

Ascension Lutheran Church

Council Agenda

October 16, 2019 at 7:00 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER

WE BELIEVE - MISSION STATEMENT OF ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH

Called to create opportunities for all people to become devoted followers of Christ.

MOTTO Invite — Grow — Serve

WELCOME - DEVOTIONS/REFRESHMENTS - October - Jeremy Hofer

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

OPEN FORUM

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Annual Meeting Minutes
2. September Council Meeting Minutes

CONSENT APPROVAL OF REPORTS TO COUNCIL

3. Administrator's Report
4. Pastors' Reports
 - Pastor Tim Delkeskamp
 - Pastor Steve Herder
 - Pastor Julie McCain
5. Youth Ministry
6. Children's Ministry
7. Life Group Update
8. School Board Minutes
9. GMT Report
10. Worship Committee

PRESENTATION OF TREASURER'S REPORT

OLD BUSINESS

1. MPIT - Update - Fundraising Calendar - 4th year Ask, Building Naming, Pavers
2. Final Draft of Escrow Instructions - Previous Approval - Final Legal Review
3. Pastor Tim Assignment - Future Vision Stories/Accomplishments - THE WHY
4. School Board Budgets and plans for next year.

NEW BUSINESS

1. New Immed. Past President Board Member needed

ACTION ITEMS (from Action Tracker)

1. 19-003 bylaw changes: Organization structure, Need Input from the S.B. on their preferred process
2. 19-004 School board Succession plans - Need subcommittee to further define requirements for the S.B.

RECURRING BUSINESS

1. Approve New Members
2. Affirm Baptisms

INFORMATION ITEMS

1. The next council meeting is @ 7pm, November 20
2. Devotion/Refreshments - November - Susie Shore

CLOSING PRAYER

EXECUTIVE SESSION

ADJOURNMENT

**Ascension Lutheran Church
Annual Meeting
Sunday, September 29, 2019**

Call To Order: The Congregational Meeting was called to order by Steve Smuck at 12:31 pm.

Mission Statement of Ascension Lutheran Church: *We are called to create opportunities for all people to become devoted followers of Christ.*

Motto: *Invite-Grow-Serve*

Opening Devotion - Pastor Julie

In Luke 10:1 - 17 Jesus sends out 70 disciples to prepare the way ahead of him. He gives specific instructions about traveling light and how they are to deal with the people they meet in each town. They must have been more than a little nervous. Upon return, they are joyful! They are surprised at what they were able to accomplish in Jesus' name. Even today we can be surprised at what Jesus can do through us. Our eyes can be opened to all that is accomplished in His name.

Approval of Minutes from June 30, 2019 Congregational Meeting

A motion was made, seconded and passed unanimously to approve the minutes from the June 30 Congregational meeting.

Presentation of Annual Report - Pastor Tim

Pastor Tim spoke of his vision for next year's congregational meeting where he hopes that even more Ascension members come to know of our amazing and varied ministries and the joy that is in this place as we do God's work. He has challenged each leadership group to gather stories of joy in ministry over the next year. These stories will be shared and next year's congregational meeting.

A motion was made, seconded and passed unanimously to approve the Annual Report.

Approval/Ratification of Annual Budgets

Shawn Wright, the School Board treasurer, presented the revised School budget. The original attendance projection was 154 students for grades TK - 8, but only 143 are enrolled. The proposed budget reflects a reduction of \$126,000. This includes changing a TK teacher from part-time to full-time and a \$100,000 adjustment due to the lower enrollment.

School principal, Diann Lavik, shared school highlights.

- English ACT scores are in the top 10% of the nation
- The science teacher just received her doctorate
- Nature Explorer accreditation
- STEAM curriculum
- Active student leaders
- An environmentally-minded student body

Questions

Ingrid Isaksen Appreciates outlining the successes of the school. Are History/Civics included in the curriculum?

Diann - Yes, History and Civics are taught and are integrated with current events.
All areas of study are aligned with Common Core and California standards.

Marcel Harner Reminded those in attendance that there was discussion at the June congregational meeting about the declining enrollment in the middle school. Since that time a forum was held to study this further. Several school parents and students attended. Two workdays were held in August to clear out the ivy on campus. Parents, students, School Board members and teachers all participated. This ties in with the goals of Communication, Collaboration and Communication.

Susie Shore Are other private schools in the area also experiencing declining enrollment?

Marcel - Yes, there is an overall decline in enrollment in the Conejo Valley.

Jim Neumann Pasadena schools are also experiencing declining enrollment.

Marcel - Ascension school will be holding an Open House on 11/17 to increase awareness of the school. ECC enrollment is strong and the school board and staff are working on strategies to retain these students for grades TK - 8.

Eric Berg What is the current state of the Reserves account, which is being used to balance the budget?

Shawn - The Reserve balance was under \$500,000 as of 06/30/19. There will still be a balance of \$325,000 at the end of this fiscal year (06/30/20).

A motion was made, seconded and passed unanimously to approve the amended Ascension School budget and to ratify the church, school and Foundation budgets as presented.

Unfinished Business

1. Master Plan Implementation Report - Kaylee Searway

ECC Timeline:

- Plans submitted to City May 1, 2019
- Discussions with City Public Works and Planning departments are continuing
- Thrivent Loan is in place
- Grading permit expected October 2019
- Construction starts November 2019
- Construction Completed August 10, 2020
- ECC opens August 24, 2020

We do not yet have the building permit. There has been turnover in the T.O. Planning department which has slowed down the process. Maximum contract prices have been finalized with EPI Construction. To get the timeline back on track we hope to complete the grading in 4 weeks instead of 7.

The budget total presented at the January 16, 2019 congregational meeting was \$6,807,000. This includes costs for the sanctuary renovation and some debt reduction. Current cost estimates are now near \$7.2M, an increase of 5.8%. This change is due to:

- City expenses coming in less
- Construction estimates in a bit higher
- Loan servicing costs are a bit higher

Final numbers will be in by mid-October with the final building permit.

Cost Summary:

- Sanctuary Costs - \$800K
- Design & permit fees - \$315K
- ECC Construction \$4.85M
- Architect & Civil & Site prep - \$370K
- City Fees - \$500K
- Debt reduction - \$115K
- Capital expenses - \$100K
- Project Mgt - \$75K
- Grading and Construction bond - \$75K

Total - \$7.2 Million

2. Mission Possible Campaign Update - Pastor Tim

The "why" for this project is still the same. As a four-year-old expressed to Pam Musberger, "I want to know who Jesus is." As church attendance declines, building faith for the youngest among us is important. The expanded ECC will bring families to church as well.

Sources of Funds:

- Mission Possible 1.0 Pledges - \$3.3Million
- Sale of Land - \$835K – Going to Escrow
- School borrowing - \$1.5Million (\$125K/yr)
- Mission Possible 2.0 – 4th yr ask – \$1.1Million
- Naming rights - \$500K
- Paver Stone program - \$500K
- Pursuing Grants

Total - \$7.735 Million

Mission Possible 2.0 - 4th year Ask:

Ascension Leadership Pledge – 30 people from Church Council, School Board, Capital Action Team and MPIT have added new pledges totaling \$400,000.

Raised an Additional in Summer 2019 - \$232,000

142 families have responded to the 4th year ask. Still awaiting responses from 219 families.

Follow-up phone calls will be made.

Still needed to raise - \$206,000

Challenge Grants - \$240,000

Grand Total - \$1.1Million

3. Vacant Leadership Positions

If the vacancy is for less than a one year term, Council can appoint the replacement. This was done when Sherith Squires was appointed to fill the School Board vacancy. The Immediate Past President position for Council is also vacant at this time.

Eloise Cohen has been nominated for the position of Chair for the Global Ministries Team. This requires a congregational vote.

A motion was made, seconded and passed unanimously to approve a voice vote in place of written ballots.

A motion was made, seconded and passed unanimously to approve the nomination of Eloise Cohen as Chair for the Global Ministries Team.

New Business

1. Audit report

There were no material findings by the auditors. The audit was completed with many hours put in by Christi Labrenz. Copies are available in the church office.

No questions.

Closing Prayer - Given by Pastor Tim

Adjournment

A motion was made, seconded and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Steve adjourned the meeting at 1:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Rachael Bowen

Ascension Lutheran Church

Council Minutes

September 18, 2019

CALL TO ORDER: 7:01

Council Members in Attendance: Steve Smuck, Carol Bartell, Debra Papageorge, Susie Shore, Carol Bjelland, Peter Swavely, Jeremy Hofer, Greg Korshavn, Pastor Tim

Others: Pastor Julie, Kaylee, Searway, Mark Howe, Bob Woodward, Creighton Van Horn

WE BELIEVE - MISSION STATEMENT OF ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH

Called to create opportunities for all people to become devoted followers of Christ.

