



Ascension In Action

Ascension Lutheran Church

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Creating Community

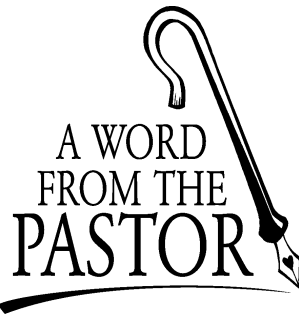
For March, we are in our Lent season. On Ash Wednesday, we were invited to “self-examination and repentance, prayer and fasting, sacrificial giving and works of love.” In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus called us to fast, pray and give without seeking notice or credit here. We do the right things trusting that God will know and that is enough.

While growing up, I don’t remember being asked to do something more for Lent. I suppose the thought was that we should be doing them all the time and not seasonally. But I have found that times of structured effort can be helpful. For instance, I do better learning when I commit to a class with others. The outward structure and joining with others definitely helps me keep going.

As much as there are many good Lenten disciplines, I would ask each of us in this congregation to do something that *creates* community. Our mission is to create community. It is one thing for us as leaders to draw attention to it. But finally what matters when we all act on it.

Creating community is a step further than sustaining community. Creating community means reaching out to those beyond our normal circles. Creating community can happen through inviting someone you don’t know well to lunch or coffee in order to get to know them. Creating community happens when you join a small group or help serve in a new way. I would invite you for Lent to take at least one action to create community.

Pastor Dan Holt



Handmade, Heartfelt Card Ministry Update

The card ministry team is thrilled to announce that, because of your generous support, we are able to give \$1500 to Habitat for Humanity from our 2019 proceeds! Thank you all! Just a reminder that in 2017, we bought a new washer for KPC Respite Center and the CLC used the 2018 money to buy 3 tablets for staff and student use.

The Place has been chosen as the recipient of the 2020 proceeds. The Place (formerly called Urban Peak) is an organization in Colorado Springs that helps homeless teens with a variety of services including shelter, education, jobs, permanent housing, and relationship building. The Place “ignites the potential in youth to exit homelessness and create self-determined, fulfilled lives.” Last year, the El Pomar Foundation recognized the good they do and awarded them a grant for more mental health services. Check out their website: theplacecos.org. for more details.

Our rack currently features Easter, Mother’s Day, Confirmation and Graduation cards, along with the year-round offerings. Take a minute to browse during coffee hour...and thanks!

FFMA Hits the Road!

Your Faith Formation for Maturing Adults Team (FFMA) has been invited to make a presentation at Christ Lutheran Church, Highlands Ranch on March 3. We will be sharing about the Ascension Generation Celebrations that wrapped up on January 26. We will discuss the logistics of putting together a Generation Celebration, the purpose of the celebrations, and the way these celebrations support our relationships with Christ and one another. We are excited for an opportunity to share one of the tools we have discovered in supporting aging as God intends and intergenerational connections at Ascension.

Deacon Mary Stoneback, Jim DeLoughry, & Elisa Thompson



What's Happening

- Deacon Mary provided the opening devotion which prompted us to consider people outside of our church walls who experience faith in various ways.
- Russ Johnson reported on January finances and encouraged Directors to stay within budget, if at all possible, and he also noted the 2019 audit is complete with only a few minor procedural/policy suggestions.
- The council applauded the congregation's generosity for additional commitments to provide salary increases for our staff.
- Pastor Daniel led a discussion surrounding the question, "Should Ascension's pastors officiate over same-sex weddings? Our values, convictions, and questions surrounding the issue were discussed. The council will tackle this question in the coming months.
- The CPC agreed to recommend several candidates for the Nominating Committee and Rocky Mountain Synod Assembly to the congregation.
- Updates on plans for the use of a couple of large gifts were discussed. Directors were asked to bring other ideas to the Council.
- John Hayes distributed updated Strategic Plan goals for the next 9 months.
- Pastor Daniel closed the meeting in prayer.

- The popular Wednesday Soup Suppers are returning. Look for the sign-up sheet if you or a group of your friends want to host. It's easy!
- Interested in serving on a Board or on Council? The Nominating Committee is looking to fill some positions. Prayerfully consider serving, if asked. Better yet, talk to a member or the pastors, if you are already inclined to serve.
- Want to meet people from the "other" service? Stay around after the first service or arrive a little earlier for the second service for some fellowship and/or coffee snacks.
- Start saving your "treasures" for the Youth's annual garage sale. Bring your donations to the basement starting March 1st.

