



Ascension In Action

Ascension Lutheran Church

December 2020

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Thank you...

Grocery clerk manager who encourages his worn and weary employees. I never knew I'd be able to see a smile behind a mask.

Anonymous donor who's brought in hundreds of dollars of gift cards for Family Promise. These isolated families aren't as alone as they thought they'd be.

Nurse who was patient and gentle when giving my daughter a Covid test. Your care led a four year old to let you put a Q-tip up her nose.

Crows who live down the block, oblivious to this year. You remind me that the world goes on.

Nursing home staff who found a way to let a dying woman safely say goodbye to her family. You matter more than you'll ever know.

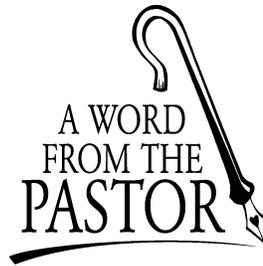
Leader of city, state, nation, church, school, team, office, factory floor, and family who made tough decisions on behalf of others, decisions which have cost you, but saved others.

Teacher who has sat with head in hands many a night, but still wakes each morning to try to find ways to reach these students, your students.

Migrant laborer and truck driver who bring food to our tables no matter what.

Church musician who plays as if the empty room were full of the faithful. They aren't there, but they are listening.

Protestor who marched and citizen who voted. You remind me that our future is worth fighting for.



Scientist developing these vaccines. We call it the "miracle of modern medicine," but it really is your tireless work that illuminate a light at the end of the tunnel.

My daughter, who called me away from cooking dinner to show me the sunset. It's one I'll never forget.

You. You who have grieved this year. You who have endured. You who have transformed. You who have fretted. You who have given. You who have doubted yet persisted. You who have encouraged.

You who have prayed. You who have surrounded me and one another that we might not go it alone.

God, for these. Amen.



What's Happening

- Please join us for a Congregation meeting on December 6th at 10:15. We will use the online Zoom application, which is the same application used for the fellowship time following online worship. Our primary agenda item is approval of the 2021 budget.
- Deacon Mary is working to publish Advent Devotionals written by congregation members.
- Plans are underway to hold an outdoor Christkindlmarket at Ascension on December 12th! Look for details in the weekly What's Up.
- Be patient as we work out the kinks in our new online streaming video and sound equipment.
- The Board of Parish Education is working on a virtual Christmas program. We can't wait to see it!



Staff Christmas Gifts

Please help me thank our staff with a monetary Christmas gift this year. 2020 has been challenging for all of us and I want to acknowledge the exceptional work of Pastor Dan Holt, Pastor Daniel Smith, Deacon Mary Stoneback, Megan Miller, Teresa Allen, Ruth Albrent-Runnels, and our CLC Director, Teresa Adams.

To contribute to the staff gifts, please give cash or checks to Donna Crump or John Hayes. You may also drop off gifts in an envelope to the church office. Please label the envelope “staff gifts” and make checks out to me or John to minimize confusion with money being sent as offerings to the church. If you want to mail a gift, you may send it to Donna Crump, 2311 Limerick Court, Colorado Springs, CO 80921. You may also mail to John Hayes, 5190 Farmington Drive, Colorado Spring, CO 80917.

While not a comprehensive list, let’s look back and smile as we remember some of the year’s highlights:

Pastor Dan: When it comes to looking straight into the camera and expressing genuine love, Billy Graham has nothing on Dan. Pastor Dan adapted to the online format like Muhammed Ali did to the boxing ring. Missing the youngest members of our church, he made a point to thank them by name as they watched his children’s sermons each Sunday. He even navigated an online Zoom wedding and fully embraced the art of the elbow bump.

Pastor Daniel: Like his pastoral counterpart, Pastor Daniel embraced the online format forced upon us due to COVID. Needing a little assistance, he incorporated Jake, the skunk, into his children’s sermons. Kids, parents, and grandparents alike took note of Jake’s words of wisdom, most notably, “Pray before you spray.” Always willing to bring current affairs into his ministry, Daniel spearheaded a book club discussion on the pandemic and incorporated thought-provoking issues into his sermons.

Deacon Mary: The pandemic required us to adapt to a ministry utilizing social media and online technology. Deacon Mary stepped up to the challenge as if she was Mark Zuckerberg’s daughter. Mary managed the

technical idiosyncrasies of online worship and worked with individual boards to share God’s message using the art form of media. And with her love of smores on the patio, I wonder if Mary ever reached the upper echelon ranks of the Girl Scouts.

Megan Miller: We’ve been privileged to know Megan’s musical talent and leadership for several years. She wasn’t daunted by the prospect of tying online worship with our culture of lay leadership. Megan organized congregation members to serve as cantors for worship and introduced the super-de-duper mask for protection against the coronavirus.

Teresa Allen: Not only has Teresa superbly dealt with a sub-par organ, she has willingly played an electronic Clavinova, outside in the parking lot, for worship. That’s pretty amazing stuff for a quality organist. Teresa loves serving God through melody and has worked with other musicians throughout the year to provide special music in our online worship services. In addition to coronavirus stress, she continues to play for us as she battles breast cancer. We pray for her quick and complete recovery.

Ruth Albrent-Runnels: Following in the footsteps of Arlayne McKee, our favorite “minion-loving” office manager, Ruth dealt with new job responsibilities and work isolation with a genuine smile and positive attitude. I wonder how many times she had to answer the question, “Where can I find the elusive online bulletin?” Bless you, Ruth!