MOTTO Invite — Grow — Serve

WELCOME - DEVOTIONS/REFRESHMENTS - September - Kaylee Searway

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Carol Bartell made a motion to approve the agenda. Seconded by Jeremy Hofer. Approved

OPEN FORUM - None

APPROVAL OF COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF JULY: Amended to correct spelling errors. Jeremy Hofer made a motion to approve as amended. Seconded by Greg Korshavn. Approved

CONSENT APPROVAL OF REPORTS TO COUNCIL: Motion to approve the agenda by Carol Bartell, seconded by Susie Shore. Approved

1. Administrator's Report: J. Hofer had a question about Shelby Next which was answered by K. Searway
2. Pastors' Reports
 - Pastor Tim Delkeskamp
 - Pastor Steve Herder
 - Pastor Julie McCain
3. Youth Ministry
4. Children's Ministry
5. Life Group Update
6. School Board Minutes: S. Smuck explained about the one-year school board vacancy. He asked G. Korshavn to ask the school board about how they want to handle these vacancies.
7. GMT Report
8. Worship Committee
9. Evangelism Committee

Carol Bartell informed the church council that she was moving to their retirement home in the desert the following Wednesday.

PRESENTATION OF TREASURER'S REPORT: Jeremy Hofer gave an explanation of the church budget to the new council members. He shared a chart that gave comparisons of congregational giving by month starting

with 2012 to current. He said that, while congressional giving for the month of August was above budget, this giving needs to go up while we are paying interest only on our loan so that we can stay within our budget once we start paying P&I.

It is hoped that when the capital campaign is over that some of those funds will continue as regular giving. J. Hofer shared a chart with proposed changes for Workman's Comp for the church, school, and ECC.

OLD BUSINESS

1. MPIT - Update - Fundraising - 4th year Ask, Building Naming, Pavers:

Creighton Van Horn, Bob Woodward, and Kaylee Searway gave an update on the construction status.

ECC Project Update

Plans submitted to City May 1, 2019

Grading permit in signature phase

Building Plans in review with City

Grading permit expected Mid-September

Construction starts Late October

Construction Completed August 10, 2020

ECC opens August 24, 2019

Project Cost Estimate from Cong Meeting

1-16-19 was \$6,807,000 – included Sanctuary facelift and some debt reduction

Current Cost estimates are near \$7.17M – an increase of 4%– City expenses coming in less, construction estimates in a bit higher, loan servicing costs are a bit higher – final numbers will be in by middle of October with final building permit.

Use of Funds

Sanctuary Costs - \$800K

Design & permit fees - \$315K

ECC Construction \$4.85M

Architect & Civil & Site prep - \$340K

City Fees - \$325K

Fundraising costs - \$100K

Debt reduction - \$130K

Capital expenses - \$100K

Project Mgt - \$75K

Grading and Construction bond - \$75K

Grand Total: 7.15 million

C. Van Horn, B. Woodward and K. Searway also talked about the status of fundraising and the 4th year asks, which is an extension of a 4th year of individual's 3 year pledge. Of the 350 families that have made a 3 year pledge, 80 have extended to a 4th year. The first 30 families generated \$400,000. The next 50 families generated an additional \$300,000. That leaves us \$223,000 short of our goal. There is a donor who is willing to match up to \$240,000 of new donations once we have reached \$850,000. They explained the building naming process and the paver program that will be used to generate additional funds. It was also stated that there will be a donor wall and a donor recognition dinner.

2. Final Draft of Escrow Instructions - Previous Approval - Final Legal Review:

P. Swavely made a motion to approve an email vote to authorize S. Smuck to sign the escrow documents. Seconded by S. Shore. Approved. There will be a three day deadline after receiving a text to access the email and vote. This vote needs to be unanimous.

3. Pastor Tim Assignment - Future Vision Stories/Accomplishments:

PT talked briefly about his sabbatical and said he will share more at future meetings. He said that at

the end of the church year he wants to share stories of the joyous/joyful work that is being done within the church. PT will go around visiting the various groups and finding out what their goals are. PT wants to have a congregational meeting where everyone attends. This may be after a combined church service.

4. Confirm Schedule for December Council Meeting:

J. Hofer made a motion to move the December meeting to December 11th. Seconded by G. Korshavn. Approved. There will be minimal reports for this meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

5. Approval of Agenda for Annual Meeting, Sept. 29, 12:30pm, Sanctuary:

The agenda was amended to add item e under unfinished business to read "Vacant Leadership Positions." J. Hofer made a motion to approve the agendas amended. Seconded by C. Bartell. Approved.

6. New Immediate Past President Board Member needed:

There was discussion about who might replace Carol Bartell's responsibilities as Past President. S. Smuck and Pastor Tim will consider possible candidates.

ACTION ITEMS (from Action Tracker)

1. **19-003 bylaw changes: Organization structure, Need Input from the S.B on their preferred process:**
We will get information from the School Board.

19-004 School board Succession plans - Need subcommittee to further define requirements for the S.B.:

S. Smuck asked for volunteers to form a subcommittee to advise the School Board about succession plans. Carol Bjelland and Debra Papageorge volunteered.

19-007 was added to the agenda about recognizing congressional leaders besides teachers at a church service. PT will look into this.

RECURRING BUSINESS

1. Approve New Members: Next meeting
2. Affirm Baptisms: William Bryan Aaron. So affirmed

INFORMATION ITEMS

1. The next council meeting is @ 7pm, October 16
2. Devotion/Refreshments - October - Jeremy Hofer

CLOSING PRAYER – Pastor Tim

EXECUTIVE SESSION - None

ADJOURNMENT: 9:18

Respectfully Submitted,

Peter Swavely

Maintenance

\$4,728.96 was billed to the K8 and ECC for labor and materials in the month of September. \$1808.04 of that was for two great improvements that the PALS group contributed. The PALS group assessed that the internal library door and door from Founders Hall into the nursery were weak points in our campus security. Both of those doors now have a keypad lock that remains active during the school week. The inner library door keypad is generally deactivated on weekends for use during and around church services. The nursery door remains locked on weekends, keeping our nursery attendees safe during services. The other improvement was the addition of an LED sign on the back gate of the school.

Jeff and Cam repaired two air conditioners in September, for the sacristy and one of the K8 classrooms. They also assisted an Eagle Scout in improving the landscape outside of Pederson Hall as part of his Eagle Scout Project.

Our new lift, "LB," is doing great. I've never seen Cam and Jeff so excited to change bulbs in the sanctuary...

ECC Construction

The fence is up. We lost about 25 parking spaces in lot 3. Our construction manager Greg Kenney painted new traffic flow arrows to keep the flow of the temporarily smaller lot going. The pastors and I will discuss any congregation members' feedback we receive, and work toward a holiday plan.

We almost got the grading permit on Wednesday, October 2nd when a department head in City planning required an adjustment to a handicap access to Hillcrest. We resolved the issue, but the City is closed every other Friday. Monday morning we were back at it with high hopes for a grading permit and pre-construction kick off meeting the week of October 7-11th.

Bob has just signed some additional documents for the County in an effort to keep the building permit process going. The lot line adjustment will be a definitive factor in being granted that permit.

Final escrow documents for the sale of 269 Erbes to Robert Younkin were signed by Steve Smuck and returned.

Portico Open Enrollment

- The baseline health contribution rate for ELCA-Primary health benefits will increase by 4% for all four options (Platinum+, Gold+, Silver+, Bronze+), and for ELCA Medicare-Primary health benefits (Standard option.)
- Health contributions also increase annually by about 2%, on average, as plan members age.
- The contribution rate for the ELCA Disability Benefits Plan will decrease from 2.5% to 1.5% of defined compensation.
- The contribution rate for the ELCA Survivor Benefits Plan will increase from 0.2% to 0.7% of defined compensation.
- There is no change to the required minimum contribution amount for the ELCA Retirement Plan.
- ELCA retiree support continues at 0.7% of defined compensation.

At the church we have 8 employees who are eligible for health care benefits. If the same elections are made by our members, our costs for this fiscal year will increase will increase \$1971.60, a 2.4% overall benefit cost increase. We budgeted for a 5% health only increase based on previous years. Given the changes, the costs should align to budget within \$200.

In terms of changes for our members, the new year will not bring any increases to ELCA-Primary member deductibles, copayments, coinsurance, or out-of pocket maximum amounts. Wellness Dollars that can be earned per sponsored plan member have been decreased from \$400 to \$200. Open enrollment will take place between October 29 through November 13, 2019.

Payroll Software

The data extraction from old to new was not as complete as we would have hoped. As such, our implementation manager at Paylocity, Gaby, has been tasked with a greater amount of data entry. We were not able to validate all of the pay rates, tax rates, appropriate tax types, and deductions for all aspects of the organization before the October 3rd and 4th payroll dates. It further complicates the situation for the church and school to be slightly different in our taxes and deductions. At one point the church taxes were accurate. When the school's taxes were uploaded changes were applied to the church taxes, rendering them incorrect. It's been one step forward, two steps back.

Another wrinkle has been applying ACA rules to the Paylocity system to get an accurate ACA dashboard set up. Paylocity's ACA dashboard is set up with only one factor contributing to health costs, either age or salary. Portico uses both variables, and has been reticent to give us age and salary bands to load into Paylocity's system.

Server Migration

Craig Thommes, our account manager at Anchor Point, as been wonderful to work with on our server migration. The new server is onsite. One of the two old servers has been decommissioned with minimal inconvenience to the staff. The second one is being phased out, with final completion scheduled for October 7th in the evening. If all goes well no one will be able to tell on Tuesday morning... We'll know next month when our invoices go down by \$100 for consolidating to one server.

