

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

October 2018

PASTOR'S PIECE | Be well-grounded

A number of spiritual leaders, including Father Thomas Keating, are associated with a practice known as “centering prayer.” Centering prayer is different from other modes of prayer in that its goal is simply to be still and quiet so that we may rest in God.

When thoughts intrude, we are advised to let them pass without fastening on them. We may restore our focus by means of a “sacred word” of our choosing (e.g. God, Christ, Spirit, peace, grace, etc.).

Recently, I presented our worshipping congregation (myself included) with a challenge to indulge in 5 minutes of “centering prayer” each day,

preferably in the morning before getting caught up in our workaday activities. The challenge to devote 5 minutes to centering prayer is both modest and potentially transformative.

“Be still, and know that I am God.”

Why? Because we are a feverishly active people who are driven for reasons we do not know or understand, people who embark upon myriad activities without being sufficiently grounded. Our vocational lives, family lives, and congregational life can be transformed if we put first things first, by resting in God who is our Creator.

Theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher defined faith as “the feeling of ultimate dependence” and theologian Paul Tillich spoke of God as “the ground of our being.” Their respective words help to communicate the foundational nature of God’s relationship to us.

What if we allowed ourselves the opportunity to experience a feeling of dependency and grounding of our being each day before launching ourselves into motion? Maybe our days would be a bit less harried and a bit more joyous. Maybe it would be catching.

Pastor Wes

Church Council Meeting Highlights

September 13

Treasurer’s report

- August offerings were below last year’s, and total year to date offerings were down as well (\$185,665.58 compared to \$199,291.54 LY). Later, the treasurer reported as of September 28 the MTD offerings were \$21,715, so we should be able to match last year’s figures of \$23,000. The balance is \$102,254.

Pastor’s report

- In the last month, pastor participated in a clergy continuing education event titled “Helping Veterans Access Care and Resources”; met with the worship committee; hosted a dinner for Cheyenne Interfaith Council participants; and attended the RMS Theological Conference in Estes Park. He also outlined his vacation plans.

Committee reports

- The **Building and Grounds Committee** reported the roof reconstruction is nearly complete, and the new sign installation is in progress. A question was raised about adding a rider to the church insurance policy to cover the paraments.
- The **Youth Committee** reported deposits and paperwork for Sky Ranch to run vacation Bible school again next summer are due soon.

- The name of the **Security Committee** was changed to the **Safety Committee**. A bid from CPS for alarms in key office areas came in under \$5,000.
- The **Social Concerns Committee** will prepare baskets of school supplies for Needs, Inc. this fall.
- The **Education Committee** reported a need for a leader for the children’s Christmas pageant.
- The **Worship Committee** will form a subcommittee to begin the process of finding a new leader for the Saturday service. The council passed a resolution that the Saturday service is an important aspect of Ascension’s community of faith, and the service should proceed into a new phase with the full support of the council.

Old business

- Doug Cook recommended a time be arranged to take all Sunday School teachers to the Division of Criminal Investigation to register for **background checks**.
- Ron Thiel and Sid Strand are looking into building **shelves** to bolt the safes to.
- The council resolved that the **signatories/contacts** for the church accounts should be the Executive Committee.
- The council will revisit the **building project priorities** after the conclusion of the audit.

Next meeting • October 11 • 7 p.m.

New and improved



Wyoming’s weather this year took its toll on Ascension’s Little Free Pantry, warping it badly, so Jon Cook rebuilt it this summer, making it bigger, using cedar and placing it on larger posts. His father, Doug Cook, said it could “withstand nuclear attack.” We’ll take his word on that, but until then the congregation is asked to support this ministry by filling it with food.

Church addresses safety

After a Laramie County sheriff’s detective told leaders that Ascension is probably the only local church without an alarm system, the Safety Committee has decided to hire Corporate Protective Services (CPS) from a submission pool of four bids. The decision came after the church was broken into during the summer.

