

# Ascension Lutheran Church

712 Storey Boulevard  
Cheyenne, WY 82009

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## Church Council Meeting Highlights

### November 8

**The council did not have a quorum at this meeting, but those present elected to discuss a few important topics to ensure momentum is not lost as we near the end of the year. The following are notes:**

#### Treasurer's report

- November's offerings began very strongly, but the sudden severe weather prevented many people from attending the services at the end of the month. This resulted in offerings of \$18,664.50, compared to last year's offerings of \$21,480.52, resulting in a decrease of \$2,816.52 for November. The year-to-date offerings are \$251,642.56, which is a decrease of \$22,305.37.
- The congregation has donated \$795 to the Lutheran Disaster Response for the wildfires in California.

#### Pastor's report

- In the last month, Pastor Wes participated in text study with Pastors Rebecca and Alison and worked on planning for Thanksgiving and Advent services.
- The Cheyenne ELCA pastors also discussed St. Paul's hosting of an informational presentation about Lutheran

Immigration and Refugee Services in January or February to be arranged through LIRS in Denver.

- The Grand View University Choir concert will be Friday, March 15 (not March 16 as previously thought).
- Pastor Wes will be away from December 27 to January 10 on a visit with Pastor Rebecca to Norway.

#### Committee reports

- The **Building and Grounds Committee** reported inventory was taken of tables and chairs for the insurance company.
- The **Endowment Committee** will finalize funds dispersals on November 11.
- The **Budget Committee** will meet at 6 p.m. on November 13 to continue the budget process.
- The **Worship Committee's** is working to begin interviews for the new Saturday service music leader.

#### Old business

- Doug Cook has registered the church with the Wyoming Division of Criminal Investigation. Once the application is accepted, background checks for Sunday school teachers can proceed.

*Next meeting • December 13 • 7 p.m.*

# Ascension Storey



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

**Ascension Lutheran Church**

*Cheyenne, Wyoming*

ascensioncheyenne.org

*December 2018–January 2019*

## Budget to be OK'd in January

### Budget presentations

- ✠ January 13
- ✠ January 20

### How was the budget developed?

In developing the proposed 2019 budget, the Ascension Church Council utilized the council liaisons in developing the budget requests. Each council member serves as a liaison assigned to a committee. Each liaison communicated with the representative committee chair. The liaison and committee chair reviewed the 2018 budget experience and prepared a written request for the 2019 budget.

### What questions were used to establish the budget request?

- Was the 2018 budget appropriate for your committee's needs?
- What is your budget request for 2019?
- Why do you request more funding in 2019? Be specific (i.e. such as a new project, need to fund items not completed in 2018, etc.).
- Could you reduce your budget; if so, by how much?

### Who served on the Budget Committee?

The Budget Committee consisted of the executive committee: Katie Wisdom, Patti Riesland, Doug Cook and Tim Leberman. Herb Taylor was a congregational representative.

### Congregational Meeting

- ✠ January 27

*Initial agenda:* annual report; Audit Committee report; budget approval

## Advent schedule

- ✠ **December 5** at Christ Lutheran with Pastor Alison George
- ✠ **December 12** at Ascension Lutheran with Pastor Rebecca Aardahl
- ✠ **December 19** at St. Paul's Lutheran with Pastor Wes Aardahl

Ascension will join the other two ELCA congregations for a soup supper at 6 p.m. followed by a service at 7 p.m.

## Christmas schedule

Both the **5 p.m.** and the **7 p.m.** Christmas Eve worship will feature candlelight services with lessons, carols and special music.

## PASTOR'S PIECE The expectant season

December is an especially wonderful month of the church calendar. We began the season of Advent and a new church year on December 2.

We closed the clipped, urgent Gospel of Mark and opened the gracefully written Gospel of Luke, with its parables of lost and found and its overarching theme of mercy.

Our Advent readings always bear some apocalyptic scenes, replete with celestial signs, distress among nations, upheaval in the natural world and the Son of Man approaching on the clouds. John the Baptist strides out of the desert and wades into the Jordan,

demanding fruits worthy of repentance, invoking images of ax, root, grain and burning chaff.

Yet, all this turmoil and distress are keyed to the pregnancies of Elizabeth and Mary. Distress of sky, sea, Earth, hostility between peoples, are like immense labor pains that presage birth.