Windows 10

Our next IT project will be upgrading from Windows 7 to Windows 10 by January of 2020. We budgeted to replace three pc's that are too old to upgrade. One of them was mine, and the hard drive has started crashing regularly. As replacing it was already in the current budget, we went ahead and replaced it. Craig and I have discussed when to replace the last two pc's and start phasing in the software upgrades. Stacy and I recently attended a cyber security webinar in which they emphasized the importance of keeping your software current so that patches and new security measures can be implemented as they are needed.

Respectfully submitted,

Kaylee Searway

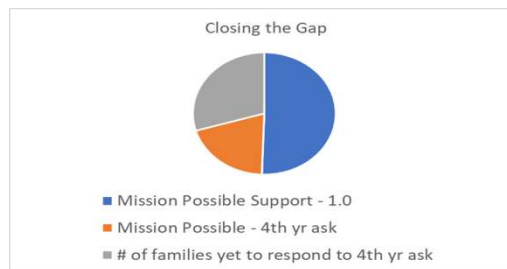
Kaylee Searway
Director of Administrative Ministries



Pastor Tim's Council Report- October 2019

This last weekend I presented my Sabbatical report during our Adult Forum at 9:30 and 11am. If you were able to be there, I thank you for your presence. I reported on the general concept of sabbatical, the three themes (de-cluttering, creativity and adventure) that I developed for it and how I believe these three themes will change me, my work as a senior pastor and the effect I hope they have on the church moving forward. Practicing these themes of has changed who I am. I believe that as a result, I have a clearer vision of my role and for Ascension and that I can cast that vision in a stronger way moving forward. I also hope that you as the church council with help me, support me and hold me accountable for growing into my role as Senior Pastor. God is calling us to move into the future with boldness and I pray that in this report will encourage you and help you to see that we are.

Capital Campaign: I was so pleased to discover how much work had been done on our Mission Possible Capital Campaign during my sabbatical leave. Prior to my leaving we developed the concept of a “4th year ask” and raised about 400k in commitments from our leaders. This, plus a challenge grant of \$150 that would kick in once we reached 850k. To date we are about 185k away from hitting that challenge grant and, the grant has grown to 240k! My sense is that we need to use “closing this gap” of 184k to create urgency and get people excited about finishing the commitment drive. We agreed on this in our CAT team meeting and so we are going to be spending October communicate the urgency people who have given to the initial 3 years or given a one-time gift to see if they’d help us “close the gap.” See the graph:



Teaching Generosity: Our Stewardship team (currently calling ourselves the Generosity Team) has the vision of teaching generosity to One Ascension so that people discover the joy of giving and for the equipping of ministry at Ascension. Having looked at the stewardship data, we believe we need to do more than just ask or tell people to give; we need to teach them to give. We are currently working on how we can do this on a year-round basis and when it will be appropriate in this process to ask people to make their yearly commitments. Some of our goals include: Make the process of on-line giving as

simple as possible, recording and telling stories of generosity, ensuring that stewardship is being taught at all age levels and connecting giving to ministry.

Outreach: As I noted in my annual report, I am convicted by the fact that we need to be a more invitational church. In other words, we need to invite people to come and be a part of our community. One avenue of this outreach is our Alpha class. Our outreach team is very much excited about producing our Alpha class that will begin in January. We are currently in the process of gathering volunteers, training and promoting the class. I encourage you to be a part of it.

Life groups: Our Life Group coordinator Sara Wallace has been working effectively in these past months to develop the Life Group brand and create new Life Groups. Our goal moving forward is to help people who may be reluctant to join a group by giving them an experience of benefits of Life Groups so that they change their minds. I strongly believe that the experience of Life Groups provides the experience of Christian community that God wants us to have and our team has been charged to make that happen.

I always feel there is more to report on than I can fit in my report but as I conclude, I will mention **#TORemembers**. We are coming up upon the 1st Anniversary of the Borderline shooting. The anniversary will trigger grief and perhaps even post-traumatic stress responses in many people. Ascension's pastors are working to help people get through this time and continue to heal. The agenda for this will include listening groups, helping people to share their stories and listen to others, remembering those who were killed, etc. A special thanks to the #TORemembers project who are providing resources to the community.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pastor Tim". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Pastor Steve's Council Report for October 16, 2019

One Ascension

This past month I've been noticing how much better we are doing as living as One Ascension. When I think of that, it's not just church, school, and foundation, but also cross-generationally. Here are some examples.

+ Our prayer ministry and our school teaming up for a terrific and best-ever-attended Blessing of Our Pets on October 6th.



+ Our Global Ministries Team serving samples of Fair Trade Coffee to our school parents dropping off their children the morning of October 9th, as we observe Fair Trade Month which included Pastor Chamie's excellent chapel message on the topic of being "fair" and "just."

+ Our Foundation gave \$1,000, and our Life Groups had a fundraiser, for the shipping costs of our 300+ Lutheran World Relief kits that were assembled by our school and congregation in early October.

+ Addie told us about the sign outside the dugout that summarizes the weekly high school Bible study is and she encouraged all of us to engage the youth in conversations around that theme (this week's theme – "Your Faith Is Enough").

+ Grant and Pastor Julie are asking adults and ministry teams to be intentional in our recognition of families receiving Bibles on October 27, for the two-year-olds, and the second graders, so I invited our SAM Team and my Life Group to participate.

+ The October-December issue of the SAM Spirit newsletter asks seniors how they can both mentor younger generations and learn from them, a devotion based on Psalm 71;

+ One Ascension is praying together for the healing of Dr. Susanne Maliski who was with us recently, back here from her treatments in Kansas;

+ Speaking of Dr. Maliski, she is helping our school and church get ready for our November Gifts of Hope. See the GMT report. We will ask our Foundation for major

gifts to our three projects, Education in Malawi, God's Global Barnyard ELCA World Hunger (Ascension is one of the top ten ELCA congregations in giving), and Habitat for Humanity;

+ Together we are all behind huge projects like Mission Possible and the construction of our new ECC to smaller projects together like our Project Response's new way of collecting food for our Friday Food Pantry and for Harbor House;

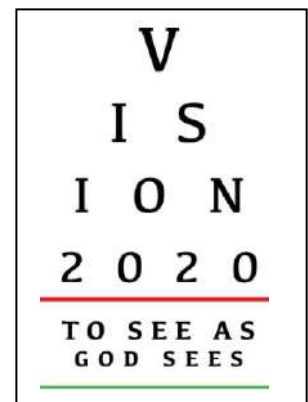
+ And we are grieving together over the loss of our oldest member, dear Jean Kramer, who left us all a legacy of faith, joy, and laughter.

Other ministry notes from September and October:

- Jubilee USA Ventura County merged with Jubilee San Diego to become Jubilee USA Network Southern California, perhaps the strongest Jubilee chapter in the country, including three board members, two of whom are co-chairpersons. On September 26th, Eric LeCompte was honored to speak before the United Nations General Assembly!



- Even as we are enjoying the adult education classes of September and October, we are already planning the year of 2020. Visit with me if you have ideas for topics or teachers. October 13th is one on Fair Trade by Carol Bjelland. Pastor Paul is teaching the October 20th class. We thank our Ascension teacher Katie Gerrans and school parent Kristine Werner for teaching the September class on creation care; Anna Berg on Living Simply; and our H.S. youth telling about their wonderful summer trip, and Pastor Tim about his sabbatical.



- Our Senior Adult Ministries Team this month begins our sixth location for our “Christian Life Hours” (hymns, prayers, devotions), the newest place being Sage Mountain Senior Living, where Suzie Bothke lives.
- We are sad in losing our oldest member of our congregation, Jean Kramer, 101. She died peacefully on October 8th. Her memorial service, which will be live streamed, will be Saturday, October 26th, at 2 pm, followed by a dessert reception hosted by our Lunch Bunch team. Friends are encouraged to wear red shoes as Jean loved to do. We keep Susanne Hopkins in our prayers.





Dear friends in Christ,

“O God, from my youth you have taught me,
and I still proclaim your wondrous deeds.

So even to old age and gray hairs,

O God, do not forsake me,

until I proclaim your might

to all the generations to come.”

As we each add another birthday candle to our cake each year, do you ever wonder, as I do, about how best to be a faith mentor to the younger generations? That’s what the prayer of Psalm 71 encourages us to do. Let’s talk about this as we meet together. Then, let’s do it! We are looking for mentors for our high school youth. And, let them teach us, as well.

Love and blessings in Christ,

– Pastor Steve

Fall Brings Flurry of Special Events

Fall, with its cooler weather and drifting leaves, also brings special events at Ascension. Here are just some of the activities you won’t want to miss:

- **Oct. 6:** Blessing of the Pets, 6 p.m., parking lot
- **Oct. 9:** Women’s Ministry Cookie Exchange, 7 p.m., Founders Hall
- **Nov. 10:** Gifts of Hope class; **Nov. 17:** Gifts of Hope fair, Founders
- **Dec. 1:** Hanging of the Green, Sanctuary, 6:30 p.m. (dinner at 5:00 p.m.)
- **Dec. 8, 15, 22:** Advent services, 7:15 p.m., Sanctuary (8th in gym)

Also, check out the enclosed flyer for Adult Ed offerings.

There are some wonderful classes coming up. Look for more information on all of these activities—and many more—in the weekly newsletter.



Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, recently re-elected to a second term as head of the ELCA, is coming to Ascension in December.

