

# Ascension Lutheran Church

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# Ascension Storey



Evangelical Lutheran  
Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

**Ascension Lutheran Church**

Cheyenne, Wyoming

ascensioncheyenne.org

March 2018

## We scored But we aren't done

To mark Super Bowl Sunday, Ascension's youth smashed last year's drive by raising 209 cans, compared to 2017's 152. The soup will go into the church's Little Free Pantry.

Now during Lent, the Social Concerns Committee has picked up the drive with a reverse offering. A basket in the narthex is available for people to continue to pick up ideas of items to add to the pantry's stock. Collections will be taken through Palm Sunday.

During the Lenten soup suppers, the committee will use ELCA World Hunger placemats, which have interesting facts and figures on one side and devotion/service learning on the other side. "Please take one with you to have at home," said Chairman Kari Chandler. "It's a great opportunity for better understanding of hunger in our world."

During March, the Social Concerns Committee will give to COMEA, Family Promise, Wyoming Family Home Ownership Program, Little Pantry, Safehouse and Climb Wyoming.

**Emma Morris, left, and Seneva Sullivan proudly show off the 209 cans raised.** (N. Morris photo)



## Church Council Meeting Highlights

### February 8

#### Treasurer's report

- Although January **offerings** were low, February is off to a good start, with offerings down only \$2,232.82 year to date.
- The Endowment Committee has transferred **\$10,000 to the intern fund** in the operating budget. It was agreed the internal audit committee will be asked to provide a date for an **internal audit** by February 28.

#### Committee reports

- The council approved a request by Chris Muggenburg and Nichole Morris to have Sky Ranch lead Ascension's **Vacation Bible School** this summer. They said the cost to bring in four staff members would be \$1,800, and the congregation would be asked to host them and provide meals. However, the council thought the total costs would be nearer to \$2,500, and the congregation could donate additional funds directly to VBS. Volunteers would still be required for the supervision of older children and the teaching of preschool-aged children, but the majority of the responsibility would fall to the camp staff.

- Insufficient attendance at the February **Endowment Committee** meeting prevented the group from voting on dispersals. The next meeting is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 10, at the church.
- The Evangelism Committee is looking into low-cost **community outreach opportunities** such as a water station at upcoming races (5K etc.) in Cheyenne. A member of the congregation has volunteered to maintain Ascension's Facebook page.
- Two **Eagle Scout projects** from Ascension's scout troop were approved. One scout will repaint the lower fellowship hall, and the other will repair and refinish the outdoor benches.

#### Old business

- As of February 8, 204 sets of **offering envelopes** have not been picked up. A plan is in the works to ensure envelopes are ordered next year only for members who want them.
- Ascension is entitled to 0.014 percent of 11 percent of the **royalties** on a property in Weld County, Colorado, and will receive money if oil drilling proceeds.

*Next meeting • March 8 • 7 p.m.*

## Our Lenten Journey

#### Midweek Healing Service

Wednesday, **March 7** • St. Paul's  
12:15 p.m.

#### Lenten Service

Wednesday, **March 7** • Christ  
6 p.m. • *Soup Supper*  
7 p.m. • *Service*  
"Poor and Oppressed"

#### Midweek Healing Service

Wednesday, **March 14** • St. Paul's  
12:15 p.m.

#### Lenten Service

Wednesday, **March 14** • Ascension  
6 p.m. • *Soup Supper*  
7 p.m. • *Service*  
"Creation"

#### Midweek Healing Service

Wednesday, **March 21** • St. Paul's  
12:15 p.m.

#### Lenten Service

Wednesday, **March 21** • Ascension  
6 p.m. • *Soup Supper*  
7 p.m. • *Service*  
"Parishes and Saints"

#### Maundy Thursday Service

Thursday, **March 29** • Ascension  
7 p.m. • *Service*

#### Good Friday Service

Friday, **March 30** • Ascension  
Noon • *Service*  
7 p.m. • *Service*

#### Easter Vigil Service

Saturday, **March 31** • Ascension  
9 p.m. • *Service*

#### Easter Day Services

Sunday, **April 1** • Ascension  
8 a.m. • *Service*  
7-10:30 a.m. • *Breakfast*  
10:30 a.m. • *Service*

The local ELCA churches will combine to provide some worship and fellowship. The Wednesday evening services will utilize the Holden Village's "Prayer around the cross," called one of "timeless beauty and quiet dignity."

Those attending the daytime services may bring a brown bag lunch (coffee/water to be provided) and should be finished eating before the 12:15 p.m. service, lasting 20-30 minutes.