**Advent: When our hopes are fed, when we can see past the world's current distress to a new reality.**

There is much distress in the world, and distress is surely not good in and of

itself. Yet, it always carries the possibility of great transformation and newness. On the last Sunday in Advent, we will hear of Mary visiting Elizabeth, of Elizabeth's child leaping in the womb and of Mary's remarkable declaration that the Lord has looked upon her lowliness with favor, brought down the powerful and lifted up the lowly.

Advent is an expectant season, when our hopes are fed, when we can see past the world's current distress to a new reality. We clear our hearts and light our candles and lean forward to receive the Christ child anew.

**Pastor Wes**

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Pastor's cell phone  
307-421-0159

#### 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

##### President

Tim Leberman

##### Vice President

Doug Cook

##### Secretary

Katie Wisdom

##### Treasurer

Patti Riesland

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.**

Jan. 25 Newsletter Deadline

## Christ Lutheran offers update, thanks

Dear Ascension Lutheran friends,

As we approach the end of the year, Christ Lutheran Church wanted to express its immense gratitude to its sister congregation, Ascension, for its thoughtful prayers, financial support and leadership guidance. As many know, Christ Lutheran has traveled a path of financial instability for some time, and now its overall viability is in question.

On October 12, Rocky Mountain Synod Bishop Jim Gonia met with Council leaders and pastors from all three Cheyenne ELCA congregations to explore ways to strengthen the ELCA witness in the community. A difficult part of the conversation that night centered on the viability of Christ Lutheran Church because the church's leadership had just learned its boiler needed replacing at an estimated cost of \$20,000.

Then on October 28, 20 members of Christ Lutheran at a special congregational meeting decided (1) to request an additional \$20,000 loan from Thrivent Credit Union (Christ Lutheran's current debt is just under \$95,000.) and (2) to determine the value of the building and grounds, should closure of Christ Lutheran be the only option. During the discussion, hopes were raised that the building could become some type of ELCA outreach and the now unoccupied north annex of Christ Lutheran could be rented as a source of income. However, Christ Lutheran realizes these hopes require a greater number of able members who commit themselves to give the congregation's ministry their gifts of time, abilities and finances. Since the second weekend of November, Ascension members have donated generously and will continue to have the opportunity to do so for several more weeks for which Christ Lutheran is most thankful.

In addition, Tim Leberman, Ascension Church Council president, has agreed to be among those who have pledged his expertise by advising the dwindling number of leaders at Christ Lutheran during this time of necessary discernment. While we seek to be Better Together in our witness to the Gospel, may this news of the church's status stir you to share your perspectives about the viability of Christ Lutheran Church with your Council leaders, your pastor or any of us who lead Christ Lutheran Church.

In Christian service,  
*Pastor Rebecca Aardahl; Council of Christ Lutheran Church, who includes President Lisa Cahoon, Treasurer Bonnie Baumeister, Financial Secretary Dan Prickett and Secretary Dave Adams*



**The turnout of cooks was great for Ascension's COMEA rotation in November. Back row from left, Matt Morris, Bill Arnold, LeAnn Cooper, RC Reiman, Paul Hohn, Katie Baxter, Shirley Kaetzer; front row, Jack Morris, Seneva Sullivan, Ella Hohn, Luke Hohn and Teisha Hohn. (Not pictured, Braf Sullivan). Volunteers from the congregation are needed for the next COMEA meal preparation on Sunday, January 27. 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. (Nichole Morris photo)**

## Youth activities

### Youth will shop December 9 for Christmas Angels Program

The Youth Group, who is sponsoring two families through the Cheyenne Christmas Angels program, will meet at Target at 6:30 p.m. on Sunday, December 9, to shop for the children. Details about the gender and ages of the sponsored children should be received soon.

### Congregational help needed for Advent dinner

The Youth Group will host a chili feed for the Advent dinner at Ascension Lutheran Church on Wednesday, December 12. There will be a sign-up sheet in the narthex if you would like to bring your favorite chili, dessert or bread. The youth group will provide salad and veggies, chips, condiments and crackers. Youth volunteers will be needed to set up at 4:45 p.m. on Wednesday before confirmation class (Class starts at 5 p.m.). Dinner will begin at 6 p.m. with the Advent service following at 7. A freewill offer will help the Youth Group sponsor families in the community through the Cheyenne Christmas Angel program. This will also be a work activity for youth group members.