Sunday, Dec. 8 — Mark Your Calendar!

As part of a thank-you tour across the country, Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton will visit Ascension Sunday, Dec. 8.

On that day, we’ll have two services, one at 9:00 a.m. and another at 11:00 a.m. Bishop Eaton will preach.

The tour is in
(Continued on back page)

Church Office: 805/495-0406

Church Emergency Line: 805/405-7431

Pastor Steve Herder: pastorsteve@alcto.org

Parish Nurse: Diana Doerfler, 805/405-0547

SAM’s Tram: Brian Festerling, 805/558-8076 3M: Beverly David, 805/495-0190; bdavidgpe@yahoo.com

Editor: Susanne Hopkins: s.write@verizon.net

Website: www.alcto.org

There's a Place Just for You in a Life Group

Where can you find God's Word, good friends, and fun all rolled into one package? An Ascension Life Group!

You may already be a part of one of these groups that are an important part of life at Ascension. But if not, why not check one out? New groups are starting now.

"Life Groups are meant to connect people in faith, fellowship and prayer. [They] are intended to help form meaningful, God-centered friendships," says Sara Wallace, Ascension's Life Group coordinator. "In our busy lives it's hard to



Life Groups meet in homes, cafes, and on campus.

take time with God. Life Groups give people an opportunity to put the craziness on hold and recharge."

There are several groups for seniors meeting both during the day and in the evening, Sara says.

Some are for couples,

while others concentrate either on men or women.

If there is nothing that works for you, you can start one yourself. "We welcome people starting new groups," Sara says, adding that host training classes are offered periodically. "It's very simple and open to anyone."

For more information, contact Sara at swallace@alcto.org.

Bishop Eaton ... (Continued from front page)

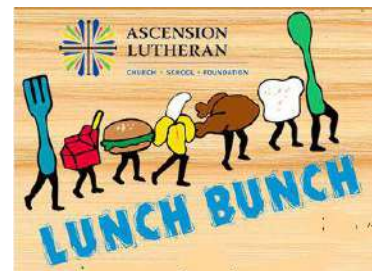
recognition of those churches who have supported ELCA global ministry efforts, ELCA World Hunger, Lutheran Disaster Response and projects in Africa.

"We are a church that believes God is calling us into the world — together," says the ELCA web site.

Over the past five years, Ascension has donated more than \$225,000 to the ELCA to help people around the world, including in our own community. The money was raised through our Global Ministry Team's annual Gifts of Hope held each November.



To all our friends with birthdays in October, November and December.
Happy Birthday, Jesus!



Join us Wednesdays at noon for good food and fun in Founders Hall. Cost is \$5. Sign up by noon Monday with the church office. Here's the upcoming menu:

October

2: Burritos w/chicken and beans, watermelon

9: Pesto pasta w/tomatoes, garlic toast, birthday cake—*invite a friend (friend eats for free!)*

16: Chile rellenos, side salad, Mexican wedding cookies

23: Three-meat wraps, chips, ice cream bars

30: Hot dogs, potato salad, fruit

November

6: NO LUNCH BUNCH

13: Chicken tortilla soup, chips, birthday cake

20: Sloppy Joes, carrot and celery sticks, apple crisp-- *invite a friend (friend eats for free!)*

27: Chicken enchiladas, side salad, cookies

December

4: Pasta w/meat sauce, side salad, brownies

11: Twice-baked potato w/ham and broccoli; side salad, birthday cake

18: Chicken Milanese w/spinach salad, cupcakes

Contact 3M for household help. Call or email coordinator Beverly David, 805/495-0190; bdavidgpe@yahoo.com

Pastor Julie October 2019 Council Report

Safe Church

At the end of the school year, the council approved an amended Safe Church Policy, that includes requiring fingerprinting, background checks, and training for all volunteers who work with children or youth. It also includes some best practices for working with children and youth.

A team lead by Eric Berg has been hard at work implementing this. We have a deep sense of urgency, but there have been some challenges that have slowed us down.

- The first delay was my foot injury; work toward implementation did not begin until I returned in mid-July.
- The second challenge has been technical. The church has first been upgrading our database, and then we need to learn how to integrate the our new system with “Protect My Ministry,” through whom we are ordering background checks and doing our trainings. (In the middle of that I also went on a two week vacation!) All of this is to say that Kaylee and I spent much time troubleshooting, and only last week did we finally see our issues resolved, when they were escalated very high up the chain in the company.
- The good news is that we now have (nearly all) the issues resolved, and have successfully had nearly all of our Sunday School teachers go through this entire process. Our Confirmation adult small group leaders will also be going through this process in the coming weeks.

The Safe Church team still needs to work on developing:

1) what we think will be an in-person training for Ascension-specific details of our policy 2) a brochure for parents to clearly understand how we are going to keep their kids safe 3) something physical that clearly indicates that a person is “Safe Church Approved” to be with kids.

As I said, there is a great deal of urgency to all of this, but I now have in my mind January as a goal for when we might expect to be able to roll out all materials and have most volunteers have gone through this process.

Orange Conference

Addie, Grant and I went to an excellent youth ministry conference in September, in Irvine. It was just one day, but focused especially on equipping families to do faith together. We each came home with several books and are continuing to have conversations about what we heard and saw at the conference. We are grateful to the chance to stay sharp in our skills, and the chance to do so together as a team.

Young Adults

I want to highlight for you that our young adult group is growing. We have a stead 6-8 people, when least year we were more often at 3 or 4. Consistency is helping here.

We are putting together care packages for our young adults—if you are part of a ministry group, could your group contribute?

Here are some ideas:

- A word of encouragement or favorite verse of your group, signed by group members
- A treat, or anything that might make them smile or help them with stress relief! For example, hot chocolate, playdoh, baking mix.
- Something specific to your ministry group (i.e. fair trade chocolates)
- Whatever you give, you might attach or include on the back a little info. about your group.

Please provide 20 of your item; we will give them to the young adults during Thanksgiving weekend worship as a way of wrapping them in love and letting them know that their Ascension community is thankful for them! Please bring all supplies to Addie's office by November 19.

In other news, this month we blessed backpacks at the start of the year for the first time! We also have just had two well-attended First Communion classes, and we blessed our 7th graders as they began Confirmation.

Council Report
Youth Ministries
October, 2019

“Therefore since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful,
and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe.” Hebrews 12:28

Confirmation is off to a good start and we are excited for what this year will bring! Last week the students participated in a “Photo Scavenger Hunt” around campus with their small groups in hopes that they would get to know each other better and bond together through this fun challenge. Pastor Julie and I agree that forming connections through small groups is very important in a student’s faith journey. Coming up this month we have our first service night on the 17th and a fellowship retreat on the 26th. For our service night we are taking the students to the Poverty Encounter in Sylmar hosted by the Children’s Hunger Fund. An interactive experience, our hope is that it will be one that is both educational and inspiring. For our fellowship retreat we will be taking our church bus up to El Camino Pines for the day. With group bonding as our objective, the students will participate in group games and challenges, bible study and worship.

With the Senior Luther League, I am also looking for more ways to help the high school students make personal connections in the congregation. You’ll see more of our students at the Youth Booth on Sunday mornings in between services—make sure you say hi to them! Introduce yourself, ask them about school, tell them your favorite part of (or what you’re looking forward to in) that day’s church service. Pastor Julie, Grant, and I all attended a conference together last month, and we learned a bit about strategies to help equip parents to build faith in their children. One way I think parents and the congregation as a whole can help, is to keep the conversation surrounding our Monday night bible studies going. Ask students what they talked about in bible study that week. If they didn’t go, encourage them to go to the next one! Tip: the subject of our bible studies is on the letter board outside of the Dugout, to the left of the door. See a high school student at church? Ask them about that phrase or bible verse.

We’ve planned our Young Adults calendar through December with bible studies on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month and a fun fellowship event on the third Sunday of the month. If you see a young adult (between the ages of 18 & 30) at church, encourage them to attend one of our studies or events. The bible studies are led by their peers using an interactive curriculum with interesting, relevant faith topics. Some of our goals include creating a place where young adults feel comfortable coming to talk about their faith questions, building community, and helping them learn how to support each other in their faith journeys by praying and learning together. Our upcoming fellowship events for October, November and December are bowling, ice skating, and a Christmas party. For more information, young adults can reach out to me or Pastor Julie.

As always, thank you for your prayers and support.

Submitted with gratitude and aloha,

Addie Behm

Director of Youth Ministries

Children's Ministry Council Report September 2019

Sunday School

This past Sunday, October 6th, marked our third week of Sunday school. Enrollment is strong with 46 children signed up. The classes are split into PreK (3-to-4-year-olds), Kindergarten, 1st-2nd Grade, 3rd-4th Grade, and 5th-6th grade. Classes through the 4th grade utilize curriculum, which follows the lectionary while the 5th-6th-grade class use curriculum titled Connect, which goes more in depth into biblical topics.

Sunday school calendars have been circulated to ALS families and are additionally available in the west narthex and in the church office. The calendars include a link as well as a QR code that takes you to the online registration form hosted by ShelbyNext. Although registration is strong, we are aware that there are a sizeable number of children enrolled in ALS that do not attend Sunday school at ALC. Sending the Sunday school calendars home with ALS students was an initial attempt to address this opportunity to raise Sunday school enrollment.

