

# Ascension Lutheran Church

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Cheyenne, WY 82009

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# Ascension Storey



Evangelical Lutheran  
Church in America  
God's work. Our hands.

**Ascension Lutheran Church**

Cheyenne, Wyoming

ascensioncheyenne.org

November 2018

## PASTOR'S PIECE 'How delightful'

Last night, Rebecca and I drove to a nearby movie theatre to see "Free Solo," a documentary about American rock climber Alex Honnold. "Free solo" is a term for climbing without the "gear" (harness, rope, pulleys and anchoring devices) that most climbers employ to prevent themselves from falling to their deaths. Free solo climbers carry little more than a bag of chalk to keep their fingers from getting moist.

Alex Honnold has taken free soloing to a realm that's left even his fellow climbers slack-jawed. In 2017, he free soloed the 3,000-foot granite face of Yosemite's El Capitan in less than four hours. It's difficult to comprehend Honnold's preparation, physical ability, concentration and fearlessness.

At times, he relied upon the slightest of depressions for a handhold.

It is hard to look at still photos of Honnold climbing, let alone to watch video footage. In fact, one of the veteran cameramen who helped document the ascent frequently looked away from his viewfinder for fear he would have to witness Honnold's fall.

**Thanksgiving provides opportunities for uttering unexpected words of delight.**

The intent of this little review is not to encourage you to see the movie. You might well judge Alex Honnold's efforts amount only to a foolish daredevilry.

But what I loved about "Free Solo," the thing I could never have anticipated, was Honnold's behavior upon reaching the top of El Capitan. There was no fist-pumping or raising of index finger skyward or other gestures of victory or conquest. Instead, Honnold walked around for some time and sat down for a moment or two, smiled from ear to ear all the while, and intoned the words: "How delightful... how delightful...how delightful."

It takes some openness to receive the fruit of one's labors with pleasure, a little clearing of time and space within. The month of Thanksgiving surely provides opportunities for such clearing and receiving and opportunities for uttering unexpected words of delight.

**Pastor Wes**

## Church Council Meeting Highlights

### October 11

#### Treasurer's report

- September offerings came in below last year's, and total year to date **offerings are down** as well (\$220,589.79 compared to \$204,836.58 last year). Later, the treasurer reported that prior to the last week in October, offerings were \$21,417 compared to \$23,962 last year. The total offerings in October last year were \$32,287, and total yearly offerings were \$242,741 last year compared to \$226,254 this year, showing a YTD decrease of \$16,487.

#### Pastor's report

- In the last month, pastor did home communion visits, led the adult forum "Who do you say that I am?" and continued to work to increase Interfaith Council participation. Confirmation is going well; the Thanksgiving Eve service will be at St. Paul's this year, and the choir from Grand View University, an ELCA-affiliated institution, from Des Moines, Iowa, will visit Ascension in March.

#### Committee reports

- The **Building and Grounds Committee** reported Craig Anderson is working on an inventory of the paraments for our insurance policy, and the

northeast door closure is being repaired soon.

- The **Endowment Committee** plans to discuss funds dispersal at its next meeting October 16.
- The **Safety Committee** met to discuss funding and timelines.
- The **Worship Committee** met to discuss its needs for the 2019 budget.

#### New business

- Members of all three Cheyenne ELCA congregations will attend a "**Claiming our Gifts**" presentation with Bishop Jim Gonia on October 12 at Christ Lutheran Church.

#### Old business

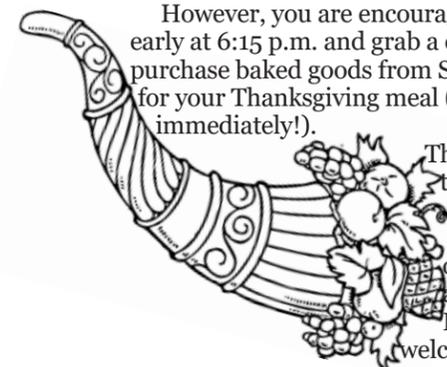
- Doug Cook will proceed with obtaining background checks for Sunday school teachers. Our insurance company recommended **full FBI checks**, so we will proceed with those through the Wyoming Division of Criminal Investigation.
- All **budget requests** from committees have been received, and the budget committee will convene soon to put together a preliminary budget.

*Next meeting • November 8 • 7 p.m.*

## St. Paul's to host Thanksgiving Eve

A joint Thanksgiving Eve service with all three Cheyenne ELCA congregations will be held at 7 p.m. Wednesday, November 21, at St. Paul's Lutheran Church.

However, you are encouraged to arrive early at 6:15 p.m. and grab a cup of coffee and purchase baked goods from St. Paul's youth for your Thanksgiving meal (or to enjoy immediately!).



