



Ascension In Action

Ascension Lutheran Church

July 2019

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Life-giving Faithful Community

We are now in our Pentecost season celebrating the coming of the Holy Spirit among and in us. The color on our stoles and altar will be green for the next five months. Green symbolizes life and growth. The Holy Spirit worked through the disciples to bring spiritual life to people. They witnessed and gathered the believers into community where they broke bread, shared, and prayed. They became a life-giving faithful community.

For us at Ascension, we see it as our mission to create faithful community. We name three major qualities to our being a faithful community. First, we are committed to helping people feel like they **belong**. This means people are welcomed. We know their names and some of their story and what matters for them. Belonging means they are included in our activities and mission. To belong means that they know we care when they are struggling or hurting.

Second, faithful community means that their **faith** is supported and strengthened. We do that through Sunday worship where they can hear a word from God and have time to rub up against other people of faith. We do that as well through giving resources and encouragement to support faith in their daily lives with family and friends.

Third, faithful community helps people **live purposefully**. For us, purposeful living comes from God's call to contribute and make a difference. To follow God's call means to work in line with one's gifts to contribute and make a difference in some area of hurt or need in our world.

Faithful community is life-giving. In a world that leaves us feeling left out or left behind, it is life-giving to know you belong. In a world where faith is either not mentioned or spoken of negatively, it is life-giving to have faith encouraged and supported. In a cynical world that leads us to feel like we don't matter and what we do doesn't



make a difference, it is life-giving to know that God has something for us to contribute and do that matters.

Pastor Dan

Milestone Celebration!

One year ago, Elisa Thompson, Jim DeLoughry and Deacon Mary completed the Johnson Certificate for Spiritual Formation for Boomers and Elders. Over the past year, the team, in collaboration with the Board of Lay Ministry, has implemented the Faith Formation for Maturing Adults ministry plan. It has included effort like Generation Celebrations, grief support through the showing of the documentary *Voices of Grief*, and a weekend-long presentation featuring Milestones Ministries Co-Directors, Rev. Dr. David Anderson and Gloria Anderson. FFMA's ministry is rooted in supporting, valuing and celebrating the second half of life so that all older adults know they are loved by God and He sees their lives as purposeful.

CONGRATULATIONS...

- **to Jason & Daniella Mannerberg on their marriage on June 1.
- **to Art Thorstensen on his 55th anniversary of his ordination.
- **to Pastor Nathan Doerr, a former intern and then full-time Pastor at Ascension, on his Retirement, celebrated at St. Philip Lutheran, Littleton, CO.
- **to Pastor Susan Candea on being elected Bishop of the Central States Synod.

CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY...

- **to Andy Saunders & family at the death of his brother.
- **to Norma Ingalls & family at the death of her father.
- **to Bill & Kathy Cornell & family at the death of their son, Jerry Cornell.
- **to Scott Allen & family at the death of his aunt.
- **to Bob Carlson & family at the death of his brother and sister-in-law.



What's Happening

- Pastor Dan opened the meeting with a responsive reading and prayer.
- Russ Johnson provided a financial report. Giving was slightly down in May but year-to date figures remain ahead of anticipated giving for the year. CLC revenues are starting to catch up and more increases are expected over the summer. Two sanctuary windows were replaced with money from the Capital Replacement Fund.
- Board Directors shared ideas on potential new areas of spending for 2020. The ideas tie into our vision and strategic planning goals in three distinct categories: Internal Ministry, External Ministry, and Ministry Excellence.
- Jerry Dollar made a motion, on behalf of the Board of Stewardship, to accept a \$225,000 anonymous gift and place the money in dedicated fund to be governed by the CPC. The motion was carried.
- Jerry Dollar briefly discussed his Board's Time and Talent Campaign focusing on 24 spiritual gifts. The campaign will conclude on October 1st.
- John Hayes provided a Strategic Visioning Update highlighting what we've accomplished in our first set of 90-day goals. Her also introduced the next set of 90-day goals. The Council passed a motion, made by John, to set aside \$5,000 of the \$225,000 gift to implement strategic visioning processes.
- Donna provided an update on efforts to replace the organ. The organ replacement committee has completed its work; however, one-on-one conversations continue. A report with the results from the committee will be presented at a future CPC meeting. The CPC is expected to make a recommendation to the congregation at the next congregational meeting. The congregation will vote on that recommendation.
- Deacon Mary reported on her current and upcoming efforts at Ascension. Her efforts directly support the Council's strategic planning and visioning work.
- Deacon Mary closed the meeting with a meditation and prayer.