Kids in Christ

The first Kids in Christ program is well into the planning process and is beginning to look like a reality. The plan is to load the bus at Ascension at 3:30 on November 5th, and take it to CLU. Once there we will hike to the cross (this is a mild hike that takes maybe ~20 minutes) and have some activities once at the top. We will then hike down and board the bus to aim for a 5:30 PM return to Ascension. Organizing this event took a little longer than planned, as CLU has certain specifications groups must meet in order to have outings on their campus. However, after some correspondence with their Director of Campus Services, Vanessa Webster-Smith, we are all set up for our trip, pending on the availability of Jeff Hengst to drive the bus. Further Kids in Christ events will alternate between on-campus events and off-campus outings, and will take place on the first Tuesday of each month.

Children's Bulletin

For the past three weeks, there have been children's bulletins available for the 8 AM, 9:30 AM, and 11 AM services. They are published by Spark and follow the same curriculum as Sunday school. These bulletins are relatively cheap and easy to make available and have been enjoyed by growing numbers of families each Sunday.

Respectfully submitted,

Grant Escandón
Director of Children's Ministry

Sara Wallace, Life Group Coordinator

September report 2019

Recap of Last Month:

September was our Sunday Life Group launch. Life groups started meeting on Sunday, September 8th after the 9:00 and 10:30 services. That day we had 13 people in the first group and 8 in the second, which was really exciting. The following Sunday the service time changed so that complicated things a bit, but the groups continued to meet. The group that meets after the traditional service has decided to continue to meet on Wed. nights.

We also had our CPK Fundraiser which was sponsored by Life Groups to support Lutheran World Relief. The event was well attended (with a lot of school families) and a lot of fun.

For the school families we also started a gathering time before chapel called "The Turquoise Table". This idea was inspired by Paster Chamie and a book she read about building community. It's been 4 weeks and we've had people gather each time. Hopefully it will continue to grow and be beneficial to our families.

Marketing:

The website continues to be updated with current groups and now also shows our Life Groups video.

Up-coming Events:

We will be planning a training for anyone interested in being a host as well as a follow up training for current leaders.

September School Board Meeting

Friday, 09.09.2019

Attendees

Marcel Harner, Susan Hall, Shawn Wright, Julie Herder, Diann Lavik, Rick Pfeiffer, Teri Maass, Pam Musburger, Pastor Julie McCain, Paul Hoffmeier, Greg Korshavn, Connie Angress, Will Wallace, Sherith Squires

Meeting called to order: 6:33PM

New agenda distributed to all attendees. Reading of Vision of Ministry for ECC and ALS: Marcel Harner

Opening devotion/exercise and prayer: Diann Lavik

Approval of August Minutes

Shawn Wright recommends change to verbage

Motion - Will Wallace - Approval of August minutes

2nd Motion - Julie Herder

Motion Carries

Agenda

Principal's Report

Julie Herder - questioned process of "zero waste" lunch.

-Diann Lavik - stated that there will be a "celebration of zero waste" on Thursday.

Tickets are given away for "zero waste" lunch. The goal of the program is to educate with grace.

Susan Hall - questioned Cobalt security around gates / Colina pick-up/drop-off.

-Diann Lavik- stated that there is a concern for safety due to construction in the parking lot; asked if we do hire security if the cost would be shared with the church.

Shawn Wright - asked if an extension was granted for WASC.

-Diann Lavik- stated that "yes," we've been granted a 6 month extension.

Susan Hall - question on vice principal report about "curriculum." What is new [socio-emotional learning curriculum being developed/used?](#)

Marketing

Shawn Wright - stated that enrollment is currently at 142.

Susan Hall - [related a parent's suggestion for](#) marketing to moms groups in Moorpark and Simi Valley. Have Tamara look into getting an intern from CLU.

Pastor's Report

Susan Hall - question for Pastor Julie about variability in religion curriculum.

-Diann Lavik- stated that Pastor Chamie has been working on curriculum.

Diann Lavik- suggestion to have learning walks to build relationships between church and school.

Julie Herder - question for Pastor Julie about changing over to new systems.

-Pastor Julie- explained that not everyone understands different programs.

ALECC Report

Susan Hall - question for Pam Musburger about possible pest control needs.

-Pam Musburger- states that company (the same that the church uses) has been hired. Additionally, Jeff Hengst has been working on pest control.

Motion - Shawn Wright- Approval of Agenda and Consent Agenda

2nd Motion - Susan Hall

Motion Carries

Action Items

Principal Search Committee Update

Marcel Harner - What steps can we take?

Sherith Squires- stated that we need to figure out who is on the committee and come up with a job description.

Pastor Julie - states that Pastor Tim has information that can be helpful in putting together a search.

Susan Hall - suggested that committee be made up of people from different parts of the school/church. Diann Lavik agrees to have educators on committee.

Will Wallace - made suggestion to advertise in church newsletter.

Diann Lavik - made suggestion to have job description posted by November 1st.

Sherith Squires, Julie Herder, and Greg Korshan will be on committee.

19-007 - Fall School Board Retreat

Marcel Harner - suggested half day retreat to discuss the school board process in WASC.

Retreat will be October 19th from 1-5 PM in the "dugout."

19-008 - Interim Principal goals for the school year

Diann Lavik stated that she will have a report in October with articulated goals for the year.

19-002 - Update: WASC Extension

Marcel Harner - WASC extension has been granted, will be completed in 2020.

Fundraiser Committee

Susan Hall - stated that she sent email to committee; meeting by end of September.

Topics of interest for committee include:

1. reviewing all fundraising goals, needs and efforts as well as service days to reduce the number of "asks" and maximize our return and community building
2. discussing how best to support and grow our advancement/development /fundraising activities between the schools and PALS (without a designated staff member in this role; a volunteer or intern position is being looked into)

3. discussing grant applications (e.g., to support the school's sports and green initiatives)
4. supporting the move of the Annual Fund to the Spring and ways make it more effective
5. discussing ways to support 4-8th grade classes attending expensive out of town retreats and learning trips, as some can not afford to attend - while balancing the need to coordinate all fundraising activities and not overburden parents
6. reviewing the Fundraising Policy (School Board Handbook, Appendix F)

18-009R - Handbook Revision Update

Three questions: 1) Homework for TK? 2) Lock down procedures not included in handbook 3) Dress code language (still gender specific language)

-TK homework: yes per Diann Lavik [nightly reading]

- Agreed to include lockdown procedures; Connie to send to Susan for inclusion

- White shirt only requirement for Chapel day?

-Hair length? - As long as it doesn't interfere with learning

Motion - Will Wallace - Approval of all 4 handbooks as revised

2nd Motion - Greg Korshavn

Motion Carries

New Business

19-003 - Church Council Request

Marcel Harner will get more specifics from church (Steve Smuck) on what they want.

19-004 - Field Grant - Sports facilities endowment fund

Marcel Harner and Jo Clem are currently working on grant application. Due date is October 10, 2019.

19-005 - Technology Plan

Diann Lavik was sent 3 year plan from Anchor Point.

19-006 - Gratitude Correspondence Secretary

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Marcel Harner - recommended that Jim Newman have title of "Gratitude Correspondence Secretary."

Motion - Will Wallace - to establish title to chosen candidate

2nd Motion - Greg Korshavn

Motion Carries

19-007 - Principal access to Susanne Maliski's google account

Motion - Julie Herder - to approve Diann Lavik to access Susanne Maliski's google account.

2nd Motion - Will Wallace

Motion Carries

19-008 - ECC Security Request: 8 door stops

Pam Musburger - requested that Jeff Hengst look into Lock Block for 8 doors in the ECC.

School Board will financially support the purchase of the Lock Blocks.

19-009 - Thoughts/Ideas for Retention

General questions: Are dates set for open house? Thoughts on loyalty discounts?

Marcel Harner calls meeting adjourned @ 9:00PM

Next Meeting - Monday, October 14th @ 6:30PM

October Devotion (optional refreshments) - Susan Hall

Calendar Items:

September 12th ALIC/ALECC picnic (5-7PM), September 24th - ECC Toppers Night, October 4th PALS Meeting (8:30PM), October 24th High School Night, October 31st Trunk or Treat.



Ascension Lutheran Church-Global Ministries Team
Agenda **& Report**
Wednesday October 2, 2019
7 p.m. Bethlehem Room

Mission Statement: With our congregation we are “called to create opportunities for all people to become devoted followers of Christ”. Together we “invite, grow, serve.”

The Global Ministries Team will do this as we pray, work, partner and participate in God’s mission around the world, using our ELCA global mission model of accompaniment. (God’s work. Our hands.) The scope of current ministries as well as those ministries we would like to better serve and support is reflected in our new name. Inspired by the Biblical mandates to preach the Gospel and remember the poor, the Global Ministries Team will respond to God’s love by sharing the good news of God’s saving grace in Christ; preserving and restoring creation; and serving others through care, advocacy, education, reconciliation, solidarity with those in need, and interfaith work.