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Rev. Wesley Aardahl

**Vicar**

Katelin Bingner

**Secretary**

Cheryl Collins

**Saturday Music**

**Coordinator**

Mark Christie

**Adult Choir Director**

Dr. Jane Iverson

**Organists**

Dr. Jane Iverson

and Gaela Young

**Newsletter Editor**

Rosalind Schliske

**Church Council**

**President**

Tim Leberman

**Vice president**

Doug Cook

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Katie Wisdom

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Mike Bell

Yessica Cordova

Erin Edwards

Dr. Frank Mellblom

Ryan Mitchell

Carolyn Rude

If your address, phone number or email address has changed, call the church office or email ascensioncheyenne@gmail.com.

**Ascension Lutheran Church seeks to be a community that nourishes relationships with God and one another that lead to a deeper spiritual life, based on a grace-oriented Lutheran perspective.**

**March 30 Newsletter Deadline**

# VICAR'S VIEW Prayer: a gift, but an act, too

*Merciful God, we thank you for [our] sisters and brothers, whom you have made your own by water and the Word in baptism. You have called them to yourself, enlightened them with the gifts of your Spirit, and nourished them in the community of faith. Uphold your servants in the gifts and promises of baptism, and unite the hearts of all whom you have brought to new birth. We ask this in the name of Christ. Amen.*  
(Rite of Affirmation of Baptism, ELW, Page 234)

A couple of years ago, I received a birthday/Christmas gift from a college friend, one who has a knack for thoughtful gifts. He gave me an English translation of a classic spiritual work from Russia called "The Way of a Pilgrim," with its lesser-known second volume, "The Pilgrim Continues his Way."

The central concern of both is the search by one man, a widower, to better understand the words of St. Paul in 1 Thessalonians 5:17, "Pray constantly...." In his journey across the Russian countryside, he meets scores of people, many of whom, through their guidance, generosity and kindness, become dear teachers and examples in living a life that is one of constant prayer across all endeavors of work, rest and family life.

The eponymous Pilgrim himself has much to teach us in this season of Lent, as we journey

together to the cross. Perhaps the most prescient and pertinent are these: (1) Prayer is an act, lived, animating; and (2) Prayer is a gift (and one we are to use!) for the whole Church of God in Christ; it is not isolated.

The pilgrim finds his greatest help in the teaching of an old monk who becomes his "spiritual father" and teaches him the Jesus Prayer ("Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me."). He finds this little prayer, through the gentle guidance of his teacher, avails him in all things—it is a prayer he can say as he works, as he walks, as he falls asleep, and as he awakes. Martin Luther himself found great comfort and help in the Lord's Prayer and in the prayer of the father in Mark 9:24 ("I believe, Lord; help my unbelief!"). Many others find solace in times of anger or suffering in the words of St. Paul in Romans 8, "Likewise, the Spirit helps us in our weakness...the Spirit intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words."

Luther is popularly quoted as saying, "Faith is a living, busy, active, mighty thing...." God's work in us; our prayer is a fruit of that, lest we relegate prayer to self-serving babble, lifeless words rendered moot without action. As the church, we need to take care not to allow prayer, this great comfort and aid, to become half of a platitude spouted when we know not what else to say. Our prayers are, ultimately, united with those of Christ himself, who, in his

earthly ministry, prayed often, even giving to his disciples a means to pray in the words of the Lord's Prayer.

What a happy circumstance, in this season, we have renewed and ample opportunities to come together in prayer: at the midweek prayer around the cross evening services with our brothers and sisters from St. Paul's and Christ Lutheran, where the topics of the homilies throughout Lent are the prayers of the church within our Sunday services; in the services of Holy Week; in the Bible studies, adult forums, Sunday school classes all; in the reverse offering for the Little Free Pantry; in the weekly soup suppers and times for fellowship—and ecumenically as well in the likes of the monthly Taizé service at St. Mark's Episcopal or in the Lenten staple of stations of the cross each Friday at St. Mary's Cathedral.

That same friend of mine who gave me that book? This year, he sent a "spiritual gift of prayers," enrolling my name in the prayer concerns of the Discalced Carmelite nuns of Iron Mountain, Michigan, for the whole year.

May we have the grace to use these lessons and gifts—of the gift of new life in our baptism, of the communion of saints in the whole catholic church and of our prayer itself—frequently and well in the days and weeks ahead.

**Yours in Christ,  
Vicar Katelin**

## Governance Congregational meeting

At Ascension Lutheran Church's annual meeting on January 28, the congregation voted not to approve the Church Council's recommendation to pay \$12,000–\$15,000 for an external full **audit**. Congregational member Scott Meier, an attorney and CPA, argued spending 5 percent of the operating budget "was not money well spent," calling it an "enormous cost for this congregation." Instead, the audit committee will make an internal review and report.

A proposal to remodel the **kitchen** was tabled. Cost for a residential-quality kitchen was estimated at \$43,200; for a commercial quality at \$88,600. The congregation expressed concern about a commercial kitchen, citing the perceived need; the possible requirement of a sprinkler system not included in the estimate; and a possible insurance increase. Only \$22,000 is on hand for the project.