- More good news from our Children's Learning Center! The Director, Teresa Adams, applied for and received a \$5,000 ECHO seed grant to continue the upgrade of the playground. This grant includes a design team and will be used to make a more interesting play area on the side playground.
- Tree damage was minimal from the heavy snow dumped during the last winter storm of the season. Thanks to the Board of Property and Grounds for all they do to keep us looking good!
- Summer weekend plans keeping you away from church? Consider attending the Wednesday night summer services on the back patio. Services start at 7:00 p.m.
- The Endowment Committee has approved a grant to fund summer activities for our youth. Annie Saunders will help plan and carry out activities to include devotionals, meetups, hikes, and more.
- The Board of Worship needs more lectors and communion assistants, especially for the 2nd service. See Ellis Conoley or Sue Trinko, if you can help out.

Notes from the Music Room



What's your favorite hymn? Most of us have at least one or two. Sometimes they are connected to particular memories or people. They may have lyrics that speak to us deeply or they give the joy or comfort that we need. This July we will have a hymn-sing each Sunday after the sermon. Start thinking about your favorites and maybe even look them up in the hymnal. We'll take requests at each service and just sing together for about 10 minutes. We won't have beer and wine like at Beer and Hymns. But you'll have good company, and I bet there will be coffee to get those voices lubricated! Coffee and Hymns in July. Join us!

Soli Deo Gloria, Megan Miller

Ladies' Lunch Bunch

Ladies of Ascension meeting once a month to enjoy each other's company over lunch. There is no age requirement. Please RSVP to Judy Conroy by the Sunday before the lunch.

Meets: 3rd Thursday at 11 am at Mackenzie Place

Contact: Judy Conroy, 481-9605
or jnconroy@comcast.net

THANK YOU...

**to Wini Klein for embroidering each of the HS Graduate's towels with "Ascension Lutheran Class of 2019." This marks Wini's 10th year of blessing the youth in this way.

Reflection on ALC's Mission from Deacon Mary:

In God's grace, Ascension Lutheran Church creates faithful community so that All belong, All live purposeful lives and All can grow in their faith in Christ and share it with others.

I love coffee shops, airports and long lines. Often these are places in which God works through others to teach me; how to listen, ask questions and to be open to receiving another's story. While some of these conversations have led to friendships, the majority of the connections were simply and profoundly for that time and space. In these conversations, I've also had the opportunity to share with others what I do as a Deacon in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and my call to serve at Ascension Lutheran Church. Sometimes it can be challenging to know what to say, not because there's nothing to say, rather, there's too much I'd like to say. Yet, in conversations that average five minutes or less and sometimes more, time is limited. Honestly, I've teetered between the firehose and breadcrumb approach, saying too much for anyone to truly remember and too many pieces in a short conversation to ever truly communicate the larger picture effectively. Recently, however, thanks to the hard work of numerous individuals in our congregation and consultant Kristin Wiersma from the Joshua Group in Minnesota, I have a new understanding of how to give voice to Ascension's unique mission as a community of faith. The following is how I've come to articulate the mission.

In God's grace, Ascension Lutheran Church creates faithful community so that All belong, All live purposeful lives and All can grow in their faith in Christ and share it with others.

I love being able to share this with others I meet in the community. And I've noticed a few things as a result of the clarity in the statement. First and foremost, I've internalized it. The statement means something to me and not only do I believe it, I've experienced it personally through one-on-one conversations with members of all ages, in prayer with youth at their school lunches, in weekly worship and in hearing God's Word and through working with others in projects like the generation celebrations.

It gives me a chance to share concrete examples of how I am involved in the life of the congregation, in relationship with God and others. And how the congregation is involved in outreach in the larger community and world. When there's a chance, I invite them to come join us on a Sunday. If there are any upcoming happenings outside of Sunday services, I extend the invitation to those as well.