Welcome and prayer

REPORT: *We were 10 in attendance on October 2, 2019. Eloise shared a special devotion from “100 Graces” - Yahweh is our loving God. We joined in prayers for Susanne, Ted, Jack & members of our families.*

Global Missions- Act 1:8

Gifts of Hope and Global Partners (Carol and Pastor Steve)

Nov 9-10; Nov 16-17

Gift Fair on just one weekend -- Nov 16-17

Update on Habitat for Humanity, God’s Global Barnyard and Malawi projects. Written report will be available at meeting and emailed after.

REPORT: *See attached report on Gifts of Hope 2019 projects, events & activities. Mary, Karen & Marcia signed up to help with the Gift Fair. Thank you. We will need many volunteers for set-up (Fri 10/15 – 2PM) and for Sat (6-7:30 PM) and Sun (9AM -12: 30PM). Contact Carol or Eloise. Invite friends to join us. We have invited Ascension young adults & youth ministries to join us. Also, please save paper and plastic shopping bags (with handles) – we will need these for the Gift Fair & December FT Sales; can put in GMT mail box or give to Carol. We will share information about the GOH projects & Gift Fair with our Synod’s Channel Islands Conference Churches & invite them to join us.*

Hunger and Health -Mt. 25:43-45

Lutheran World Relief (LWR) Kits (Louise)

Confirm schedule for October 3-6

REPORT: *See attached report on LWR Kits of Care Ministry. Note date change for In-Gathering /Mt Cross/Camarillo (Oct 24th). Reviewed list of volunteers for Thurs 10/3-Sunday 10/6. Eloise & Carol will do the Sunday School message & bring children to FH so each can pack a school kit. Louise will review final financial gifts/expenditures & communicate same after 10/24. Quilts & Kits will be blessed & lifted up during worship 10/12-13; will be a display of school, personal care & baby kits. Pastor Steve’s Lift Group is doing baby kits.*

Bread for the World October 27 (Eloise)

REPORT: A church in Simi Valley wants to do an offering of Bread letters; David Gist/Bread of for the World put them in touch w/us for guidance. We will do Bread letters Oct 27th.

ELCA World Hunger (See above GOH God's Global Barnyard)

REPORT: Mary shared that there is a good story/report in the "Living Lutheran" magazine about ELCA WH/Malaria campaign. In August 2019, LL had a good article about South Sudan project we supported in an earlier Gifts of Hope.

Justice & Advocacy-Ps. 33:5

Fair Trade- (Carol)

Need for additional volunteers

October 9 (8:30-9:30) "Have a Fair Trade Day" Morning welcome

Trunk or Treat at ALS- Oct 31

Adult Ed October 13

Written Report will be available at meeting and emailed after.

REPORT: Fair Trade reports attached. Monday 10/28/19 @ 11 AM/Bethlehem Room – Mary, Carol, Karen will sort FT Finger Puppets for ECC children (Need 88) and make 200 FT chocolate treat bags (we have recyclable bags & Halloween stickers; will put 3 FT milk chocolate mini's in each for ALS kids). Exciting that ALS students want to do the FT class for each other!

LIRS and Matthew 25:35 – (Eloise, Carol, Mary)

REPORT: Eloise shared information about LIRS/ "Hope for the Holidays" gifts of holiday cards and other for families/children held in immigration detention facilities. There is a webinar 10/8/19 - 3 PM EST where details will be discussed; details posted on LIRS website after webinar. Time period is Oct 8, 2019 – Dec 6, 2019. Once we have more details, we will share w/ALS, ECC, ALC Children/Youth Ministry groups, Life Groups & others; given GOH (Projects & Gift Fair & Angel Trees), will focus on the sharing of cards & prayers vs. \$. Discuss in November 2019 if GMT wants to make a \$ gift.

ECAS Support Circle formation for Asylum Seekers October 6,
p.m. Holy Trinity

5:30

Matthew 25:35 donations

REPORT: Mary & Carol will plan to attend; Rev. Alexia & others will lead the program/information sharing. We will consider making a gift of \$ for travel funds (to help asylum seekers get to cities/communities where they have family /friends); will get more details from Rev. Alexia on how best to provide \$ gifts for travel funds. Mary/Carol will write up a report after the gathering at HTLC 10/6.

Jubilee (Pastor Steve)

Puerto Rico update

Encinitas gatherings

Eric's presentations at the U.N.

Nov. 6-7 meetings in DC

REPORT: Pastor Steve shared that Jubilee Ventura County & Jubilee San Diego have merged and are now Jubilee Southern California. We learned about substantial debt reduction happening for Puerto Rico – this

is go good to hear; we hope this helps the people in PR rebuild after devastating storms. We will celebrate & lift up Jubilee at a future weekend, likely after Jan 1, 2020.

Peacemaking- Mt. 5:9

ELCA Middle East and Israel trip (Pastor Steve)

Conejo Valley Interfaith Association and WIN (updates)

Open Mosque Day October 6

Loving our Muslim Neighbors class at Westlake Presbyterian (Karen, Mary)

REPORT: Pastor Steve shared that the ME/Israel trip will be 6/23/21-7/9/21. Many are interested. Also ELCA Global Mission Team trip to Indonesia 9/2-9/16/20.

Karen & Mary shared that they have attended many of the “Loving our Muslim Neighbors” class (6 Sunday evenings; 9/8-10/6, the speaker (CLU prof) excellent & the material/information very informative. Maybe invite the speaker to do some classes at Ascension as part of ALC’s adult ed class program.

Flyer attached for Open Mosque Day – Oct 6th. Many of us have attended in the past; it is a great opportunity to learn about our Muslim neighbors.

Creation Care- Gen. 2:15;Ps.24

Updates (Pastor Steve)

REPORT: *Edith reminded us all that all of us at Ascension need to be mindful of packaging waste/recycling of materials used.*

Prayer & Education- Mt. 28:18-20

Fair Trade Campaigns National Conference -- March 20-22, 2020

Conejo Elementary Tutoring (Mary)

Great Music at Ascension (Edith)

REPORT: *Edith shared that the 9/22 GMT event was a great success; many attendees came from outside our CV area. This is great outreach. Nov 24th is Jens Lindemann GMA concert – mark your calendars.*

Mary shared that ALC has fewer tutoring volunteers this year; ALC volunteers will cover the Kindergarten class (that wouldn’t even be available if Ascension hadn’t started volunteering 2 years ago).

Other items

Visit in December from Bishop Eaton on December 7,8 with one Festival

Service ~~at 10 a.m.~~ 9 & 11 AM on December 8.

REPORT: *Worship time changes for visit of Bishop Eaton Dec 8th – now 9 & 11 AM 12/8/19. Rev. Ron Glusenkamp will be here also.*

Cheryl shared about a project sponsored by Hanes/Hanes at Camarillo Outlet to help human trafficking victims in recovery/reestablishing their lives.

*Karen shared that she will be Susan B. Anthony in the production of “**Voices of a People's History of the United States**” Oct 11-13 at Chalice Unitarian Universalist Church in Thousand Oaks. This will be a great opportunity to look back on the many impactful men and women in our nation’s history.*

ELCA Impact Report (attached via email)

Next Meeting:

November 6, 2019 at 7 p.m. Bethlehem Room

Closing Meditation and Prayer

“We pray for the ministry of ELCA Advocacy, its Washington office and its state public policy offices as they work with ELCA members to develop and advance legislation that will overcome poverty, defend God’s creation and promote peace, dignity and justice.”

“We Praise God who exists throughout the universe and all time yet has compassion and concern for people who are poor and in great need; pray that we will be moved by God’s ways, examples and commands to show attentiveness, mercy, compassion and love for our neighbors in need.”

ELCA Prayer Ventures September 2019



“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV)

Preview of Ascension’s 2019 Gifts of Hope Ministry

The Gifts of Hope Projects for 2019:

Improving the learning environment at 7 primary schools owned by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malawi

God’s Global Barnyard and its ministry to fight food insecurity

Habitat for Humanity helping families build homes and our community grow stronger

In addition to sharing financial gifts with our friends at Habitat for Humanity, our Ascension Church & School Community and happy, helping hands of ***all ages*** will have the opportunity to be a part of building for Habitat families. *Watch for upcoming details.*

Saturday, November 9, 2019 – 6:00 PM

A special Temple Talk from Darcy Taylor, Ventura County Habitat for Humanity

Sunday, November 10, 2019 – 9: 30 & 11 AM in Founders Hall

A special Adult Ed Class highlighting Gifts of Hope projects past & present

Saturday, November 16, 2019 – 6-7:30 PM

The Gifts of Hope Gift Fair Founders Hall

Sunday, November 17, 2019 – 9 AM- 12:30 PM

The Gifts of Hope Gift Fair in Founders Hall

The Gifts of Hope Gift Fair will include some new things we think you won’t want to miss, including a silent auction of some special quilts celebrating God’s Global Barnyard, new chocolates and snacks at Ascension’s Fair Trade Table and some vendors from Fair Trade LA.

Everyone is invited to participate in the many opportunities to celebrate Ascension’s Gifts of Hope Ministry & share in the many ways our Gifts of Hope uplift the lives of people & communities here and abroad. If you would like to be a part of the Gifts of Hope Volunteer Team, there are lots of fun things to do and it’s a great way to connect with friends and make new friends. Contact Pastor Steve or Carol Bjelland (carolb@netscape.com).

