



Ascension In Action

Ascension Lutheran Church

July 2023

The Vote was 38 to 21

At our congregational meeting at the end of June, the congregation was asked to support a spending plan for money we received from a government pandemic aid program called the Employee Retention Credit (ERC). It is money given to businesses who kept on employees when their income was down. Our lowered income and keeping employees was a part of the reason we struggled with our 2023 budget. When we applied for the ERC program, we were making tough budget choices and were thinking we might get around \$10,000. In April when we were informed that we would receive around \$125,000, we were taken aback.

What to do? Our leadership began by looking at our financials. Because of your generous response to our special appeal, we had restored rostered salaries near to our guideline levels. Our reserves were near to our guideline levels. Giving was a bit above what we expected. Because we were in a good financial place, the Council came up with a spending plan to use the money in a missional way. We recommended that we give away \$100,000 through social outreach, give \$10,000 to support our Children's Learning Center in its mission and give \$10,000 to support our local outreach like Faith and Art Camp. We then would put the remainder (\$4-5,000) into our capital replacement fund.

The vote was 38-21 in supporting that spending. That is an unusually close vote for us. Votes are often unanimous. The main reason for the disagreement was that some wanted money to support future salaries or bonuses for staff. I supported the spending plan for three reasons. First, I have concerns with our government spending in this way and would prefer to pass it on to do some good. Second, I believe that it is best to operate based on our ongoing giving. It brings us to trust Jesus who counseled his disciples not to take an extra coat or staff on their mission. It left them to trust others (God) for ongoing support. Third, I like being a part of God's good support for those in need. We are going to do some powerful good.



My thanks to everyone who participated in this discerning and especially to those of you who stood up to disagree. If you feel strongly that we got this one wrong and would like us to shift, prayerfully consider being in leadership here. That is where you will have the most impact. We will have an election in one year.

Pr. Dan

CHURCH COUNCIL/ EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Our Council had a Planning Retreat on June 13th to discuss our plans for the next year and areas we'd like to focus on. We also proposed a spend plan for the Employee Retention Credit (ERC) money our church will be receiving from the federal government in the next year.

On June 25th, we held a Congregational Meeting where we **approved adding Donna Crump to the Lay Ministry Team** and approved a motion for spending the ERC money that we'll be receiving. **The Congregation approved spending \$100,000 of the \$125,000 we expect to receive on programs to be recommended by the Social Outreach Team and approved by the Council. The Congregation also approved setting aside \$10,000 for future Children Learning Center (CLC) projects, \$10,000 for local Community Outreach programs such as Faith in Art Camps, Christkindl Fests, and Neighborhood Mailings, and \$5,000 to put into the Capital Replacement Fund.** There was a healthy discussion on whether some of the funds should be set aside to move the Rostered Staff salaries closer to the Rocky Mountain Synod-approved salary guidelines. That proposal was voted down in a vote of 38-17.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Faith in Art Camp was held at Ascension from June 19-23. About 60 children from Ascension, the Children's Learning Center, and the local community participated in this camp. Three staff members from Rainbow Trails helped lead some of the activities. A huge THANK YOU goes out to Deacon Mary for her overall leadership of this effort and to the tremendous number of volunteers who helped make this program a giant success. I helped on Thursday evening, and it was so gratifying to watch the children show their parents the art projects they created and the skills they learned. In addition, it is great to see the number of people attending our single service each Sunday this summer. Our numbers are up about 20% from last year! **As we enjoy the summer and all its activities, please be safe.**

CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY TO...

****Ferne Dillow & family at the death of her husband Bob Dillow.**

****Sherry Seever & family at the death of her uncle Wayne Stroud.**

Dining Out!

This month's Dining Out is set for July 21 at 6:00. Ron and Deb Mohler are hosting at The Old Spaghetti Factory, 3101 New Center Point. RSVP to the Mohlers by July 14th (the week before) at Mohlerd57@gmail.com.

Sub Sandwich Sunday Congregational Picnic



Mark your calendars for Sunday, August 27, for a gathering with food and fun after the Sunday service. Save the date now, watch for more information in August, and say this quickly three times: Sub Sandwich Sunday after the single Sunday service!