“The Safety Committee will proceed in the near future with CPS, Inc., to create a security package that is most appropriate for Ascension,” said Tim Leberman, Church Council president. He explained the committee’s desire to select a company large enough that could accommodate possible congregational needs.

Council member Doug Cook said September 8 the installation of a security system was the first step in a long-range, multiphase strategy to secure not only the church but also the preschool.

Some security issues revolve around emergency evacuation plans; medical emergencies; an intercom system with the preschool; key control system codification; and the church secretary’s safety.

For now two heavier duty safes have been purchased; new locks have been installed, and keys/doors are being more closely monitored. Further measures, of modest cost or no cost, will be implemented in the short term.

Any proposed safety expenditures may be funded by a capital drive with request for congregational approval.

Ascension Lutheran Church

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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.

Oct. 26 Newsletter Deadline

Youth activities



Corn maze trip set

October 25 registration deadline

The Ascension Youth Group plans to be “a-mazed” Saturday, **October 27**, when they travel to the **Fritzler Corn Maze** in LaSalle, Colorado.

The annual trip will leave the church at 3 p.m. for dinner at the A&W in Eaton

and will return after 10 p.m.

Nichole Morris, group leader, described the event as two mazes, the first a traditional “find your way through.” But after dark, “the second maze becomes Scream Acres Haunted Maze filled with special effects, mechanical engineering, eerie sound technology and scary creatures,” she said.

The single \$30 admission includes both mazes, Ghost

Haunt, Verti-scope, Jumbo Jumper, pedal go-carts, slide, Ball Zone and Rat Roller. Youth may bring a friend.

The deadline to RSVP is **Thursday, October 25**, to Nichole at 719-321-7038 or ascensionyouthcheyenne@gmail.com.

Each participant must have a signed parental permission slip for the trip and an annual parental release/medical form on file.

Service held for Charles Blackburn

A service for Ascension Lutheran Church member Charles E. Blackburn, 82, who died August 27, was held September 1 at the church. Born August 12, 1936, in Holdrege, Nebraska, to Hilga and Ellis Blackburn, he married Lyla Casper on December 23, 1956, in Hildreth, Nebraska. Charles graduated from Kearney State College (KSC) with a teaching degree. During his Air Force career he attended the Air Force Institute of Technology (AFIT) at Wright Patterson AFB, Ohio, receiving an electrical engineering degree. He later earned his master's degree from the University of California at Los Angeles.

Charles served in the U.S. Air Force, retiring in 1988 with as a colonel with 33 years of service, which took his family to several USAF base assignments, ending at Warren AFB. Charles was employed by the city of Cheyenne for 15 years. He enjoyed gardening and was a member of the Kiwanis Club, VFW, Air Force Missileers and Wyoming Military Officers Association.

Former intern joins Rocky Mountain synod

Ascension' former intern Pastor Matt Barnhouse will begin this month in the office of the bishop as the director of evangelical mission (DEM) for the Rocky Mountain Synod (RMS). This ELCA churchwide staff position focuses on new mission congregations, congregations under redevelopment and ethnic ministries. Matt said he considered this call “a surprise and honor.” Since his graduation from Wartburg Theological Seminary in 2014, Barnhouse has served Mount Hope Lutheran Church in El Paso, Texas, as pastor redeveloper. Matt and his wife, Heather, will relocate to Colorado after their daughter, Megan, graduates from high school in spring 2019.

Matt Ferchen to speak on US-China relations

The son of retired Ascension Pastor Duane and Karen Ferchen will speak at Laramie County Community College Thursday, November 1, on “U.S.–China relations and how they matter for Wyoming.” Matt Ferchen, a nonresident scholar at the Carnegie-Tsinghua Center for Global Policy, will speak at 5:30 p.m. in the Clay Pathfinder Building.