This is a fund-raiser to revamp the youth room off the kitchen, and a variety of goods will be available for purchase. Donations are also welcome.

**ADVENT CALENDAR**

The schedule for the combined Wednesday Advent services are as follows: **December 5** at *Christ*; **December 12** at *Ascension*; and **December 19** at *St. Paul's*. A meal will begin at 6 p.m. with the service at 7 p.m.

### Fall adult forums

#### "But Who Do You Say That I Am?"

This fall, Pastor Wes is leading a series of adult forums that explore the person and work of Jesus Christ. The New Testament itself offers many angles on Jesus, and many perspectives have been offered by Christian thinkers and schools of thought throughout the centuries. The goal of this forum is to equip participants with a richer range of ways to relate to Jesus Christ in their lives of faith.

We carry different life experiences with us, so which depictions of Jesus speak to us more effectively? How have you thought about Jesus Christ up to now? How might your thinking be different going forward?

Take advantage of this opportunity. Everyone is welcome at any point throughout the fall after Sunday worship in the upper fellowship room.

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#### Staff

*Pastor*  
Rev. Wesley Aardahl

*Secretary*  
Cheryl Collins

*Adult Choir Director*

Dr. Jane Iverson

*Organists*

Dr. Jane Iverson  
and Gaela Young

*Newsletter Editor*

Rosalind Schliske

#### Church Council

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Tim Leberman

*Vice President*

Doug Cook

*Secretary*

Katie Wisdom

*Treasurer*

Patti Riesland

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Yessica Cordova

Erin Edwards

Dr. Frank Mellblom

Ryan Mitchell

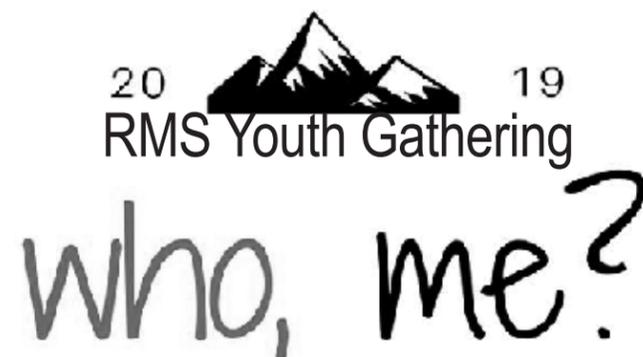
Carolyn Rude

*If your address, phone number or email address has changed, call the church office or email [ascensioncheyenne@gmail.com](mailto: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.**

*Nov. 30 Newsletter Deadline*

## Youth activities



January 19–21 • YMCA of the Rockies, Estes Park

**Wednesday, November 28**, is the deadline to register for January's Rocky Mountain Synod Youth Gathering, which will focus on each participant as a uniquely created child of God called to live out baptismal promises in unique and various ways.

Starting with dinner at 5 p.m. on Friday, January 19, and ending at 11 a.m. on January 21, the event will look at themes of spiritual gifts, vocation, community and service as the youth gather and are then sent to boldly share the love of God in the world. Gathering scriptures will be Psalm 139: 13–14; Ephesians 4: 1–2; Romans 12: 1–7 and Matthew 22: 36–40.

The YMCA of the Rockies in Estes Park, Colorado, will also let the youth explore creation and relaxation in the mountains as they enjoy fellowship with middle and high school students from all parts of the Rocky Mountain Synod. While all students will gather for some large group worship time, separate tracks for middle and high school students will allow each group to participate in age-appropriate conversation and activity-based learning.

Those interested should contact Ascension youth group leader Nichole Morris at 719-321-7038 or [ascensionyouthcheyenne@gmail.com](mailto:ascensionyouthcheyenne@gmail.com). Cost is \$180 a person; however, Nichole said some funds are availability to offset the cost.

### Tree decorating set December 1

The youth group will set up the church Christmas tree and hang the Christmas wreaths at 10 a.m. on Saturday, December 1.

This is a paid work event; youth group members who help will earn money for their youth accounts to help pay for youth group activities.

Lunch will be provided.

### Youth needed for Birthday Party

Youth volunteers are also needed for the Birthday Party for Jesus, hosted by Jo Hobbs. The party will be from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, December 1. Any youth group members interested in helping should contact Nichole Morris at 719-321-7038 or [ascensionyouthcheyenne@gmail.com](mailto:ascensionyouthcheyenne@gmail.com) or Jo Hobbs at 630-0226.

This is considered a work activity for youth group members. It will be at the same time that the youth group is setting up the Christmas tree. Youth can split their time between the two events and help with both or help where they want the most.

Lunch will be provided.