We are now accepting items for the garage sale. Please bring items and place in the downstairs



classroom marked with a garage sale sign. Please NO large items, furniture, chemicals, blinds, TVs, computers, etc., that Goodwill won't accept. We will accept items through July 12th in preparation for the garage sale on July 14th and 15th from 8am to 2:00pm. Please contact Kirsten Johnson at (719)440- 5896 with any questions.



Rainbow Trail Lutheran Camp - Creating Lifetime Memories.

Thinking of an experience your kids, grandkids or any kid will not out live, RTALC is an excellent choice. Scholarships for all ages are available, so don't wait, RTALC Summer Camp is filling up fast! RTALC offers opportunities to experience camp whether you're entering the 2nd grade or are an adult. In addition, most of your commonly asked questions can be answered! Please see our display or contact Michele Haufe – gato_haufe@msn.com / Ron Cornell – roncornell1@comcast.net or by phone, ALC office, Ruth, 719-634-1694.

Older Adults, yes us old people, are you interested in a fall retreat 2023? Contact Ron Cornell!

Bridge Group

Our Bridge Group will meet on **July 15th 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.

BECOME INVOLVED...

****Ruth Circle:** All ladies of Ascension are invited to join us on the 2nd Thursday of each month (Beginning again in August) at 9:30am in the Fellowship Hall, for fellowship and casual Bible Study. If you are new to Ascension, we invite you to join us. Please contact Nancy Shatto for any questions at 719-243-8978 or Njshatto@yahoo.com.

****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! Or if you are interested in starting up this Fall, contact Darcy Ayen, 719-351-0776, or dkdayen@gmail.com.

****Flower Chart** – The 2023 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@ascensioncos.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 Gardens Healthcare Center for about 35 years. Herb Bagenstos started this out-reach program and then Bev Godec took it over from him. John Hayes took it over from Bev in 2015. This program is supported by a small group of hardy volunteers. 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. Prizes include gently used men's clothing (sizes Large and higher), women's clothing (large and Plus sizes), sweatpants and tops (large sizes), hygiene products (body washes, lotions, toothpaste, shampoo, etc), playing cards, some small containers of ladies' perfumes, adult coloring books/crayons, and lady's jewelry. If you would like to contribute gifts, please mark items as "Bingo Prizes" and place them in the Terrace Garden Bingo box located in the cupboard 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.



SMALL GROUP MINISTRIES QUARTERLY UPDATE

All are welcome; come join in the fellowship!

If you'd like to join a group, please reach out to the group's contact person to get the most up to date information on when/how/if the group is meeting.

If you are considering starting a NEW group, please contact Aimee Calderon (aimeebuesing@yahoo.com).

DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

Centering Prayer Group

Discussions on theology and practice of centering prayer and centering silence together.

Meets: 1st & 3rd Monday at church 7:00 pm.

Contact: Pastor Dan Holt, 719-634-1694 or d.holt@ascensioncos.org

Ruth Circle

All ladies of Ascension are invited to join us for fellowship and casual Bible Study. We are starting a discussion of "Just like Jesus" by Max Lucado. If you are new Ascension or just looking for a casual Bible Study group, we hope you will come and join us!

Meets: 2nd Thursday at 9:30 am in Fellowship Hall.

Contact: Nancy Shatto, 719-243-8978 or njshatto@yahoo.com

Scripture Roundtable

One of the Pastors leads study on Bible or religious topics chosen by group, or scripture for the week.

Meets: Tuesday morning at church 10:30 am.

Contact: Pastors Dan or Daniel, 719-634-1694 or office@ascensioncos.org

Men's Bible Study

Pastor Dan is leading a Men's Bible study that will focus on understanding the scripture and allowing time to discuss its implication.

Meets: 2nd Monday at church 7:00 pm.

Contact: Pastor Dan Holt, 719-634-1694 or d.holt@ascensioncos.org

FELLOWSHIP GROUPS

Bridge

Come play bridge once a month with others who love this card game!

Meets: monthly Saturday night at the church. Actual dates in church bulletin.

Contact: John & Kathy Hayes, 719-572-1052 or kittypawz@aol.com

Dining Out

Group participants take turns selecting the date, time, and restaurant each month. The hosts then make reservations for all those who are able to attend.

