



Ascension In Action

Ascension Lutheran Church

June 2020

Published monthly in Colorado Springs, Colorado

Four explorations of scripture this summer



What you read matters.

As everyone knows, what news source you watch matters. It forms your perspective on the world. The same is true for the music you listen to, the advice you take, and the friends you spend your time with. And, when your scripture is a big as ours, what you read matters. In worship, were we to only read Leviticus, or the Psalms, or Paul's letters our understanding of the faith would be very different than it is now. What we choose to read matters.

This summer we will take four different explorations of scripture. First, following our reading through the Gospel of Mark this winter and spring, we'll pick up a few stories we missed. Mark is a book of action with few words, and there are a few stories we just hate to leave behind.

Then we're going to try something new. Most lectionaries (lists of scripture readings used in worship) try to give a sense of the breadth of scripture – an important goal. But the approach misses a basic truth – we tend to center our faith and our understanding of God and discipleship around central stories. It is good for us to have a few stories that we know so well that they have become part of us. So, for a few weeks this summer, we will spend time with the parable of the prodigal son. It is my hope that this becomes a story you know in your bones. For those who want to engage further, we'll have an online book study on Henri Nouwen's "The Return of the Prodigal Son." This excellent (and short!) book makes the story personal. I hope you can join us.

After the prodigal son, we'll take some time pondering what our faith says about human suffering using the book of Job. If Job isn't a relevant book this summer, then I don't know what is. Importantly, the book never 'answers' the question, why do people suffer? Instead, it explores responses to the problem of suffering – responses from us and from God.

Finally, we'll bring back a favorite: ask the pastor! We'll collect a host of questions from you, and look for insight and guidance from scripture in preparing and hearing a sermon. Stay tuned for how you can share your question.

When it comes to scripture, *what* you read matters. But what also matters is *how* you read and *who* you read it with. I hope this summer we can explore our holy book together in many life and faith giving ways.

God bless, Pastor Daniel



The Date is Set! July 25

The Annual Garage Sale benefitting Ascension's Youth will be Saturday, July 25th. Please contact

Kirsten Johnson at (719)440-5896 if you need help in getting your items to the church. We will start collecting items again the first part of June. Please, NO large items, mattresses, TVs, chemicals, etc.

Worship Board Update

Dear Folks: During this crazy time, the worship board is still working. We have been consulted about the sound and video capabilities in the sanctuary, and we will be an important part of the decisions that will be made to move forward in these areas. Kathy Hayes and Ellis Conoley have been very helpful in navigating through these decisions, and I am grateful for their support. Our next job will be to take the work of the Online Worship Task Force (led by myself and Pastor Daniel) and implement the recommendations for continuing online worship in a meaningful way at Ascension. As always, if you have any input or thoughts about things that the Worship Board should know about, you should feel free to let me know via email at ildaniel@yahoo.com.

Sincerely, Ingrid Daniel, Worship Board Director



What's Happening

- Pastor Dan opened the meeting with a devotional reading from John 20. The story of doubting Thomas is a reminder that God has the last word and he will come through for us.
- In his Treasurer's report, Russ Johnson noted significantly higher offerings for April. When combined with the \$95,000 Payroll Protection Program Loan, we are able to pay all our employees at the same rate we were paying before the Pandemic crisis began. We will also return our Social Outreach payments to the original budgeted amounts.
- The council approved Brad Chewakin's and the Property and Grounds Board's recommendation to accept Sunflower Landscaping's bid for work on the corner of North Circle and Holiday Lane. The project will improve curb appeal, water retention, and ease of maintenance.
- The council discussed an article, "Ten Ways the Church will Change because of COVID-19." Everyone agreed online worship will remain a part of our ministry, even after we return to in-person worship.
- Ingrid Daniel, Director of the Board of Worship, is leading An Online Worship Task Force consisting of Pastors Dan and Daniel, Deacon Mary, Alyssa DesJardin, and Gail Tucker. The group will develop an online worship plan for the current transition period and long-term future. In the near future, we expect recommendations for equipment, staffing, and volunteer needs to implement the plan.
- Deacon Mary Stoneback gave a back-brief on the Rocky Mountain Synod Assembly. The annual meeting was held online. It was considered both cost- and time-efficient. We were the only synod to hold Assembly as scheduled because the online meeting was approved at the 2019 Assembly.
- Ruth Albrent-Runnells will transition into the Office Manager position in late May as Arlayne McKee is set to retire in June.
- Individual Boards were asked to begin discussion for next year's budget needs and the Fall stewardship campaign.
- Dennis Bagenstos, Chair of the Nominating Committee, reported progress with identifying new leaders for the CPC and individual Boards.
- Pastor Daniel closed the meeting in Prayer.

