



Ascension In Action

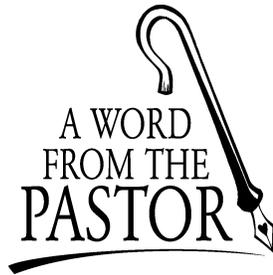
Ascension Lutheran Church

February 2021

Published monthly in Colorado Springs, Colorado

Lead with your heart

I started doing yoga this past fall. I'm really bad at it. So bad that I don't think I'll ever do it outside of my own basement. I fall over a lot. I'm really inflexible. Some of these poses leave me panting after only a few seconds. But, it's helping heal a minor running injury, so I keep at it.



I do the same video over and over, and in my exhaustion I'm always surprised at this one part about 20 minutes in. On one leg and two hands, leaning over my wrists, the guy on the screen says "lead with your heart."

It's a really good way to describe how to do that pose. It's an even better way to describe how to do life. We have a penchant as humans to hedge our bets. We ease into relationships. We hold back. We dip our toe in the water. We sign up for the free trial period. We see cynicism as a virtue, optimism as naivety, and hope as an unnecessary risk. Because we don't want to be heartbroken. We don't want our dreams crushed. It makes sense.

So, we lead with our heads, our hearts safely hidden away until a safe time, tbd. Or, more likely, we don't lead at all. Waiting for another to take the risk first.

But that costs us. To avoid heartbreak, we remain aloof. Our heart isn't in it.

I think this world needs us – and God calls us – to lead with our heart. I think we're called to uncompromising compassion. I think we're called to bold acts of love. I think we're called to risk heartbreak. In our relationships. In our work. In our neighborhoods. In our prayers. Without risking heartbreak, I don't know if we can be truly present. I don't know if we can truly love.

And maybe we need not fear heartbreak so much. Three days after the crucifixion, two disciples were walking the road to Emmaus when Jesus came up to them, but they

didn't recognize him. They were down and told Jesus "we had hoped that he was the one to restore Israel." (Luke 24:21) *We had hoped.* These two had lead with their hearts, and now thought they were irrevocably heartbroken. But then Jesus reveals who he is and the two run to the other disciples full of joy: "The Lord has risen!" Every heartbreak will heal one day in God's embrace. So, our call is not to hedge against heartbreak, our call is to lead with the heart.

Pastor Daniel Smith

Action needed: (Please)

In this annoying time of COVID-19, pandemics, isolation, general suffering, and pain, we are forced to make do with online Worship. Now don't get me wrong, I sure am grateful we have it, but it makes it more difficult to stay in touch, to feel linked. To help us all with this issue, we now have online Connection Cards. Yes, these are similar to the cards that would show up in our bulletins, lovingly handed to us by nonjudgmental ushers as we slipped in the door late on Sundays, back when we met in person. *Je me souviens* (translation: "Yes, I remember." No, I do not really know French – it's on the license plate in Quebec. Yes, I've been there.)

Well, we now have an online version. So, even if you stream the services from an app on your TV like Firestick, it's still super easy to just pick up your tablet or mobile device and go to Ascensioncos.org- click on online worship and scroll down just a bit, & there it is! Please fill it out and hit send. It helps us a lot.

So, like I said Connection Card - super easy- *sans aulune excuse.*

Merci - Andy Saunders
Board of Evangelism

CHURCH COUNCIL



- Pastor Daniel opened the meeting with a devotion and prayer. With all the turmoil in our country, he reminded us that we can have faith and feel lament.
- Jon Thompson updated the council on his Leadership Team's goals and progress. The team is studying our current lay leadership structure to see how we can be more effective and efficient in our processes to reinforce our mission statement.
- Our treasurer, Russ Johnson, reported a financial surplus for the end of the year. The council discussed options for its use and will make a recommendation to the congregation at the annual congregation meeting.
- The council approved the Finance Board's recommendation to add Terry Snow and Julie Burton to the Audit Committee. The committee conducted the audit of our finances on January 23rd.
- The Rocky Mountain Synod Assembly is scheduled for April 19- May 1st. The council will bring a recommendation at the annual congregation meeting for three members of the congregation to attend as voting representatives.
- Deacon Mary closed the meeting with a reflective video and prayer.