He is currently participating in the Public Intellectuals Program as part of the National Committee on U.S.–China Relations, which requires him to organize local public educational programs. From 2008–2017 he was a faculty member in the department of international relations where he taught courses on Chinese political economy and China–Latin American relations. Included in the discussion will be background about the growing trade war with China, about China's role in negotiations with North Korea and about energy and educational links between Wyoming and China.

Sunday School snacks, pageant head sought

Now that the education department has filled its Sunday School staffing, it is reaching out to the church for two more needs.

First, it needs a Christmas pageant/program coordinator, which has been described as a “critical but short-term commitment.”

Second, the department also asks the congregation to donate snacks for the Sunday School children.

The staff of Sunday School teachers includes Kris Rude, Cyndee Linn, Teisha Hohn, Stacy Obermueller, Nichole Morris, Adam Orla-Bukowski, Jo Hobbs, Kim Strand and Chris Muggenburg.

To volunteer as the pageant coordinator or to donate snacks, contact Chris at 221-1483 or cmuggenburg@gmail.com.

43 school kits assembled

Teisha Hohn, who coordinated putting the school kits together for the God's Work. Our Hands Sunday, said she and eight people including four hard-working children assembled 43 full kits into backpacks. They will be sent to the ELCA Lutheran World Relief program to be distributed throughout the world. The extra supplies were taken to NEEDS to be used in Cheyenne. Kari Chandler of the Social Concerns Committee thanked the Ascension congregation for all the generous donations.

News

Family Promise training to be October 7

Margie Sewell, Ascension's Family Promise coordinator, said a volunteer training session will be conducted at 11 a.m. on Sunday, October 7, at St Paul's Lutheran Church with whom Ascension shared its rotation. “If you know of anyone who might be interested in joining our volunteer force and wants the training, please pass this information on,” she said. “They are free just to attend without signing up, but if anyone shows interest, perhaps you would let me know for an informal count.” Ascension's next rotation is October 28–November 4.

October 9 deadline for budget information

October 9 is the deadline for Church Council liaisons to provide information to the Budget Committee in order to plan for the 2019 church budget. Council President Tim Leberman said that this year the council is utilizing its liaisons in developing most of the budget requests because “the budget is a big task.” The liaisons will communicate with the chairs of the Standing Committees in requesting information regarding the 2018 budget experience and the 2019 budget request.

Endowment group meeting set October 9

Endowment Fund Committee Chairman Michael Smith invites the congregation to attend a meeting of the group. It will be held at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, October 9, at the church.

Repentance topic continues at Bible study

The Women of the ECLA (WELCA) will continue the second part of a three-part Bible study on repentance at 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday, October 16, in the upper fellowship hall. The topic focuses on Matthew 22:37–40 “If I could turn back time: Turning to others”: “When Zacchaeus met Jesus, he was moved to give away half his wealth to the poor and to make amends with those he had defrauded. Why? In the Gospels, Jesus' call to repentance is a call to turn back to the ways of God's reign on Earth—justice, peace and mercy for the neighbor and the community. What does repentance look like in our relationships?” 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 October 28

Volunteers from the congregation are needed for the COMEA meal preparations on Sundays, October 28 and 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.

Ascension Book Club to read 'Ordinary Grace'

The Ascension Book Club resumes at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, October 30, at the church. The title is “Ordinary Grace” by William Kent Krueger. Discussion questions will be available on the table at the rear of the narthex and on our website a week prior to the meeting. “It's a gift to read a good book,” Pastor Wes said, “and even better to discuss it with fellow readers!”

'But who do You say that I am?' forums

Jesus directed that question at his impetuous disciple Peter. Peter boldly responded, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” There are in truth many possible “good answers” to Jesus' question. Come and explore some of the perspectives on Jesus that have been articulated throughout the centuries. Sharpen your own “Christology”! Our fall adult education series is getting underway in the upper fellowship room after worship at 10:45.

Take the opportunity to browse up close the church's paraments in the Art Gallery.