Meets: Monthly on Thursday or Friday nights. Call to add your name to the email list. Actual dates in church bulletin and by email.

Contact: Rich & Judi Johnson, 719-360-5319, or jrajohnson@aol.com

Men's Breakfast

Get together with other men for fellowship over breakfast.

Meets: Thursdays at 8:00 am at Wooglin's Deli, 4750 Barnes Rd. (corner of Barnes & Oro Blanco).

Contact: Rich Johnson, 719-360-3411 or jrajohnson@aol.com

Faith Seeking Understanding

Ascension's book and podcast club. We read a variety of books and listen to podcasts in order to have the civil conversations so lacking in our world. Topics have included race-relations, immigration, faith and homosexuality, and criminal justice. Fiction, non-fiction, and maybe even a dabble into poetry! The discussions are friendly, honest, and open to anyone.

Meets: 4th Monday of the month at 7:30 at church and via zoom. Contact Pastor Daniel to learn about the next book and podcast we're discussing or to be put on the group's email list.

Contact: Pastor Daniel, 719-634-1694, or d.smith@ascensioncos.org

Walking Group

Walks at various venues. Some of our favorite places are Nancy Lewis Park, Old Colorado City, Manitou Springs, and our neighborhoods (one has a coffee shop en route!)"

Meets: Tuesday & Thursday mornings, outside when weather permits and in Chapel Hills Mall when it doesn't. Please call to confirm special times & locations.

Contact: Wini Klein, 719-636-1232 or wklein636@msn.com

SERVICE & SUPPORT GROUPS

Quilts for New Beginnings

If you show up, we'll find something for you to do - no matter your skill level. If you would like to help from the comfort of your own home, *kits are available to take home*. We provide quilts for Family Promise, ONWT, Bakhita Mountain Home, Special Kids Special Families, Habitat for Humanity, and world relief (through Mennonite Central Committee and Lutheran World Relief).

Meets: Wednesdays 9 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., at the church.

Contact: Anita Arends, 719-651-3470 or Barb Daugherty, 719-264-1630 or bdkm@pcisys.net

Terrace Gardens Bingo

Have fun helping nursing home residents play Bingo and win prizes.

Meets: Terrace Gardens monthly, 3rd Wednesdays from 9:45-11:15 am

Contact: John & Kathy Hayes, 719-572-1052 or blazehayes@aol.com.

SEASONAL GROUPS

Camping

Bring your RV, motor home, pull behind trailer or tent and join other folks who enjoy the great outdoors for fellowship and fun! We will share calendar dates and great camping sites with one another via email.

Meets: During the late spring and summer months at different times and locations based on interest.

Contact: Donna or Scott Crump, 719-622-0927 or dannec664@aol.com (please contact Donna or Scott if you would be willing to help plan the trips)

Biking, Holy Pedalers

Rides are scheduled most weekends. Group members can sign up to schedule and lead rides. Bike riding is mostly on trails, with some lightly traveled roads. Most rides include a stop for breakfast or lunch in support of fellowship.

Meets: Weekly, April – October, weather permitting. Most rides are on Saturdays. Time & location by email and on the Ascension Holy Pedalers' Facebook page.

Contact: Aimee Calderon, 720-318-7479 or aimeebuesing@yahoo.com



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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/ Organist – Scott Christiansen
Choir 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
August newsletter deadline: July 24



Mary Ann Bond, Allen Brooks (Foster son of Darcy & Tom Johnson), Brad Buhler, Michael Foret, Jen Gabrius (friend of Elisa Thompson), Elaine Glover, Eileen Hedstrom, Stewart Hellem, Cheri Hughes, Bob Kelly, Pam Landry, Carol Passon, Cerne Rieves (ALC Quilter), Fran Schumacher (friend of Ron Mohler), Jeff Sebben, Cassie Shaffer (friend of Trents), Warren Slagle, Merrill Sorenson (Uncle of Deb Asiano), Cathy Stanley (sister-in-law of Marilyn Gulliksen), Bruce Thompson (Brother of Sandy Trent), Carol Thompson, Marilyn Thompson (Mother of Jon Thompson), and all of our men and women serving overseas, especially Anthony Calderon.