### Youth to take down the 'Greens' January 9

The Youth Group will take down the Christmas tree and the wreath on Sunday, January 6. They start about 11:45 a.m., as soon as Sunday school ends. Lunch will be provided, so please text Nichole Morris at (719) 321-7038 or email her at ascensionyouthcheyenne@gmail.com if you can help so that she knows how many people to plan for lunch. This is considered a youth work event.

**ABOUT PEOPLE** Karen Marcy wrote: "I had my first C-scan since my treatments. I have an overall 50 percent reduction in the size of my tumors and lymph nodes. Praise God; miracles do happen! Thanks for everyone's prayers and support."

Thanks to **Wally Rice** for striping the park lot.

**Jim Geringer** reported **Sherri** has been moved to a rehabilitation facility where she can receive cards: Cornerstone Hospital SE AZ, Sharyn Geringer, 7220 E. Rosewood, Tucson, AZ 85710. He said they appreciated the prayer shawl, cards and prayers. They hope to bring her home or to Northern Colorado by her December 19 birthday.

## News

### Youth group collecting blankets for seniors

This year, in addition to sponsoring families with children through the Cheyenne Christmas Angel program, the Ascension Youth Group is helping this organization collect fleece blankets for its senior outreach program. The organization has a goal to collect 300 throw blankets to distribute to elderly and disabled Cheyenne residents for Christmas. To help Ascension's youth with this community project, bring donations of new throw blankets to church December 9 and place them in a collection box in the narthex.

### Biblical essential oils topic for WELCA group

The Women of the ECLA (WELCA) will meet at 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday, December 18, in the upper fellowship room for a devotion from the December issue of the Gather magazine and an "Essential Oils of the Bible" presentation by Jacy Kruckenberg. All women are invited to bring cookies for an exchange. If there are extra cookies, they will take some to shut-ins. The January 15 meeting will begin a new study. For information, contact Shirley Toppenberg at 634-4946.

### Family Promise volunteers thanked again

Ascension's last Family Promise rotation, October 28–November 4, was a little "spooky" midweek, but Coordinator Margie Sewell said thanks to all the wonderful volunteers, it went well despite four air beds going flat and the challenges of food allergies and food preferences. She thanked the following:

*Dinner hosts:* Shirley Kaetzer, Linda Oliverius, Patti Riesland, Kris and Jeff Rude; *Overnight hosts:* Tom Kaetzer, Lynne Iverson (who took the "spooky" night), Margie Sewell; *Evening host:* Kathy Robbins; *Weekend day hosts:* Dave and Marcia Talley, who did "double duty" by hosting from 10–2 on Saturday; *Last Sunday take-down assistance:* Wally Rice; *Laundry:* Connie and Guntar Dambro.

At the volunteer appreciation dinner on November 27, Margie said she was approached by a single mother with an 11-year-old girl, saying that "our church so far was the most hospitable." Other congregations and organizations will handle Christmas gifts for the families. Ascension's next rotation will be February 10–17. St Paul's has a tentative plan to replace the never-ending deflating air mattresses with more permanent cots, Margie reported, but the big challenge is finding space in which to store them.

### Quiet time to be offered for spiritual renewal

A newcomer to Cheyenne who is a spiritual director and a congregant at St. Mark's Episcopal is offering a free retreat six Wednesday mornings in 2019. Loretta Barker invites men and women to a time of spiritual growth and quiet reflection. The mini-retreat will run Wednesday, January 30, and continue each Wednesday through March 13, with the exception of Ash Wednesday, March 6, and will meet from 10 a.m. to noon. To guide the group in this time of retreat, Joyce Rupp's book "The Cup of Our Life" will be the centerpiece. Although this group is not a book study, Rupp's book will help guide the participants' time of reflection and refreshment during the rest of the week. All are welcome, but space is limited to the first 10 who call Loretta and ask to participate. For more information, including the Cheyenne location of the retreat, call or text Loretta at (307) 760-1091.

### Endowment committee allocates funding

Ascension's Endowment Fund Committee at a special meeting on November 11 determined the allocation of the \$8,567 generated by the fund's investments and now available for distribution. The committee voted to distribute the funds as follows: (1) \$3,000 to Ascension's Vacation Bible School to support the cost of contracting with a team from Sky Ranch to conduct the 2019 program; (2) an amount up to \$4,000 for travel to sister Lutheran World Federation communities by representative members of Ascension; and (3) an amount up to \$1,067 to support the Visiting Scholar Program. The committee also voted to use the remaining \$500 as a gift to Christ Lutheran for the repair or replacement of the church's heating system.

**The church office will be closed December 25–26 and January 1.**