Donna Crump
President, Congregation Planning Council

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:

Sabine Wachs - Birthday

**Phil & Sandy Trent -
Dorothy Candea Memorial**



Save the date - and your unwanted treasures!
Annual Ascension garage sale will be Saturday, April 4th. We will begin collecting items on Sunday, March 1st! Great time to clean out your cupboards and closets! All proceeds benefit the youth traveling to Minneapolis summer 2021.

Annual Congregation Meeting, February 10, 2020

Approved minutes from February 2019 Annual Meeting and December 2019 Budget Meeting are on the round kiosk.

Member of the Nominating Committee (Dennis Bagenstos (chair), Karen Rubinow, Jim Deloughry, Dallas Shrawder) were approved. Gabrielle Brown, Ruth Albrent-Runnells, Justin Runnells were approved as delegates to Rocky Mountain Synod Assembly in May 2020.

Amended 2020 Budget was approved. Changes to the budget were 2% cost of living increase for all employees and salary increases to bring the Pastors and Deacon salaries close to our goal of 90% of Rocky Mountain Synod guidelines. This budget change was possible due to the generous response of congregants; thank you.

2019 giving was \$14,000 less than in 2018. The 2020 includes an anticipated carryover of excess revenue from the Children's Learning Center. This carryover is less than expected: Boards will work hard to keep spending limited to available funds in 2020. Our mortgage balance is now \$319,000 due to buy-down with leftover capital campaign funds as approved by the congregation.

Endowment fund investments have done well. Endowment committee anticipates up \$5,000 available in 2020 for youth and up to \$10,000 available for other activities.

We received two significant designated gifts this year, one for \$225,000 and one for \$7,820 each year for the next three years. The donors wish to remain anonymous and set criteria for use of the funds. \$22,500 is designated for social outreach, \$25,000 will go towards improving our sound system, tentatively finished by Easter. \$25,000 is earmarked for basement, kitchen and downstairs restroom improvements, \$3,800 is designated for the new youth and adult bell choir, \$1,500 will go towards creating faithful community through social media. Landscape improvements are also in the works, we are awaiting bids.

Strategic Planning identified four focus areas: Belonging Pathways, Leadership, Equipping for Evangelism, and Purposeful Living. Purposeful Living was discussed last year during Lent. Belonging Pathways, headed by Andy Saunders, has been working to improve congregant and visitor experience and anticipates completion of their tasks by the end of the summer. Jon Thompson's Leadership Team will be evaluating our leadership structure. Work on Equipping for Evangelism and Purposeful Living will take place afterwards.

President Donna Crump and Vice President John Hayes are pleased with how things are going at Ascension. We had a new stewardship approach this year: we will focus on fewer projects in future Stewardship campaigns. When pastor salaries came up, the congregation was generous in their response -thank you. Thank you to all who volunteer. We're seeing more new members joining, and we are positioned for growth.

THANK YOU...

**Dear Ascension family, for the many cards, emails, prayers, hugs, and other expressions of sympathy at my mom's passing. You have no idea how much those have meant to our family during this time of loss. How grateful we are for the confidence we have in the promises of Christ! With Thanksgiving, Sharla Saunders.

** A huge Thank You to the Ladies' Lunch Bunch for the gift cards presented to the KPC Respite Center before Christmas. The families that received those are so incredibly grateful! Traci Hearne.

**Thank you to Ruth Circle for the gift cards presented to some of the families of the CLC before the Holidays. What a Blessing for those families.

**Thanks to all of you for your positive thoughts and prayers for healing for my surgery. Appreciate all of them and I am especially thankful for all of you. Rich Gaona

CONGRATULATIONS...

**Bill & Darcy Ayen on becoming Great-Grandparents on February 14 to Isaac Jaxson McFarland, adopted by their Granddaughter Becca & her husband Ben after fostering him since he was 5 weeks old. He will be 2 on March 2.

DINING OUT MARCH 20

Scott and Sandy Ewen are hosting the next Dining Out on March 20th. It will be held at Happy Belly's Tacos, 7702 Barnes Road (Barnes & Marksheffel) at 6:00. They are new at this location and don't have a big sign up yet but there is a "TACOS TACOS" sign on their front door. Their menu includes burritos, tacos, some appetizers and a full bar. RSVP to Ewens at sandyewen211@gmail.com.