### Advent Retreat

## Families to prepare together

Guests of all ages are invited to join in the 2018 Advent Retreat at Sky Ranch Lutheran Camp in Colorado. Participants are invited to take advantage of this important season and grow closer to God with their family through reflection, fellowship, activities and music. Begin this Advent at Sky Ranch in a time of reflection and preparation for the birth of our Savior.

The retreat will be held **November 30–December 2**. The cost is \$80 for an adults; \$50 for a child with a maximum of \$250 for a family.

For questions, call the Sky Ranch office at 970-493-5258. To register, go to [www.skyranchcolorado.org/advent-retreat](http://www.skyranchcolorado.org/advent-retreat).

## Summer camp provides lifetime of great memories

This past summer Ascension sent 10 youth (third-grade and older) and two younger children (first-grade to third-grade) to Sky Ranch Lutheran Camp in Colorado, and they returned with enthusiasm and a lifetime of memories.

"For the last 20-plus years the youth group has divided its earnings between three funds: camp (one-fourth); gathering (one-half), and activities (one-fourth)," RC Reiman explained. "It is from the camp fund that these youth are helped in getting to camp. The youth group leaders have been trying for years to get our youth to go, and now it is happening."

Teisha Hohn expressed gratitude to Ascension for paying a portion of the cost. "My kids had a blast. I heard stories about fun pranks played on other cabins. Additionally, great songs and mealtime prayers," she said. "What a blessing to spend a week in a beautiful setting, to make new friends and to connect with nature and God."

Her son, Luke, liked the high ropes course, while her daughter, Ella, praised the staff and was proud of the basket and candle she made.

Another parent, Adam Orla-Bukowski, recalled he never had a camp experience like his children did. "It made me wish I had a time machine so that I'd be able to enjoy it through the life of a kid. As a parent, I cannot express my gratitude enough for the youth group and everyone at Sky Ranch."

His son, Pablo, said being at Sky Ranch "helped me to see God in the nature and people around me." Daughter Zofia remembered, "Sky Ranch was filled with breathtaking experiences like the day hikes, the overnight and the campfire worship."

Parents, can we hear an "Amen"?

## News

### 3-part repentance topic concludes Bible study

The Women of the ECLA (WELCA) will conclude the three-part Bible study on repentance at 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday, November 13, in the upper fellowship hall. The topic focuses on I John 1:8–9 called "Turning points: Turning as the church to the world": "The word repentance often refers to an invitation that brings people into the church. But what happens when the church turns outward to the world? When the church has been complicit in abuse, racism, anti-Semitism and other attitudes and practices that lead away from God's reign, what happens when the church repents?" The Bible study is written by the Rev. Meghan Johnston Aelabouni and can be found at the Gather magazine's website. For information, contact Shirley Toppenberg at 634-4946.

### Volunteers for COMEA needed November 18

Volunteers from the congregation are needed for the COMEA meal preparations on Sunday, November 18. Six to eight cooks/servers are needed 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.

### Choir rehearsal to go on winter schedule

During the winter months, beginning in November, Ascension's adult choir will rehearse only on Sundays, not on Wednesdays. Jane Iverson, adult choir director, said the musicians will rehearse before and after worship on Sundays. She also encouraged anyone to join the group.

### Family Promise volunteer dinner scheduled

The volunteer appreciation dinner for Family Promise volunteers will be from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, November 27, at the Cheyenne Berean Church, 5716 Powderhouse Road. RSVPs should be made to Margie Sewell at 631-1815. Ascension served two families in the program during its rotation with St. Paul's Lutheran Church October 28–November 4.

### Book Club chooses Potok's 'The Chosen'

Ascension's November book selection is Chaim Potok's "The Chosen." Potok was a rabbi, doctor of philosophy and author who wrote acclaimed, best-selling novels about Jews living in New York City. He was especially concerned with the dynamics of modern versus orthodox Judaism. "The Chosen" is a wonderful story of two boys who met as adversaries but became friends. Pastor Wes will share impressions and notes from a lecture given by Rabbi Potok that he attended in Claremont, California.

Book Club will meet at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, November 27, at the church. Discussion questions will be available at the rear of the narthex on Sunday, November 18. Readers, unite! Come to Ascension Book Club!

### Birthday Party for Jesus slated December 1

A Birthday Party for Jesus is scheduled for Saturday, December 1, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the lower fellowship hall. All Sunday School children from preschool through the fifth-grade are invited to attend. They will celebrate the birth of Christ with crafts, games, lunch, cupcakes and ice cream. If you are interested in assisting with the party, contact Jo Hobbs at 307-638-1512. Your assistance is very much appreciated.

### Alpha Delta Kappa donates to Little Pantry

The congregation extended thanks to Karen Kelley and the members of Alpha Delta Kappa, international honorary organization for women educators who donated food for Ascension's Little Free Pantry at their last meeting. As we approach the season of giving thanks, remember to purchase a little more for our little pantry.