A 2018 operating **budget** of \$316,556 was approved, an increase over the 2017 budget of \$324,286 and \$307,867 actually spent.

## Church Council retreat

Ascension Church Council, which met February 17 at the church for a retreat, welcomed four new members: Yessica Cordova, Erin Edwards, Carolyn Rude and Mike Bell. The council members leaving the board and being thanked for their many contributions were Sherri Geringer, Kim Strand, Karen Meister-Emerich, Jerry Zang, Connie Dambro and Kent Porter.

According to Tim Leberman, president, key highlights of the retreat were as follows:

- **Healthy Start:** The final Healthy Start meeting to be coordinated by Pastor Randy Pabst will be Thursday, March 15.
- **Council Size:** For the 2018 calendar year, the council decided to reduce the size of the council from 12 to 10 members. In November, the council will revisit the impact of this change to determine whether additional changes to the council size are warranted.
- **Kitchen Task Force:** A kitchen task force has been established, and interested individuals are welcome to sign up to participate. The purpose of the task force is to evaluate and analyze the multiple

options available for the kitchen remodeling. The task force will also obtain appropriate municipal and design expertise in the process.

- **Building Improvement Survey:** The initial number of building improvement surveys returned was fewer than expected. Because more input is needed, surveys will be made available in the narthex, and additional information will be provided online.
- **Liaisons:** Because the council recognizes the need to enhance Ascension's communications, council members will be introduced to the congregation at all services on the first weekend in March. Additionally, each council member will become a liaison to select committee chairpersons. The council member will discuss the needs, goals and achievements of those committees and coordinate their observations with the council.

Tim asked the congregation to watch Ascension's worship bulletins, newsletters and electronic communications for updated information and to contact any council member with issues, observations or questions.

## News

### Family Promise training to be offered

A training session for those who have never volunteered for Family Promise but would like to will be held from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, March 10, at the Unitarian Universality Church, 3005 Thomes Ave. Light refreshments will be provided. If interested, call Lori or David at 772-8770 or email fpcasemanager@hotmail.com. Although Ascension volunteers are filling up the needed slots for the March 11–18 Family Promise rotation, a few vacant slots are available. Watch for the sign-up board at the church.

### WELCA Bible study to meet March 20

The Women of the ECLA (WELCA) will meet at 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday, March 20, in the upper fellowship hall. The Bible study is a continuation from the March issue of *Gather* magazine titled "Multiple meanings: learning from other interpretations," by Mark Allan Powell, session three, from Luke 10:30–37, The Good Samaritan. Copies of the study are available in the church office. For questions or more information, contact Shirley Toppenberg at 634-4946.

### COMEA volunteers needed for March

Volunteers from the congregation are needed for the next COMEA meal preparation on Sunday, March 25. Also mark your calendar for the next date, Sunday, April 29. Six to eight cooks/servers are needed each month to prepare and serve the dinner. Food preparation starts at 2 p.m. and continues until 5:20 when the dinner is placed in vehicles for transport to COMEA. Serving takes place from 6–7 p.m., then back to the church to finish cleanup and unload utensils. A sign-up sheet is available in the narthex. For information, contact RC Reiman.

## Youth activities

### Youth to paint at Flydragon Art Studio

**March 5 is the deadline** for reserving a place for an afternoon of glass painting at Flydragon Art Studio from 1:30–3:30 p.m. on Sunday, March 11. The cost is \$10 for youth group members. Friends and parents are welcome for a cost of \$25. Snacks and bottled water will be provided. When you RSVP to Chris Muggenburg or Nichole Morris, you will select your three pattern choices. Youth should watch their email for additional details and glass design options. Participants should meet at the studio, 600 W. 17th St.

### Youth to host two March soup suppers

The youth will host the Soup Suppers on Wednesday, March 14 and March 21, at Ascension, so volunteers are needed. Setup will start at 4:45 p.m.; soup will be served at 6 p.m. followed by Lenten worship at 7 p.m. These are work events with earnings going into each youth's account. Text or email Nichole Morris at ascensionyouthcheyenne@gmail.com or 719-321-7038 if you can help with setup, serving or cleanup.

### Call out for Easter breakfast volunteers

**Easter breakfast setup:** Setup by Ascension's youth will be on Saturday, March 31, as a youth account work activity. Watch email/text alerts for the time.

**Easter breakfast:** The youth group will host breakfast on Easter Sunday from 7–10:30 a.m. Volunteers are needed to serve, reset tables and help with cleanup. If you are available to help, even for a little while, we are happy to have you. Any members of the congregation who would like to help are also welcome. Contact Nichole at 719-321-7038 or ascensionyouthcheyenne@gmail.com to let her know how or when you can help.