Notes from the Music Room

When I think of worship, I often think of the title of a book by theologian Marva Dawn: *A Royal "Waste" of Time*. Marva Dawn breaks down her title word by word. Royal is for God, who is king, who truly deserves our worship and praise. He is our leader and the center of attention in worship. As host, God gives us grace in worship. Waste is because we sacrifice, we offer up our time to do something that doesn't serve an earthly purpose. And time is about focus. We shouldn't be staring at our watches; we let go of those other worries and devote our hearts and minds to God.

It can become easy for us to be slaves to utility. We want to be as efficient and do as much good as possible in as little time as possible with the least expenditure possible. But that is also not very fair to expect of ourselves every moment of every day. Think of Jesus' words from the Gospel of Mark: "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath." Being good stewards of ourselves and our resources also means recognizing our need for rest and rejuvenation. Sometimes you need that downtime to listen and be together, maybe do something fun, or have a deep conversation. Think of Worship as date night in the life of the Church. It helps you reconnect to God, to why you follow him, to why we have built this community on His Rock. Knowing the goodness of God, eases our weariness and revives our hope, and he works through us in this time together. His words comfort us and joining our voices together in word and song invigorates us to go out and do good work. God knew that humans would always need this.

See you this week for date night?

Soli Deo Gloria,
Megan Miller

CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY TO...

- **Sharla Saunders and family at the death of her mom, LaNelle Pierce.
 - **Dennis Conroy and family at the death of his brother, Brian.
 - **George Candea and family at Dorothy's death.
 - **Jean Schimmack at the death of her sister.
 - **Sabine Wachs at the death of her mother.
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Ascension Lutheran Church Pictorial Directory

The new Ascension Lutheran Church pictorial directory is online! If you haven't already, we'd like you to go online and create an account for yourself so you can access the directory anytime you'd like. To do so, use this link: <https://members.instantchurchdirectory.com/signup>. (The signup will only work if you previously emailed me. If you didn't...email me! dennisbagenstos@gmail.com.) You will then create a unique password for yourself. Don't forget your password, because I won't be able to recover it for you!

Note that your address and anniversaries and other personal information won't be shown unless you provided permission to list them. If you would like to include that info, you can now add or edit your information by clicking the 'Edit Family' button on your page. Keep in mind that the directory can only be accessed by members of the congregation who have been provided an account and password. And if we don't have your photo yet, or if you'd like to change your photo, you can also do that online.

Oh, and if you've already signed up but aren't sure where to go to access the directory, it's members.instantchurchdirectory.com. Even better, you can get the app for Android, Apple or Kindle; just search your app store for Instant Church Directory.

Let me know if you have any problems accessing the directory. And yes, we still have members we need to add, so if you don't see that family that sits next to you in church listed, tell them to send me an email! All inquiries should go to me at dennisbagenstos@gmail.com.

COFFEE HOUR –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.

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 9 January 2020 will be Nancy Shatto 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.

An Update from the Knotty Kneedlers

An update from the Knotty Kneedlers! We meet every Wednesday from 1:00- 3:00 P.M. We serve coffee and enjoy fellowship. We always like to see new faces. Our group has just donated about 50 hats to the CLC for Christmas. We donated 119 hats, 13 scarves, 64 blankets, 3 ponchos and 1 sweater to One Nation Walking Together. Anyone interested in joining us is very welcome. You can work on your own projects or for charity. Contact person is Bonnie Vawter at 719-579-6707 or you can just show up.

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

Bridge Group

Our Bridge Group will next meet on March 21st 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.

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.

****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. 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 9-11 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.

******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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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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

Diaconal Minister of Faith Formation – Mary Stoneback

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Our Website: www.ascensioncos.org

April newsletter deadline: March 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), Geri Cogdill (Cousin of Arlene Schultz), Andrea Galant (Gabrielle Brown's sister), Tom & Sandy George, Elaine Glover, Joe Hammel (Nephew of Elisa Thompson), Betty Hatcher, Keith Hedstrom, Bill Johnson, Elaine Kelly, Ron Mohler, Terri Moore, Sara Petz, Hazel Quindt, Jeff Sebben, Nancy Shatto, Teri Thompson (Sister-in-law of Sandy Trent), Lisa Wulf, Dee Yocum, and all of our men and women serving overseas, especially Anthony Calderon.