What's Happening

- The Annual Congregation meeting will be held via the online Zoom application following worship on Sunday, February 7th at 10:15 am.
- The Youth Board is planning an outdoor gathering for Shrove Tuesday (also known as Fat Tuesday) on February 16th from 5:00-6:30 p.m.
- The congregation's generosity allowed us to provide Christmas bonuses to all our staff. Teresa Adams, the CLC Director, received a grant that allowed her to provide Christmas bonuses to her CLC staff.
- Ascension's WIFI Networks have been upgraded to provide better connections throughout the facility. Ask our Office Manager, Ruth, if you need the guest WIFI password.

- The Evangelism Board has implemented a Connection Card for those attending online worship. You will find the card on the church website near the weekly bulletin. You may complete the card using a personal computer, tablet or any mobile device.
- Our Social Outreach Board will begin its World Hunger appeal in late February/early March.

Shrove Tuesday Celebration, February 16th

We look forward to welcoming you at this year's Shrove Tuesday celebration Tuesday February 16, 5-6:30 pm, sponsored by the Youth. The event will take place in the lower parking lot, follow the signs.

Come and enjoy supper from <https://www.wittypork.com/> food truck. You can purchase from a select menu of pizzas (gluten free available). And RSVP to receive your complimentary cupcake from the winners of Food Networks Cupcake Wars, Cupcake Doctor Truck, which will also be onsite. <http://www.thecupcakedoctor.com/> Please RSVP for all who will be attending to ensure you will all receive a complimentary cupcake! (gluten free available, please indicate so during sign up)

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70a0444aeab2aa5f58-shrove>

What to Expect: There will be food and something for all ages, including games led by Ascension's youth for the kids, music, contests and opportunities to ring bells (of course)! We'll also offer a special blessing as we prepare for our Lenten journey beginning the following day, with Ash Wednesday. Questions? Email Deacon Mary Stoneback at m.stoneback@ascensioncos.org

We will follow standard COVID-19 health procedures and ask for all to wear masks when not eating. Thank you for your help in practicing safe outdoor gathering. Shrove Tuesday, is the traditional feast day before the start of Lent on Ash Wednesday. Lent – the 40 days leading up to Easter – was traditionally a time of fasting and on Shrove Tuesday, Anglo-Saxon Christians went to confession and were “shriven” (absolved from their sins).

Please RSVP by Thursday February 11th so we can get final numbers to the vendors.

Being Generous

Most of us will be receiving another stimulus payment. For some, the financial needs likely surpasses the money. For others of us, like myself, we are doing fine and do not need that money to pay bills. As someone trying to be a good steward of my resources, it gets me pondering what to do with it. I have decided to give it away.

If you are in a good place financially, I would ask you to consider doing the same. Our increased giving goal for this coming year at Ascension is to support local people in their need, especially food needs. If you want to join in that, you can write a check to Ascension and put "food help" in the memo line. We will use that through our ministry partners in support of those in need.

CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY TO...

- **Darcy Johnson at the death of her father.
 - **the family of Sara Petz at her death.
 - **Charles Lewis & family at the death of his son, David.
 - **Susan Curtis at the death of her cousin Alan.
-



*Ascension Lutheran Church
Endowment Fund*

Your ALC Endowment Committee

It is my pleasure to introduce your Endowment Committee for the next term. Joining the team are Julie Burton, Judy Leiseth, Kim Knoche, Eric Gresh, and myself. We are also pleased to be supported by Pastor Holt and Russ Johnson.

We look forward to being of service to the congregation and all of our Boards. Please do not hesitate to reach out to any one of us in regards to; making an Endowment gift or learning about the grant process. Thank you for your support!

Blessings, Jerry Dollar, Chairman

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!

~~US THEM WE~~

Hearts, Hope, & Home Luncheon, Feb 28th

Family Promise (aka IHN) is hosting their annual luncheon on Sun., Feb 28th. This year, it will be virtual with lunch delivered by Door Dash and there will be an online raffle! Ascension has so generously supported this organization during the pandemic with grocery store gift cards and other donations. If you'd like to celebrate their successes with them at this luncheon, please contact Karen Askinas at 719-229-8799 or kaskinas@gmail.com. Social Outreach will pay for your luncheon tickets.

