

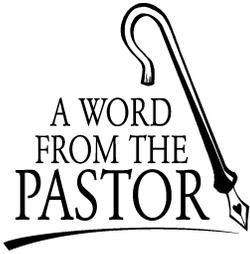


Ascension In Action

Ascension Lutheran Church

December 2019

Published monthly in Colorado Springs, Colorado



Advent Blessing

It's coming. The time of increased and cheer and dread. The time of schedules (too?) full, dinner plates (too?) full, credit card statements (way too?) full. The time of joyous moments, heartfelt gifts, and unexpected grief. Christmas – and all it entails – is coming. Depending on your shopping habits, radio preference, and decoration inclination, it may feel like Christmas already arrived weeks ago.

No other time of year inspires so much joy and stress and melancholy all at once. And so, receive this Advent Blessing:

In place of wishlists and keeping up with the Joneses,
may God fill you with a spirit of gratitude.

In place of the *oughts* and *shoulds* that haunt this season,
may God fill you with a spirit of generosity and charity,

a perspective of what you *get* to give.

In a time of so much,
may God give you courage to pause and witness
the coming of Christ among us.

In a time when the emptiness of life can feel like too much,

may God give you courage to pause and hope for
the coming of Christ among us.

In a season filled with lights,
may you see the dawning of the light of the world.

In a season with so much darkness,
may you see the dawning of the light of the world.

And whether it all feels too much or too little,
may you know that you are
enough
loved enough
loved so much

that God comes for you.

Amen.

Congregational Meeting



9:15 AM, December 8, 2019

Please attend a Congregation Meeting between services, Sunday, December 8.

Congregation Meeting Agenda:

- Opening Devotions
- Congregation Meeting Minutes (Approval)
- 2019 Operating Budget (Review)
- Church Planning Council Directors (Update)
- New Board Members (Approval)
- 2020 Operating Budget (Approval)
- 2020 Endowment Committee Budget (Approval)
- Mission and Vision Update
- Large Gift Update
- Closing Prayer



Poinsettia Time!

Please help the sanctuary look festive for the Christmas Season by purchasing a Poinsettia Plant. There is a sign up sheet in the fellowship area on the rotunda by the windows. The price is \$15 per plant. Place your check (made out to church) in the offering plate and designate for Poinsettias. Last day to order is December 15!



What's Happening

- Pastor Dan opened the meeting with a recap of our Stewardship campaign and a prayer.
- In his Treasurer's Report, Russ reported general giving is at 98% of the budgeted amount. The CLC is doing well with revenue about 106% of budget. Expenses are as predicted. He expects we will end the year near break-even or with a small surplus.
- Jerry Dollar presented results from the Stewardship Board's God's Grace in Action and the Over and Above for Faithful Community campaign. He expressed thanks for the congregation's generosity. A discussion on recommended changes for next year's campaign followed his report.
- The Council used the information presented by the Board of Stewardship to draft a balanced 2020 budget that will be presented at the Congregational Meeting on December 8, 2019.
- Dennis Bagenstos distributed recommendations from the Belonging Pathways Team. The CPC plans to incorporate the suggestions into our visioning efforts to shine God's light into darkness as we create faithful community. Directors will discuss implementation at their November Board meetings.
- The CPC accepted the Nomination Committee's recommendation to add Kathy Hayes to the Board of Worship and Rex Rudy to the Board of Lay Ministry. The congregation will vote on the motion at the upcoming congregational meeting.
- As part of the budgeting process, the CPC approved proposed housing allowances for both Pastors.
- Pastor Daniel closed the meeting in prayer.

