Book Club

Faith Seeking Understanding, Ascension's Book Club, will be reading and discussing "Becoming Nicole: the Transformation of an American Family" by Amy Ellis Nutt. This book about a transgender teenager should lead to some challenging and engaging discussion around identity, parenting, and faith. The discussion and potluck will be Saturday, April 13 at 5:30. All are invited. Questions? RSVP? Ask Pastor Daniel

Attention young-ish adults: Brunch and Board Games at Ascension!

Who: Young-ish adults at Ascension and their friends
When: March 9, 10am-noon
Where: Ascension library
Childcare: Yep! We'll hire a nursery attendant and have games for little ones, too
What to bring: a dish to share, a favorite board game
RSVP: Handy, but not necessary.
Questions?: Ask Pastor Daniel

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.

BECOME INVOLVED (cont.) ...

****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. *We are always looking for volunteers to help us.* We've lost a couple of our volunteers because of deaths and moves. 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.

****COMMUNION CLEAN-UP Help Needed!** The Altar Guild is looking for a volunteer to clean up communion just once a month after the second service on the second Sunday of the month. Duties would include throwing the leftover bread and wine/juice outside under a tree, disposing of the cups, washing the trays as needed, and taking home soiled linens to launder. If you can help, contact Dorathy Reed at dreed0258@gmail.com or 262-210-1200.

Bridge Group



Our Bridge Group will meet on March 23 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 if you have any questions about this group.

Milestone Ministries offers workshops

Coming up on April 6-7, 2019, Ascension will welcome Rev. Dr. David Anderson and his wife Gloria Anderson, founders of Milestone Ministries. Milestone Ministries is a ministry that develops and provides vital Christian resources for faith formation and outreach to individuals, congregations, and community members. The duo will offer several workshops throughout the weekend and will lead an intergenerational hour on Sunday April 7 in between services. All are invited to attend these offerings. You'll leave with practical tools to grow in your faith in Christ. More information to come.

Lenten Cantata: "Followers of the Lamb"

When: Friday, March 1, at 7 PM

**Where: Church of St. Michael the Archangel,
7400 Tudor Road**

Take a journey to the cross and beyond, as seen through the eyes of those who first followed Jesus: "Followers of the Lamb!" Weaving Early American and Celtic folk hymns together with beautiful new anthems and dramatized soliloquies, this cantata will be performed as a pre-Lenten offering for the community on Friday, March 1, at 7 PM. The artful craftsmanship of composers/arrangers/writers Lee and Susan Dengler flows throughout the work, which will include the accompaniment of a small instrumental ensemble as well as our combined choirs. The narration is in the form of reflective monologues interpreted in costume by actors from our parish. The program is free and open to the public.



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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 Allen)
t.adams@ascensioncos.org (Teresa Adams)
clc@ascensioncos.org (CLC)
ts.trinko@gmail.com (newsletter articles)

Our Website: www.ascensioncos.org

April newsletter deadline: March 17

*In Our Thoughts
& Prayers*

Beth Ayen (Daughter-in-law of Darcy & Bill Ayen), Brad Buhler, Tom & Sandy George, Elaine Glover, Steve Hahn (Grandson of Joan Magee), Darcy Johnson, Hazel Quindt, Judy Resh (Sister of Dee Yocum), Jeff Sebben, Jerry Smith, Virginia Stanley, Carol Thompson, Bruce Yocum, and all of our men and women serving overseas.