Everything that is done in the world is done by hope. Martin Luther

Gifts of Hope 2019 **Update 9/29/19**

1. International Project: 7 ELCM Schools

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malawi (ELCM) owns seven primary schools located in remote parts of Malawi where Lutheran congregations are operational. The schools have improved access to quality primary education to both boys and girls in these regions. Despite these achievements, the church is experiencing various challenges to the increased number of students and higher rates of enrollment. This has been largely due to the free primary education policy passed by the government. High numbers of students in schools has resulted in a shortage of teaching materials and supplies, sanitation facilities (especially for female students), and a shortage of classroom space, making the environment not conducive for teaching or learning. This has contributed to higher school drop-out rates, especially among female students.

This program will procure adequate teaching materials and supplies and will begin construction of gender neutral sanitation facilities to all seven ELCM primary schools to improve the environment and conduciveness for teaching and learning in ELCM primary schools, and increase student retention, especially among female students.

Our GOH Gift Items will include things such as classroom materials (books, chalk, training & learning materials), school fees, school uniforms, bathrooms/latrines, security at the schools, maintenance for classrooms etc.

We are also including a separate/special gift item for the ELCA World Hunger Child Nutrition program in Malawi; this program provides emergency food for children until their communities are able to grow sufficient food locally. This Child nutrition program focuses on bringing nutritious food to children so they can be better prepared & better energized for school.

2. **God's Global Barnyard:** We will have the slate of the animal gifts from God's Global Barnyard. We know the animals provide food and provide income opportunities for families & communities around the world.

Something new this year: With the help of Ascension's Quilters, we will be holding a silent auction for 3 special/child-focused quilts celebrating country-cousin characters of the animals we have grown to love from GGB. Silent auction will run during the Gift Fair (11/16 & 11/17). Proceeds to GGB.

3. GOH Local Project: Habitat for Humanity

1. In addition to providing financial gifts to support the work of Habitat in our Community, our Ascension Community will have the opportunity to participate in a build in our area. Because of the dangers associated with power tools and other equipment at a build site, participation at the build site is limited to those 16 yrs and older. For ages 16-18, participants will not be able to work in areas where there are power tools.

Our friends at Habitat know that it is important for children & young adults to have the opportunity to participate in Habitat's work and some suggestions have been discussed.

2. Painting wood trim that will go into the HH house(s) & flower pots/garden pots. We have discussed this with ALS. This would be done at Ascension. Date/Time to be coordinated between ALS & HH.

3. Building a HH playhouse that will be given to military families at local military installations. This would be done at Ascension. We thought this might also be an opportunity for ALS as well as Ascension's Kids of the Kingdom and other Ascension Youth groups. Date/time to be coordinated between leaders of ALS, Ascension KOK/Youth Ministries & HH. We have communicated these opportunities to ALS & to Grant, Addie & Pastor Julie.

General:

We have shared the above information about the global and local projects with ALS & Ascension's Child/Youth Ministry Leaders.

Pastor Chaime/ALS has indicated that for ALS, focus will be global project (Malawi ELCM Schools) & HH (ALS focus last year was GGB/ELCA World Hunger; ALS wants to expand focus to the Malawi & HH projects this year).

We have provided 60 ELCA WH Advent Calendars & GGB banks to Grant for distribution with youth in his ministry programs.

Communication plan discussed among GOH Leadership Team; (1) Preview and project focus news items starting 10/6-7; each week information on one of the project focus areas; (2) projection system slides with photos highlighting the project areas; (3) distribution of the GOH catalog/form after worship (November)

Catalog/gift form completed 10/15/19 target; delivered to ALC 10/31/19 target (we want to be able to handout catalogs/forms after worship 11/2-3 and 11/9-10.

We have offered to have a special Sunday School message about GOH Projects 11/10/19; Have also invited Sunday School to come to FH during the Gift Fair 11/17 to learn more about Fair Trade

We will submit a grant request to the ALC Foundation for the 3 project areas.

Sat 11/9/19 – Temple Talk by HH

Sunday 11/10/19 – Special Adult Ed Class (9:30 & 11 AM); Founders Hall; HH & review of GOH projects past & present. Table to accept GOH Project Gifts

Gifts of Hope Gift Fair: November 16 (6-7:30 PM) & November 17 (9AM-12:30 PM) –
Founders Hall

Friday, 11/15 – 2 PM; Set-up Tables in Founders Hall. Need Team of 5-7 volunteers

Saturday, 11/16/19; Need Team of 5-7 volunteers to cover Global Treasure Trove, Fair Trade & Checkout Tables

Sunday, 11/17/19; Need Team of 8-10 volunteers staggered over the 3.5 hours

We will invite Ascension's Young Adult & Youth Ministries as well as staff & families from ALS to join us at the Gift Fair

Silent auction of 3 special quilts for GGB/ELCA World Hunger

Gift Fair Tables will include:

ALC Fair Trade, ALC quilters, African Team Ministries, Global Treasure Trove*, Angel Tree/Casa Pacifica, Prayer Shawls (no charge), Angel Tree /Harbor House, Fair Trade LA & 2-3 Fair Trade LA partner organizations

* Global Treasure Trove will include consigned items from SERRV (Thank you Barb & Eloise for ordering a great variety of FT items from our friends at SERRV), books, ELCA WH advent calendars & a variety of other items from various Fair Trade vendors.

At checkout table, will give GGB ornaments, thank you cards, coloring books and banks to those making GGB gifts

October is Fair Trade Month at Ascension & around the World



Join Us in Celebrating & Learning More about Fair Trade!

**“Have a Fair Trade Day” Morning Welcome
Wednesday, October 9, 2019 - Ascension’s K-8 School & Early Childhood Center
7:45-8:45 AM @ K-8 School; 8:30-9:00 AM @ ECC**

We will share a cup of Fair Trade coffee or tea and a Morning Welcome with families bringing their children to Ascension’s K-8 School & Early Childhood Center. The Chapel Worship focus for this Fall is the Season of Creation - we will share information with the children and their families about how Fair Trade promotes environmental justice. We look forward to joining everyone at Chapel Worship (9 AM)

**“Fair Trade: A Multi-Faith Movement”
Adult Ed Class, Sunday, October 13, 2019
9:30 & 11 AM in the Library**

Ascension’s Fair Trade Ministry will share information on the faith origins of Fair Trade and the role of faith in many aspects of Fair Trade. (*There will be chocolate!*)

**“Trunk or Treat” with Ascension’s K-8 School & Early Childhood Center
Thursday, October 31 in the Parking Lot**

We look forward to sharing Fair Trade treats with the children at Ascension’s K-8 School & Early Childhood Center – chocolates for our young friends in the K-8 School and a toy for our young friends in the Early Childhood Center.

We thank the Ascension Community for its long & strong support of Fair Trade! From 2017-2018 reports, we learn that total Fair Trade retail sales in the US alone exceeded \$1 Billion. We know each and every purchase of a Fair Trade product matters to the farmers and artisans whose labor and creativity make the many items we purchase and enjoy. Ascension’s Fair Trade Ministry will hold two Fair Trade Product Sales in the remaining months of this year -- November 16-17 in conjunction with the Gifts of Hope Gift Fair & December 14-15. In addition, Fair Trade handcrafts, jewelry, wearables, home décor and other surprises will be available for purchase at the Gifts of Hope Gift Fair November 16-17 in Founders Hall.

We look forward to having you join us in celebrating Fair Trade this month & every month.

Fair Trade Update
September 29, 2019

Contact Carol For More Information &/or to Volunteer

FAIR TRADE:

1. **Fair Trade Product Sale September 14-15, 2019** (9/14 in the Library after worship; 9/15 on the patio, 9-11 AM).
 - a. Louise, Eloise, Cheryl, Karen, Marcia, Mary & Carol have volunteered to help Sunday 9/15; Carol will cover Saturday 9/14; Carol will invite Kaylee & Emily to join us on Sunday.

Update 9/29/19: "Thank You" to Louise, Paul, Eloise, Barb, Cheryl, Karen, Marcia, Mary & Carol - it was a very busy weekend. Total net sales: \$1274.59 (cash, check, credit card) The new credit card reader worked great - Thank You Kaylee.

Next Fair Trade product sales event will be at Gifts of Hope Gift Fair, Nov 16-17, 2019. We invite volunteers to help with set-up (Friday, 11/15/19 - 2 PM) and with the sales during the Gift Fair (Sat 11/16 from 6-7:30 PM and Sun 11/17 from 9 AM-12:30 PM). Invite friends to join you at our FT Table. We will have some new products too.

Last Fair Trade product sales event of 2019 will be December 14-15, 2019

2. **"Have a Fair Trade Day" Morning Welcome: Wednesday, October 9, 2019 - Ascension Lutheran School**

- a. We will share a cup of Fair Trade Coffee or Tea with families bringing their children to school & to chapel that morning
- b. Nothing to sell - just sharing a welcome & greeting with a cup of coffee or tea
- c. Est. time 8AM - 9 AM
 1. Let's join the students & families & staff in Chapel worship that morning
- d. In conjunction with ALS Chapel Theme for Fall: Season of Creation, we will share a flyer with key points about how Fair Trade protects the environment. We will be mindful of the ALS commitment to zero waste as we plan/implement.
- e. Volunteers Invited:
 1. Welcome Team/Handing families cups of coffee/tea & our FT flyer & sharing greeting
 2. Preparation Team/Help with:
 - a. flyer
 - b. GMT cards/Name Tags
 - c. Fair Trade cards
 - d. Coffee & Tea
 - e. Cups & FairTrade cup sleeves

Eloise, Karen & Cheryl have volunteered; Eloise will create a flyer; Pastor Steve will help with making the coffee in PH kitchen; Carol will send out more information re: logistics for the morning.