Lutheran Family Services of the Rocky Mountains has been busy! They have even expanded their services during this time: Immigration Legal Services have been added (Salt Lake City and Eagle, Grand, and Summit counties), COVID Crisis Counseling if available (City & County of Denver, Delta, Gunnison, Montrose, Ouray, and San Miguel counties), and Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR) requests were made for long term disaster recovery case management for the areas affected by the Cameron Peak and East Troublesome fires.

Stay tuned for more on the World Hunger appeal starting soon! How will we be feeding the world this year?

Board of Social Outreach

Ruth Circle

Due to the uncertainty of Covid pandemic, Ruth Circle will not meet until the fall of 2021. More information will come as information comes available to us. If you are new to Ascension or just looking for a casual Bible Study group, we hope you will keep us in mind! Please contact Nancy Shatto for any questions at 719-426-9444 or Njshatto@yahoo.com.

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](tel:7195721052) or at kittypawz@aol.com if you have any questions about this group.

New quarterly devotional books are in!

The new Christ in Our Homes devotional books are in for January-March 2021. You can come to church and pick them up on the Welcome Desk or if you call church Ruth can mail one to you.

Ascension's Book Club

Pastor Daniel is pleased to announce the next book for Ascension's Book Club. "At the Edge of Haight" by Katherine Seligman tells the story of a young homeless woman in San Francisco. As a work of fiction, it will be a slightly less heavy read, which we need in this pandemic time. And yet it is written by someone who has studied and researched homelessness a lot, so it should also lead to some good discussion. The book should be available on Amazon, Audible, etc. Let Pastor Daniel know if you'd like to join the book club and he'll keep you in the loop on the discussion date which is TBD. d.smith@ascensioncos.org

Backpacks for the CLC kids. We are currently providing 12 weekly backpacks to CLC kids, which helps to supplement food over the weekend. Your continued support is much appreciated. Click on this link for food suggestions.

http://www.ascensioncos.org/ministries/outreach/ascensions-free-pantry/?_thumbnail_id=1895 and pick up a few items next time you go to the store. Donations can be dropped off at the church weekdays from 9-1. Financial support for this much needed program is always welcomed as well. Thank you so much for supporting the CLC in this way.

Chris Koehler & Kirsten Johnson

BECOME INVOLVED...

****Flower Chart** – The 2021 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. We are specifically looking for nonperishable foods; however, items that are rarely picked up from our Food Pantry located outside the church building are packages of pasta and canned vegetables. Any donations of those items will go directly to Mercy's Gate. No sugared cereals or sugared drinks, please! While the children will happily eat them, they lack much nutritive value. Finally, **please do not donate expired food of any kind.** Thank you so much for your generous donations!

****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.

****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.

****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 February 2021 Issue #2
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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

E-mail addresses: office@ascensioncos.org

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ts.trinko@gmail.com (newsletter articles)

Our Website: www.ascensioncos.org

March newsletter deadline: Feb. 24

*In Our Thoughts
& Prayers*

Teresa Allen, Beth Ayen
(Daughter-in-law of Darcy & Bill Ayen), Allen
Brooks, Brad Buhler, Sonny Campbell, Penny Foster,
Andrea Gallant (sister of Gabrielle Brown), Elaine
Glover, Jack Kagarise, Pam Landry, Rick & Joan
Leiting (niece & husband of Judi Johnson), Daniela
Mannerberg (daughter-in-law of Kathy), Carlos Quiles
(friend of Ron Mohler), Rick Rogers, Connie
Schneider (friend of Debbie Broderick), Jeff Sebben,
Cassie Shaffer, Warren Slagle, Betty & Janice Snow
Castle (Mother & sister of Terry Snow), Cathy Stanley
(sister-in-law of Marilyn Gulliksen), Ilene Steinkruger,
Jan & Steve Tompkins, Wanda Wade, Lucille Walker,
Dee Yocum, and all of our men and women serving
overseas, especially Anthony Calderon.