Whether they take me up on that invite or not, I trust the Holy Spirit is present and at work in ways I am not aware, for reasons yet unseen. The opportunity in those moments is to simply give voice to what God is up to. Maybe you'd like to share with a friend or neighbor about your faith and where you go to church but like me, fumbled for the words? I encourage you to share your stories of how you belong, have found meaning in your life and how you've grown in your faith as a result of your involvement at Ascension Lutheran Church. Be encouraged, no matter how you do it, by words, actions or through your God-given gifts, your light shines in the darkness.

Looking for something to invite your friends to this summer? Join us for Campfire Worship & s'mores on the back patio Wednesdays beginning June 26, 7 pm - August 14, with no worship on July 3.

An Overview of Spiritual Gifts in Motion: Part II of III

As we have shared with you previously, the Board of Stewardship is pleased to be following the Midland Lutheran College "Spiritual Gifts Inventory" program this year. This exciting new approach to time and talent will form the foundation for our 2019 Spiritual Gifts in Motion program.

Over the course of three newsletters, we are pleased to introduce you to all 24 spiritual gifts. This month, we continue with the second 8 gifts:

The Gift of **Hospitality**

Characteristics

- Welcome others openly with love and acceptance
- Work to help guests feel at ease in a new situation
- Look to the needs of others and their comfort

Bible Example

- Lydia used the gift of hospitality when she opened her home to Paul and his companions immediately after she was baptized (Acts 16: 11-15).

The Gift of **Intergenerational Relationships**

Characteristics

- Interacts comfortably with people older and younger than one's self
- Fosters conversation and friendship between people of different ages

Bible Example

- In the story of the Passover, each person young and old had a special place in the celebration. The young asked questions, while the old shared stories of faith (Exodus 12).

The Gift of **Knowledge**

Characteristics

- Have the needed information or insight at the exact moment it is most essential
- Knowledge is shared in that it may come from a life of learning and observation

Bible Example

- Jesus healed a paralyzed man, and Jesus knew what those in authority were thinking. He could teach others about God's grace by observing their interactions (Mark 2: 6-8).

The Gift of **Leadership**

Characteristics

- Has the confidence to take a forward stance
- Can direct and motivate those around in order to accomplish a goal
- Can hold up a vision
- Is able to model the Christian life of service

Bible Example

- Jesus contrasted his culture's idea of leadership with that of God's definition of leadership. Servant leadership is displayed when Jesus washed the disciples' feet (John 13).

The Gift of **Listening**

Characteristics

- Ministers to others by providing a dependable ear, without judgment; and with careful, gracious questions
- Helps the other person hear, in his or her own story, that God is present in everyday circumstances

Bible Example

- It may seem that many scriptures portray God's people actually lacking the gift of listening. However, listening and wisdom are equally paired many times (Proverbs 1: 5).

The Gift of **Mercy**

Characteristics

- Feels deeply for those who are experiencing pain, distress, or need
- Goes beyond empathy to action in helping to meet those needs

Bible Example

- Paul is constantly inviting the churches to gather resources to help those in great need (Galatians 6: 1-4).

The Gift of **Music**

Characteristics

- Inspires others to experience the presence of God in their lives through the playing of musical instruments or through singing
- Believes that music can bring spiritual healing effects to those in need

Bible Example

- The psalmist calls for God's people to use trumpets, harps, lyres, tambourines, stringed instruments, flutes, and cymbals to praise the Lord (Psalms 150).

The Gift of **Networking**

Characteristics

- Knows someone in just about every place or every line of work
- Excels in matching present needs with the talents of others

Bible Example

- When Moses felt unqualified to speak on God's behalf; he suggested his brother Aaron do the speaking for him (Exodus 6:27).



Ascension at the Vibes Baseball Game

Ascension is having an outing at the Colorado Springs Vibes baseball game on Sunday, August 18th. The Vibes are the Single A minor league baseball team for the Milwaukee Brewers organization. The team is mostly comprised of brand new professional baseball players that were drafted out of college and high school in early June 2019. We have reserved a section of the Family Picnic Terrace Area along the right field line at Sky Sox Stadium for Ascension members and our guests. The game starts at 1:30PM and we can enter the Picnic Area at 12:30 to begin eating our meal. The cost is \$27 per person for everybody over age 12 and \$18 for children between ages 2-12. The price includes all you can eat buffet (hamburgers, hot dogs, chicken, potato salad, coleslaw, and cookies) and drinks (Pepsi products; beers can be purchased at your own cost), parking, and admission to the game. The Ascension Choir will sing the National Anthem at the start of the game (but choir members will have to pay as well). If you'd like to reserve tickets, contact John Hayes at blazehayes@aol.com or call him at (719) 572-1052.