Teresa Adams: Running a pre-school and afterschool program during a pandemic with staffing challenges and difficult state-imposed restrictions seemed to be an impossible challenge. Teresa handled the challenge with care and concern for the families she serves. Due to her efforts, the CLC never had to shut down and even extended services to children of First Responders. Teresa is a truly-valued behind-the-scenes person for a mission that ties us directly with our community.

Ascension is a community of grace called to serve and we are thankful to our staff who lead us in our call of service. Blessings to each of you and your families. Please know we love you and appreciate all you do for us.

Donna Crump
Council President

CHURCH COUNCIL



- Deacon Mary Stoneback opened the meeting with a COVID-19 video reflection. The video expressed gratitude for those serving their communities and reminded us to praise God for our many blessings.
- For the second month in a row, Russ Johnson reported monthly giving fell below budget amounts; however, higher giving earlier in the year has put us right on track for November.
- Based on the Stewardship Board's Pandemic of Plenty estimated giving campaign, General Offerings are expected to increase \$11,000 in 2021.
- The council approved a draft budget to present to the Congregation at the December 6th (Zoom) congregation meeting at 10:15 following our online worship service.
- The council also approved an updated Marriage Policy that will allow our Pastors to officiate weddings, to including couples of the same gender.
- Pastor Dan Holt closed the meeting in prayer.



Thank you!

- * To our youth and youth board for a successful Spaghetti supper, raffle and Variety show!
- * To Jim and Patrick DeLoughry and Deacon Mary for helping put together the variety show for all to enjoy!
- * To all who donated items and baskets for the raffle!
- * To all who came and picked up their spaghetti dinners - TO GO

We are truly thankful for your support of the youth of Ascension Lutheran Church! All proceeds benefit our regular youth activities - including bible studies, meet ups, synod gatherings, service projects, college care packages, baccalaureate gifts, one on ones with Deacon Mary and so much more!

The Music Continues!



While Ascension Lutheran's musicians are sad not to be able to share a cantata with you this Advent. We are very excited to share a virtual concert with you! We invite you to come together, and remember God's great love for us, his incarnation into our life here on earth, and his heavenly power to unite us across time and space. We will have bells, singers, brass, and more, something for whatever your musical taste may be, and all recorded by our very own talented musicians. The concert will air on YouTube on December 20. Please watch your weekly What's Up for final details! May music be a light for you in these short days and confusing times!

Soli Deo Gloria,
Megan Miller

Congregation Meeting via Zoom - December 6th at 10:15.

Our primary agenda item is approval of the 2021 budget. Join us for more details and exercise your voting power one more time!

CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY...

** The family of Tom George at his death.

CONGRATULATIONS...

**to Dan & Sylvia Holt on the birth of their new Granddaughter, Scarlett, born to Kelly & Aaron Holt on October 30.

Handmade, Heartfelt Card Ministry

Thank you for your continued support of the Handmade, Heartfelt Card Ministry. As a reminder, this year's profits are going to The Place, a local organization that assist teens and young adults with a variety of services to help them move out of homelessness. Additional cards are added to the rack regularly.

Create a Legacy!



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!

Bridge Group

Our Bridge Group will most likely not be meeting again until a COVID-19 vaccine is distributed to the US population. 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...

****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.

****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.** *We will probably not be supporting Bingo at the Terrace Gardens Health Care Center until a COVID-19 vaccine is distributed to the US population.* 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.***

****Knotty Kneedlers:** The knitting group has closed down for now. We will be watching for any interest in the future.

****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.

Advent 2020 - For Such A Time As This: Advent begins Sunday November 29. We invite you to a season of reflection and prayer practices for the home to prepare for our Savior's advent among us.

Advent Devotional Booklet available online: Enjoy daily reflections on Scripture readings from Ascension members and friends, November 29 - Christmas Day.

Advent on Instagram: Follow @ascensioncos on Instagram for image-based reflections of Advent.

Wednesday Evening Advent Devotions: Join Pastor Dan Holt on zoom each Wednesday evening at 8 PM through Advent. They will be brief – less than 15 minutes with reflection and prayer on the season.

Advent Calendars for Sunday Schoolers: Through Advent, Alisa Desjardin, Sunday School Lead, will be dropping off at homes of Sunday Schoolers a simple Advent Calendar to put together.



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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 – off on Friday

Music Director – Megan Miller

Diaconal Minister of Faith Formation – Mary Stoneback

Office Administrator – Ruth Albrent-Runnells

Child Learning Center Director – Teresa Adams

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Our Website: www.ascensioncos.org

Jan. newsletter deadline: Dec. 23

*In Our Thoughts
& Prayers*

Teresa Allen, Beth Ayen
(Daughter-in-law of Darcy & Bill Ayen), Allen
Brooks, Brad Buhler, Andrea Gallant (sister of
Gabrielle Brown), Sandy George, Elaine Glover, Jack
Kagarise, Pam Landry, Sara Petz, Carlos Quiles (friend
of Ron Mohler), Jeff Sebben, Cathy Stanley (sister-in-
law of Marilyn Gulliksen), Ilene Steinkruger, Wanda
Wade, Dee Yocum, and all of our men and women
serving overseas, especially Anthony Calderon.