



Ascension In Action

Ascension Lutheran Church

December 2021

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Incarnation

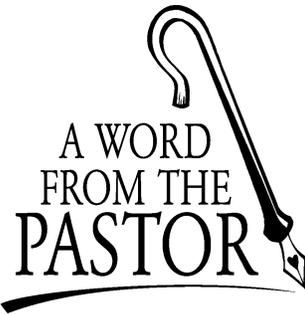
I decided to try an experiment one night, not too long ago. My daughter and I read from her Story Bible each night. We'd finished it the night before, which meant it was time to start again. And, almost on a whim, I decided to use 'she' and 'her' when I referred to God.

I'm not entirely sure why I did it. I don't want Zora thinking God is a man, but I don't want her to think God is a woman, either. Maybe I wanted her to just know that God isn't fully defined or boxed in by a gender. Maybe I was curious, and felt better switching the pronouns in a paraphrased story Bible than switching the actual words written in the Bible.

Whatever the reason, the impact has been unexpected. Not so much for Zora, but for me. Some of the stories have a whole different feeling for me this way. Reading a story about God's compassion or God's anger or God's love sounds different. Not better or worse, just different. And that's made me pay attention in new ways.

This month we celebrate the incarnation of God. Of course, at Christmas, we remember God coming in the baby boy in the manger. But the incarnation is more than that, too. The incarnation is how God comes among us in our world. In bread and wine. In the love of a friend. In your conscience poking you.

God is incarnate because we need God to be. It's hard to say exactly who God is, but we certainly can't imagine it. We're not good at imagining that which gives all things life, that which is pure love. So, because God's love is so strong, God comes to us in things we can see and hear and imagine and taste. These things don't box God in, they give us a glimpse of the un-glimpse-able. And the more glimpses, the more ways we can experience the incarnation of God, the richer our faith.



I don't know if I'll keep up with the different pronouns for God in our nightly reading. But I'm glad I did it for a bit. I'm glad Zora and I got to have another new image of God in our minds. And I pray God comes to you in unexpected and new ways this Advent, and beyond.

God bless,
Pastor Daniel



December 5 at 9:15

In-person and Live-streamed online.

Agenda:

- Opening Devotions
- Congregation Meeting Minutes (Approval)
- 2021 Operating Budget (Review)
- Church Planning Council Directors (Update)
- 2022 Operating Budget (Approval)
- Closing Prayer

Staff Christmas Gifts

Let's thank our hard-working staff with a monetary Christmas gift! 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, labeled "Staff gifts" to the church office. Make checks out to Donna Crump or John Hayes to minimize confusion between offerings and gifts. If you prefer to mail a check, you may send it to Donna Crump, 2311 Limerick Court, Colorado Springs CO 80921. You may also mail a check to John Hayes, 5190 Farmington Drive, Colorado Springs CO 80917.

Donna Crump, Council President



Pastor Daniel opened the meeting with a devotion.

- Russ Johnson reported a large jump in giving, possibly because October was a 5-week month. It made up for lower giving the previous month. Year to date, we are looking good.
- Our Stewardship Program ended with 102 Estimate of Giving cards returned.
- 2022 revenue is expected to remain flat but expenses are expected to increase.
- A 2022 budget was approved and will be presented at the December 5th congregational meeting.
- Approval was given to Property and Grounds to spend up to \$2,000 in gift funds to replace the outdoor patio tables.
- Council approved \$6,600 from our gift funds to make KPC Respite Center a safer place for children as they repair damage from the extensive flood.
- Pastor Dan closed the meeting in prayer.

What's Happening

- Please join us for a Congregation Meeting on December 5th in between services at 9:15. We will meet in-person in the sanctuary and an online version will also be offered.
- The Children's Christmas Program will be on December 12th at the 10:30 service.
- Our second annual Christkindl Fest will be held at Ascension on December 12th from 4:00-6:00 pm. Biggi's Little Bavaria food truck will be there with activities for children and enjoyment for adults. Please RSVP online at the church website.
- Download the ALC Mobile App to connect with others and provide encouragement this Advent season. Devotionals starts Sunday, November 28th and run through December 25th.
- There will be three Christmas Eve services this year: 4:00, 6:00, 8:00. The 4:00 and 6:00 services will be live-streamed as well.

Ascension's 2nd Annual Christkindl Fest

The second annual Ascension Christkindl Fest will be held Sunday December 12, 4-6pm, with a *stay for s'more* time (yum!) from 6-7pm. It's an evening of festivities, lights, warm fires and fun for all ages. Pretzels, treats, hot cocoa, gluhwein and Biggi's Little Bavaria Foodtruck will be onsite to ensure you won't go hungry. Childcare will be available, with fun activities for the kids (and kids at heart) to enjoy! Any donations will support Reclaiming Hope, an organization dedicated to journeying with survivors of sex trafficking to discover hope and recovery. Learn more on the RH website: www.reclaiming-hope.org. Please RSVP for Christkindl Fest at ascensioncos.org or scan the picture of the QR Code. The first 100 to RSVP will receive 'Kindl Cash', to be used at Biggi's Little Bavaria food truck during the event. We also are looking for a few volunteers to help with the event. Contact Deacon Mary Stoneback at m.stoneback@ascensioncos.org. Hope to see you there!



CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY TO...

**Jerry Dollar at the death of his mother, Maria Dollar.

Next SUP December 16

Practical Cybersecurity: The next SUP on December 16, 12-1pm will feature Dr. Bill Ayen discussing the current cybersecurity landscape and how we can take simple steps to protect our personal information. The Q&A format will allow for your questions to be answered. Bill has spent over 20 years studying and teaching cybersecurity related topics. He currently chairs the Risk Committee on the Ent Credit Union Board of Directors with responsibility that includes oversight of cybersecurity risk. Not able to join in person? Join via zoom at: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88205379808>. To help in planning for the time, it's helpful to let Karen Rubinow know you're coming at nodak@sidkar.com.

What is KPC Respite Center?

Driving to church each week, we pass the KPC Respite Center across the street on Holiday Lane. As a newcomer to Ascension, I saw the KPC sign and questioned, "What is KPC?" After hearing it mentioned a few times I wondered, "What is the connection with Ascension?" I learned the connection is strong and goes back to the Center's beginnings, nearly 20 years ago.

Ascension actually owns the property and leases it to Lutheran Family Services Rocky Mountains (LFSRM) for a dollar each year. LFSRM runs the Center providing temporary crisis and planned childcare for infants and young children at no cost to the parents or guardians. On a monthly basis, KPC sees an average of 55 children and provides anywhere from 500-800 hours of respite care. Most of the families utilizing the services live well below the federal poverty guidelines and have no other safe option for childcare.

For example, a pregnant mother of two young children called KPC in an overwhelmed state looking for child care so she could attend a medically necessary appointment. KPC registered the family and scheduled care on the same day the mom called looking for help. Without KPC, she would have missed her appointment.

As you've probably heard, the Center suffered extensive water damage in September. LFSRM continues to provide care in our church basement, Monday-Friday while their facility is repaired. Early in the repair process, we discovered asbestos in the drywall texturing and the joint taping. A professional asbestos abatement company removed over 5,000 square feet of drywall damaged by the water. A contractor will replace the drywall, repaint the entire house, and install new flooring. All of this is being paid for by our insurance company, less a \$2,500 deductible.

There has been minimal maintenance for functional and cosmetic purposes on this property over the years. Additionally, there are a number of licensing issues that need to be corrected to protect the children. Ascension wants to help. At its November meeting, the Congregation Planning Council voted to use \$6,000 of our gift funds to cover some of the immediate needs that will not be covered by insurance. Those needs include cordless window coverings, adding a gated area in the lower level so toddlers can safely play, child proof covers for baseboard radiators, and installing network cabling inside the open walls before new drywall is installed. The Property and Ground Board asked Bill Ayen to oversee our interests with this project. I am working with him to identify additional needs as the repairs continue.

We value our partnership with LFSRM. Together we shine light into darkness and create faithful community. If all goes as planned, KPC will be back in their facility early next year. Please keep the staff and their important mission in your prayers.

Donna Crump
CPC President

Christmas Gift Tags

This year we are partnering with *One Nation Walking Together* to provide presents for 50 children who live on reservations. **THANK YOU** to everyone who has taken a tag! The gift tags are now all taken. Please remember to return your gifts to the church by December 12th. They should be unwrapped and have the tag attached. If you don't have the tag, please put your name with it so that we can match it up to the right recipient. Please contact Aimee Calderon with any questions aimeebuesing@yahoo.com.

Poinsettia Time! Let's decorate the sanctuary

Please consider purchasing a poinsettia for the sanctuary during the Christmas season. The price for one poinsettia is \$15. There will be a sign-up sheet on the rotunda in the fellowship area to place your order. You may add "in memory" or "in honor" if you wish. You may also email me at Kittypawz@aol.com with your information. If paying with check please notate on check for poinsettia and make check out to church and place in offering plate outside the sanctuary. If paying with cash please notate your name on an envelope and state for poinsettia. The deadline to sign up is Monday, December 13th. Thank you!

Kathy Hayes

Available for Download Today, ALC Mobile!

ALC Mobile (for iOS and Android) will keep you connected and informed to what's going on at Ascension and provide encouragement for you in your faith. Download today and starting Sunday November 28 through December 25, follow along in daily spoken Advent reflections from community members and friends.

- Visit the App kiosk in the fellowship hall for more information on how to download or on your mobile device search for ALC Mobile and then download.
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Advent and Christmas Information from the Worship Board

Dear Friends,

Advent is upon us soon, and Christmas will soon be here! We will have several special events coming up - read on for more information.