- Congregational Meeting to discuss the 2020 budget on December 8, 2019 at 9:15.
- Introduce yourself and say hello to our newest members: Justin Runnells and Ruth Albrent-Reunnells; Cassi Smith; Karin and Owen Rose; Rob and Chris Koehler; Mark Patzke; Julie Barton; Jason and Terri Moore; Paul, Karen, and Alex Just; and Tom and Shelley Sabga. Welcome to our family!
- We continue to collaborate with Audubon Elementary School (across from the church) with a food drive scheduled in December. The drive will benefit our free food pantry located in front of the CLC.
- The Board of Social Outreach will support the Pueblo Mental Hospital with gifts again this Christmas. Unwrapped gifts are due to be returned to the church by December 8th
- Do you love Christmas poinsettias? Keep an eye out for the Worship Board's sign-up sheet to preorder and help decorate the sanctuary for Christmas.
- Please see Donna Crump or John Hayes if you would will contribute to staff Christmas gifts this year. Cash is easiest but checks are also accepted. They should be made out to Donna Crump (instead of Ascension) so that your gift is not confused as offering.

Show Your Ethnic Pride December 15

Rice Pudding, Springerle, Kringla, Panettone, Rosettes, Linzer Hearts, Krumkaker, Spritz, Divinity, Rommegrot, maybe even Fruit Cake!! What were your favorite Christmas sweets growing up? Dust off Mom's and Grandma's cookbooks and pick one or more you would like to bring to the Ethnic Coffee Hour between services on December 15th (also the Sunday of the Christmas Cantata). A lot of those specialties are available to buy during the holidays if you don't like to bake. Please include the name of the sweet and from what country they came. Hope you will participate!!

COFFEE HOUR – Smell the Aroma and Sign Up to Host!

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.



Children's Learning Center Update

It's hard to believe that the year is almost at an end!! Before we know it, the new year will be here!

The Children's Learning Center is busy as always learning and growing! In the weeks ahead we have several things coming up. We will be having our Christmas program on the December 20, our annual staff gatherings, Jesus' birthday party and lots of great holiday fun!!

Along the way we teach the children the knowledge that they need for the next steps of their lives and about the love of God!

We want to say a big Thank You to everyone for the continued support of the CLC!! We especially want to thank Pastor Daniel and Sylvia for the Bible stories and songs that they share with the kiddos. Another huge thank you to Wini for the reading program that she teaches to our next group of Kindergarteners. Having them come in each week to share these gifts with the children is inspiring!

As many of you know, through the generosity of the congregation, CLC planning for the playground need and a grant, we were able to replace the playground equipment this past summer! What a blessing!!! We can't thank everyone enough!

As the playground equipment project came to a close, the CLC was chosen as an ECHO seed site and is the recipient of a grant for the side yard of the playground!!! What an honor to be chosen and have these funds to help turn the rest of the playground into an amazing play area for the children! While receiving the funds for this part of the playground renovations is huge, we are going to need your help! There are projects that will need some hard work such as disassembling the sandbox, moving a portion of the fence, creating a dry riverbed with a bridge, prepping for a bike path and a number of other projects. As we get ready for each of these projects, we will put out the plan for workdays to see if you can come out and help us along the way. So much of the side playground is just dirt so the renovations to this area will help to make the side yard safer and much more FUN!!!

CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY TO...

**Carolyn Smith and family & friends at the death of her husband, Jerry Smith.

**Arlayne McKee and her sister Gwen Epley at the death of Gwen's husband, DeWayne Epley.

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 using the book, *Fierce* by Alice Connor. Our hostesses for 12 December 2019 is Kay Richardson who will lead our discussion on Asherah. 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.

Ladies' Lunch Bunch Meets the 3rd Tuesday

(Note the ladies' lunch is the 3rd TUESDAY of each month. It has been incorrectly listed as Thursday previously.)



Ladies of Ascension meet 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 Tuesday at 11 am at Mackenzie Place
Contact: Judy Conroy, 481-9605
or jnconroy@comcast.net

Create a Legacy!



*Ascension Lutheran Church
Endowment Fund*

Celebrating a special event? Remembering a special person? Memorialize those people and events in your life with a gift to Ascension's Endowment Fund, and create a lasting legacy!

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

In Memory of Jerry Smith:
Kay Richardson
Phil & Sandy Trent

In Memory of Buzz Howe:
Ilene Howe



Lutheran Camping Ministry Is for You!