- Our very own Deacon Mary Stoneback was elected to serve a four-year term on the Rocky Mountain Synod Council during the Synod Assembly!
- A congregational meeting is set for June 28th to elect new leadership for Ascension. We are looking for alternative means to vote, if meeting in-person is not an option.
- Basement renovations are on-going. You will see new paint, kitchen appliances, countertops, updated bathrooms, and flooring this summer!
- Church business continues with the use of technology and Zoom meetings.
- The Executive Committee is planning a celebration to honor Arlayne McKee and her service to Ascension. We will celebrate once we are able to return to church.
- Congratulations to the class of 2020! Blessing to you as you move forward through another milestone in your lives. God has plans for each of you!

Getting Ready for Worship in the Sanctuary.

You may have noticed that the Catholic churches in Denver started in-sanctuary worship on May 9-10 and the Colorado Springs Catholic Churches began on May 16-17. The Ascension CPC asked our Worship Board (led by Ingrid Daniel) to develop procedures for when Governor Polis allows our church to resume worship in our Sanctuary. We expect the governor may allow this to happen in June so we want to be ready to hold services in a safe and healthy manner when governor makes his announcement. The Worship Board is working with local Catholic churches and other churches across the US to ensure we will be ready for this day. We expect the governor will direct that social distancing and face masks be required for church services. We expect that social distancing will limit the number of people who can attend services at any one time. Communion will be most likely be "By Station" instead of at the altar. We also expect that there will be a sizeable number of our members who will be initially reluctant to return to in-Sanctuary services because of health concerns. Recognizing this, live streaming of our church services over the Internet will continue...possibly forever.

Ascension Phone Tree

While our church services are suspended because of the CORONA virus, we are trying to contact each member of Ascension once a week to make sure you're doing well and if you're not, what can we do to help out. If you haven't been contacted by anybody, please let John Hayes know so we can establish contact with you. John's e-mail address is blazehayes@aol.com and his phone number is (719) 572-1052.

Us & Them We

A Hearty Thank You from Family Promise/IHN

Scott Ewen received a great thank you from IHN/Family Promise when he dropped off 22 grocery store gift cards worth \$760:

"Awesome! Thank you so much! I talked with Heather yesterday and she informed me that you came by too. I cannot thank you enough for this. Truly, Scott, thank you for reaching out to Ascension and everyone for our IHN families and getting this together. I appreciate your giving

hearts! 😊

Have a fantastic day! Andrea"

He has since dropped off another \$450 [9/\$50] of King's Soopers gift cards at Family Promise just this week! Thank you, Scott for leading this effort and thank you Ascension. Your helpfulness and generosity is appreciated!!

Board of Social Outreach

Blessings abound!

Karen Askinas and the Board of Social Outreach

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!

CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY TO...

**Carol Thompson at the death of her brother.

Ruth Circle

Due to the uncertainty how long the restrictions for Covid-19 will be, we will suspend meetings until August 2020. Ruth Circle does not meet in June and July. More information will be coming later. 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.

Ladies' Lunch Bunch Meets the 3rd Tuesday

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

Ascension at the Vibes Baseball Game

**SAVE
THE
DATE**

Ascension is having an outing at the Colorado Springs Vibes baseball game on Sunday, August 23rd. 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 are just drafted out of college and high school. 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). As we get closer to the game, John Hayes will be taking ticket orders.

Ascension Lutheran Church Pictorial Directory

During this time of personal distancing, we all need to be able to contact each other to stay in touch. The new Ascension Lutheran Church pictorial directory can do just that, since it's online! However, if you haven't already, you need 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>.

IMPORTANT: The signup will only work if you previously emailed me so that I can add your email address to the directory database. If you didn't...email me now! 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. And yes, the family dog, cat, bird, velociraptor can be in the photo! No professional photos, please, unless you provide a copyright release. That's why we can't use photos from our previous directory.

Oh, and if you've already signed up but aren't sure where to go to access the directory, its 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 remember, if you aren't in the directory, your Ascension family can't find you! All inquiries should go to me at dennisbagenstos@gmail.com.

Bridge Group

Our Bridge Group will next meet on a TBD date in June 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 the church office 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.

****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. 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.

****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.

****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.



AIA June 2020 Issue #6
Ascension Lutheran Church, ELCA
2505 N. Circle Drive
Colorado Springs, CO 80909

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

Office Administrator – Arlayne McKee

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

July newsletter deadline: June 17



Scott Allen, Beth Ayen
(Daughter-in-law of Darcy & Bill Ayen), Brad Buhler,
Cindy Foster, Tom & Sandy George, Elaine Glover,
Darcy Johnson, Charles Lewis, Arlayne McKee, Ron
Mohler, Hazel Quindt, Rick Rogers, Jeff Sebben,
Cassie Shaffer, Cathy Stanley & Michelle Stanley
(sister-in-law & niece of Marilyn Gulliksen), Ilene
Steinkruger, Teri Thompson (Sister-in-law of Sandy
Trent), Wanda Wade (friend of Kagarises), Dee
Yocum, and all of our men and women serving
overseas, especially Anthony Calderon.