RUTH CIRCLE

We will be taking a summer break during June and July. We will begin again August 8, 2019 discussing a chapter in the book, *Fierce* by Alice Connor. 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 any questions or a book at 719-426-9444 or njshatto@yahoo.com.

Bridge Group

Our Bridge Group will meet on a TBD date in July 20th 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.

GET INVOLVED...

****Flower Chart** – The 2019 Flower Chart is posted in the office for you to sign up on for a special Sunday for you or a family member, or a special occasion. Check with Arlayne for more info.

****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.

****Pop can tabs** help the Ronald McDonald House. They may be placed in the container in the cupboard in the Welcome Center.

****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.

SMALL GROUP MINISTRIES QUARTERLY UPDATE

All are welcome;
come join in the
fellowship!



DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

Centering Prayer Group

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

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

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

Ruth Circle

All ladies of Ascension are invited to join us for fellowship and casual Bible Study. We are starting a discussion of "Fierce: Women of the Bible and Their Stories..." by Alice Connor. If you are new Ascension or just looking for a casual Bible Study group, we hope you will come and join us!

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

Ladies' Lunch Bunch

Ladies of Ascension meeting once a month to enjoy each other's company over lunch. There is no age requirement. Please RSVP to Judy Conroy by the Sunday before the lunch.

Meets: 3rd Thursday at 11 am at Mackenzie Place

Contact: Judy Conroy, 481-9605 or jnconroy@comcast.net

Men's Breakfast

Get together with other men for fellowship over breakfast.

Meets: Thursdays at 7 am at Big Train Restaurant, 808 Garden of the Gods Rd.

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

Faith Seeking Understanding

We read books that usually address hot-button issues in order to have the civil conversations so lacking in our world. Topics have included race-relations, immigration, faith and homosexuality, and criminal justice. The discussions at the end of each book are friendly, honest, and happen over a

potluck! All are welcome!

Meets: Occasionally. Dates will be advertised in the bulletin, What's Up, and on the website. Pastor Daniel can also put you on an email list.

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

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 GROUPS

Quilts for New Beginnings

Family Promise, One Nation and World Relief need more quilts, and you can help. If you show up, we'll find something for you to do - no matter your skill level. *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

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 blazehayes@aol.com.

SEASONAL GROUPS

Biking, Holy Pedalers

Rides are scheduled most weekends. 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, April – October, weather permitting. Most rides are on Saturdays. Time & location by email & in Ascension Office's *What's up* weekly email

Contact: TBD

Ascension Outdoors

Experience the fellowship of other members while going out for an easy hike during the week, taking a weekend off to go camping, taking advantage of fresh snowfall to go snowshoeing, testing your endurance while climbing a 14er, or anything else that celebrates the great creation God has made.

Meets: Regular outings are not scheduled. Group will be notified by email when an outing is planned. Please contact Aimee if you would like to plan an outing and she will get the word out.

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



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Ascension Lutheran Church, ELCA
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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

CHURCH STAFF

Normal Office Hours: 9-12 Mon-Fri (719) 634-1694
Pastor Dan Holt – off on Friday
Pastor Daniel Smith – on sabbatical
Music Director – Megan Miller
Diaconal Minister of Faith Formation – Mary Stoneback
Office Administrator – Arlayne McKee
Child Learning Center Director – Teresa Adams
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Our Website: www.ascensioncos.org

August newsletter deadline: July 21

*In Our Thoughts
& Prayers*

Beth Ayen (Daughter-in-law of Darcy & Bill Ayen),

Jerry Bramschreiber, Brad Buhler, Katie Bui (Daughter-in-law of Anita Arends), Dennis Conroy, Tom & Sandy George, Steve Hahn (Grandson of Joan Magee), Betty Hatcher, Beth Mbise, Hazel Quindt, Judy Resh (Sister of Dee Yocum), Jeff Sebben, Ken Shodeen, Colleen (Jon) Steinhauer (Daughter-in-law of Dave Steinhauer), Bruce Yocum, and all of our men and women serving overseas.