The Camping Ministry has a magic all its own. Surrounded by the wonders of God’s creation and with a small group of people, youth and families can renew their lives and grow in understanding of God’s world and Christ’s love.

Our Ascension Lutheran congregation has an excellent opportunity to go camping this summer -- at Rainbow Trail Lutheran Camp. Openings are available for youth and families.

The summer programs at our Lutheran Camps are designed to provide Christian growth experiences for everyone. Here Bible Study, nature study, campfires, camping out and worship are all rolled into one experience that means fun, excitement, and Christian development.

Those interested in a camping experience at Rainbow Trail Lutheran Camp can get more information at the website: rainbowtrail.org or contacting your camp ambassador, Brad Chewakin at chewakin@msn.com, phone: 719.237.6801 or Mary Stoneback.

Remember to check out their summer camps and retreats for both youth and families.

Welcome New Members!

On Sunday, November 17, we welcomed 11 new members to Ascension:

- Julie Burton**
- Cassi Smith**
- Karin and Owen Rose**
- Shelley and Thomas Sabga**
- Mark Patzke**
- Ruth Albrent-Runnells and Justin Runnells**
- Paul, Karen & Alex Just**
- Jason and Terri Moore**

In addition, we welcomed back previous members Rob & Chris Koehler. Please welcome these folks into our faith community when you see them, and remember that they have a lot of names to learn! Wearing your name tag at church is a great way to help them to do that.

From the Belonging Pathways Team: Belonging Pathways- Connecting Guests

Coming soon: Connection Cards!

Why the change? We need a better method to collect information from our visitors so we can follow up with them to:

- Thank them for coming
- Invite them back
- Invite them to special activities
- Invite them to upcoming events

It has been proven that the most effective way to get information from both visitors and regular attenders is for everyone to fill out an info card. The card will be an easy way to gather visitor information and, just like the pads we currently use, also act as an attendance registry. The card can then simply be placed in the offering plate. With that in mind, beginning December 1, the pads that sit on the ends of the row will disappear and the new Connection Card will show up inside your bulletin.

Connect

Please place this card in the offering plate.

Change in contact info

Name(s) _____

Email _____

Phone _____

Mailing address _____

Preferred communication: text call email mail

Children's names & ages _____

Prayer Request _____

1st Time Guest Attender
 Returning Guest Member

see back



ASCENSION
LUTHERAN CHURCH

THANK YOU...

**to all who came to celebrate the iGens at our annual Spaghetti Supper and Talent Show at Ascension. Born between 1997-2012, this is a vibrant group of youth. Thank you for supporting them in life and faith. And congratulations to Sandy Ewen for winning the quilt raffle.

**Carolyn Smith and family would like to thank those who brought food for and helped out with the luncheon after Jerry's funeral. You are all greatly appreciated.

**from Jack Kagarise-I wish to thank everyone for the prayers, cards and the words of encouragement that I received during my cancer treatment. They were greatly appreciated.

Bridge Group

Our Bridge Group will next meet in December on a date TBD. 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:7195721052) or at kittypawz@aol.com if you have any questions about this group.



****Flower Chart** – The 2020 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. Cost is \$25. Check with Arlayne for more info.

****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, toothbrushes, 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. **We need to build up our pool of 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.



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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 – off on Friday
Music Director – Megan Miller
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Our Website: www.ascensioncos.org

January newsletter deadline: Dec. 15

*In Our Thoughts
& Prayers*

Scott Allen, Beth Ayen
(Daughter-in-law of Darcy & Bill Ayen), Brad Buhler,
Katie Bui (Daughter-in-law of Anita Arends), Caitlin
Denton (relative of Chris Koehler), Tom & Sandy
George, Elaine Glover, Steve Hahn (Grandson of Joan
Magee), Betty Hatcher, Keith Hedstrom, Jack
Kagarise, Ron Mohler, Hazel Quindt, Jeff Sebben,
Colleen (Jon) Steinhauer (Daughter-in-law of Dave
Steinhauer), and all of our men and women serving
overseas, especially Anthony Calderon and Zach
Carbonell.