1) Children's Christmas Program - The Children's Christmas Program will be presented at **only** the 10:30 service on December 12. This service will be livestreamed, so people who are not able to attend will be able to watch it online.

2) The Christmas Eve services will be at 4, 6, and 8 pm, as usual. Extra chairs will not be added to the sanctuary, in order to preserve safe distances for all. A plan is being discussed to provide livestream access from another room in the church -stay tuned for more details.

3) There will not be a service on December 25. There will only be one service, at 10:30, on Sunday, December 26.

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. 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 719-243-8978 or Njshatto@yahoo.com.

Thoughts from Our VP John Hayes

Do Not Be Anxious. I had the opportunity to attend church with my brother and sister-in-law in Duluth, MN last month. At their Adult Sunday School, they studied Matthew 6:25-34:

"Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was

not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."

After 20 months of living through the COVID pandemic, it is easy to get anxious about our world and what it's coming to. It's good for us to remember that we are God's creation and he will take care of us.

Ushers Needed

We are still looking for ushers for our services. If you are interested in becoming an usher for the early or late services, please contact John Hayes at blazehayes@aol.com or at (719) 572-1052. Training will be provided.

Ascension Online Directory

The Ascension online directory is a great resource tool that allows you to get to know our church family better! Go to instantchurchdirectory.com or go to the App Store, search for Instant Church Directory and download the free app to begin. You will use your email address listed in the directory to CREATE A LOGIN the first time you use the directory app. If you're not listed in the directory, OR if you have trouble logging into the app, please contact Dennis Bagenstos at dennisbagenstos@gmail.com. And if you haven't submitted a family or personal photo for the directory yet, you can email that to Dennis as well.

Funeral Committee News

I am updating the contact list for the funeral committee. Persons on the contact list receive an email asking for assistance when a funeral is scheduled. Then members can provide food, usually a salad or dessert, or help with set-up/clean-up or serving. If you are interested in helping with receptions or luncheons following a funeral here at Ascension, please contact me by email at lorada6255@live.com or by phone at 719.213.1983. I look forward in hearing from you!

Lorada Shrawder



Ascension Lutheran Church Endowment Fund

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!

Thanks and God's blessings to our recent contributions:

Carolyn Smith, birthday

Calling all worship servers. With in-person worship resuming, it is time to begin filling various server roles! If you have an interest in serving as a Lector, Cantor, Acolyte, Greeter, or helping with communion preparation before/after worship, please send an email to Ingrid Daniel at ildaniel@yahoo.com. Even if you have served in particular roles in the past, please still send Ingrid an email in order for us to have a complete roster of servers. https://docs.google.com/document/d/1UsvSih2vJiYOpR7I-EIQqC_Ww_i6ooKIaYG8uQi3-I/edit?usp=sharing

GET INVOLVED...

****Knotty Kneedlers:** The knitting group has closed down for now. We will be watching for any interest in the future. If you know of anyone in need of a prayer shawl, please let one of the Pastors know!

****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.

****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** – 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 because 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 program. *Thank you for your continued support.*

****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.

Bridge Group

Our Bridge Group will meet on a **TBD date in December starting at 5:30PM**. Please let John or Kathy Hayes know if you plan to play that night. Feel free to contact them at (719) 572-1052 or at kittypawz@aol.com if you have any questions about this group. If you'd like to learn how to play bridge, Charles Lewis would be happy to give you bridge lessons.



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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 – Ruth Albrent-Runnells

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)

t.adams@ascensioncos.org (Teresa Adams)

clc@ascensioncos.org (CLC)

ts.trinko@gmail.com (newsletter articles)

Our Website: www.ascensioncos.org

January newsletter deadline: Dec. 26

*In Our Thoughts
& Prayers*

Larry Adams (Husband of Teresa, CLC Director), Beth Ayen (Daughter-in-law of Darcy & Bill Ayen), Mary Ann Bond, Allen Brooks, Brad Buhler, Sonny Campbell, Michael Foret, Andrea Gallant (sister of Gabrielle Brown), Elaine Glover, Bev Godec, Steve Hast (friend of Oltrogges), Stewart Hellem, Jean Hinck, Joshua Kaiser (friend of John Hayes), Pam Landry, Gary McKee, Michael Noble Jr. (friend of the Trents), Kim Parker (ALC Quilter), John Plump (friend of Kemmlings), Carlos Quiles (friend of Ron Mohler), Cerne Rieves (ALC Quilter), Rick Rogers, Jeff Sebben, Cassie Shaffer, Cathy Stanley (sister-in-law of Marilyn Gulliksen), Carol Thompson, Wanda Wade (friend of Kagarise), Dee Yocum, and all of our men and women serving overseas, especially Anthony Calderon & Ben Hayes.