Update 9/29/19: We Set-Up & Prep: 7:15-7:30 AM. Carol & Pastor Steve will make the coffee. We will serve Coffee/Tea at The Turquoise Table: TK-8 /7:45-8:45 AM (2 locations; 1 inside gate/1 outside gate) and at the ECC 8:30-9 AM (1 location/by ECC/4s classroom). Pastor Chaime will ask Cam/Jeff to set up the 3 tables/locations for serving the coffee/tea

Join the students & families & staff in Chapel worship that morning. Chapel starts at 9 AM

In conjunction with ALS Chapel Theme for Fall: Season of Creation, Eloise & Susanne prepared a great flyer with key points about how Fair Trade protects the environment & upcoming ALC Fair Trade events in 2019. 200 flyers given to Pastor Chaime 9/25/19. We will also have a few copies of flyer to give to those stopping for coffee/tea if they haven't already seen it. For those helping 10/9 (Karen G, Marcia, Cheryl, Carol, Pastor Steve -are we missing anyone?), please wear your ALC name tag. 6 oz recyclable white paper cups have been purchased. We will use the FT coffee sleeves from our inventory. We will offer also an EE FT chocolate mini. We will use coffee, tea, chocolates from our inventory.

Another 1-2 volunteers would be great.

Carol is the contact (carolb@netscape.com; 805-657-3731)

3. Fair Trade: A Multi-Faith Movement": Fair Trade Adult Ed Class, Sunday, October 13, 2019, 9:30 & 11 AM in the Library

- a. Focus will be on the faith origins/role of faith in many aspects of the Fair Trade Movement
 1. Fair Trade USA, Fair Trade UK, Ten Thousand Villages, SERRV, Equal Exchange & LWR Partnership, LWR/Thrive Market Partnership, Catholic Relief Services
 2. The various faith groups involved in/support Fair Trade & reasons why
- b. Let's bring and/or wear Fair Trade items to illustrate the many kinds of Fair Trade products. We want to have the SENDA Soccer balls for people to see; Carol will order a few more.
- c. Let's give Fair Trade mini-chocolates to those attending the class

Update 9/29/19: As the class focuses on how faith has played a big part in the FT movement, if you are able to attend the class & feel comfortable doing so, how about sharing a few words about what FT at Ascension means to you? Or how you see our faith connecting with/supporting Fair Trade? We will give those attending an EE FT mini chocolate. If you have Fair Trade items you would be willing to bring as visuals of the many FT products, please do. We will have a table for the FT soccer balls & other FT items. Presentation materials are being finalized this week. Will show a very short video clip & then move into the PPT presentation. Carol will contact Church Office to confirm equipment needed (Church vs. personal laptop? Additional equipment/cables to contact laptop to projector?)

5. "Trunk or Treat" with Ascension Lutheran School: Thursday, October 31, 2019 @ Parking Lot

- a. 12:30-2:30 PM
- b. Give out small packets of Fair Trade chocolate mini's (3 per pkt)
- c. Volunteers Invited to Hand Out Candy
- d. Volunteers Invited to Help with:
 1. A "trunk" to be decorated
 2. Our theme/decorations/costumes
 3. Making up 200 candy packets; need small pkts, candy (Carol will order the candy) We will give the kids milk chocolate EE mini's. We will be mindful of ALS commitment to zero waste; will consult w/ALS on candy packaging

Eloise volunteered her car to be our "trunk". We will organize a work session to fill candy bags. Cheryl volunteered also. We will all put together our own costumes celebrating Fair Trade farmers & artisans.

Update 9/29/19: For ECC, we will give the children a Fair Trade finger puppet. Pam gave us ECC # of 88. Finger puppets have been purchased. Brown paper snack bags (recyclable) and pumpkin stickers have been ordered for the candy packets. Propose a 60 min. "assembling" meeting to sort finger puppets (maybe we focus on animals finger puppets?) & package chocolates. Propose Friday AM, 10/25 or Monday (AM or PM) 10/28. With 4-5 people, we can accomplish everything in an hour or less. Let Carol know if you can help with this & preferred date/time - we'll go with the date/time that works for the group.

So far, Eloise, Carol & Cheryl have volunteered to be at the 10/31 event. More volunteers would be great. We may need to divide into 2 teams for a little while - one to distribute candy packets & another to distribute finger puppets.

6. ALS Chapel Engagement: "Who Wants to Be A Fair Trade Farmer?"

- a. Pastor Chaime has asked if GMT would lead students in the interactive class (with the big dollar bills) during a Chapel opportunity
- b. Pastor Chaime interested in exploring other education opportunities re: Fair Trade, incl opportunities for upper division students to teach younger students
- c. Date/time/details TBD; Carol will meet with Pastor Chaime soon & get more info

Update 9/29/19: Following meeting with Diann, Pastor Chaime, Pastor Steve, Susanne (by phone) & Carol on 9/13/19, plan for the FT skit as follows: ALS students are going to learn about Fair Trade & put on the skit themselves for other students in the coming weeks. This is a great way to have fun in learning. Carol made up a package of information of information /materials given to ALS 9/16/19: 4 of the oversized/big dollar bills for the skit; a copy of the 10K Villages Fair Trade education package (incl the skit & other ideas/information); a copy of GMT/FT Adult Ed Fair Trade Class presentation from 2017 (incl Biblical foundation & Martin Luther insights); and links to 4 short video clips about Fair Trade. We would love to come and see the skit if ALS logistics permit. We look forward to learning more about what the students have learned about Fair Trade. "Think Fair Trade First - book by Ingrid Hess (Carol has 2 copies; sold at GOH Gift Fair 2018)

7. Fair Trade Campaigns National Conference - March 20-22, 2010 @ Westin Hotel, Pasadena

Conference Registration: \$150/\$175 Early Bird Student/General (EB to 11/22/19); \$175/\$250 Student/General (11/23/19-3/19/20); \$200/\$300 Student/General On-Site

It would be great to have several from Ascension attend given the conference location. It is an inspiring learning opportunity.

Update 9/29/19: Fair Trade LA has been invited to have a table at the Gifts of Hope Gift Fair. They will bring flyers about the March 2020 FT Conference & information about FT LA & the many programs they offer throughout the year. Suggestion: Would we like to offer a scholarship (1-2) for others from Ascension to attend the conference in March? Maybe offer \$50-75 for each of 2 scholarships? Let's discuss.

UPDATE ON LWR KITS PROJECT, October, 2019

1. Sign up sheets for Oct 3, 5, 6
 - a. ALS 5th-8th graders on Oct 3 assemble/pack personal care kits
 - b. Sunday School classes with Carol and Eloise on Oct 6
 - c. Sunday School classes pack school kits
 - d. Worshippers pack school kits on Oct 5-6

2. Change of Ingathering Date to October 24th.

3. Quilt and Kit Dedication weekend, Oct 12-13
 - a. Include sample kits for dedication

4. SHIPPING FUND
 - a. Balance from donations (\$722 in Sept after reimbursements)
 - b. ALC Foundation, \$1,000
 - c. ALS October Chapel Offerings
 - d. Life Group mixer at California Pizza Kitchen \$366.50

One Ascension will send approximately 380 school kits (\$532 shipping costs), 200 personal care kits (\$350 shipping costs) and 30 baby kits (\$39) for an estimated total of \$921.

5. Article in newsletter when accounting is complete with thanks and gratitude.

Thank you to all who have participated in this One Ascension service project!

Louise Evenson

ICCV Invites you to
Open Mosque Day

**Come meet your Muslim Neighbors on
October 6th, 2019
12-4 pm**



**12:00- 4:00PM |
Registration Tours –
Exhibits**

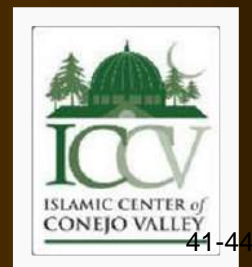
**1:15PM | Duhr Salah
(Midday Prayer)**

**1:30PM- 2:30 PM | Q&A
Session**

**2:30PM- 4:00 PM |
Refreshments served
on Patio**

**Tours and Interactive
Exhibits continue**

**2700 Borchard Rd, Newbury Park
Events@iccv.org**



at

Ascension by for a sip and a sample before

In attendance: Pastor Ken, Pastor Paul, Pastor Tim, Rachael Bowen, Lory Breitzman, Fran Mork, Wyant Morton

Opening Prayer Given by Pastor Ken.

Attendance Figures

The average weekend attendance for 2019 through 09/08 is 445 worshippers. A comparison of 2018 vs. 2019 figures for mid-June to September 7/8 is 335 vs. 342, a slight decrease. Ascension has 1,600 baptized members which means approximately 25% attend services each weekend. Pastor Paul noted that the average for smaller congregations is 35 - 40%. The percentage goes down as the size of the congregation increases. Pastor Ken will do more research on this.

Fall Worship Planning / Advent Services

In October will include an emphasis highlighting the postlude - it's meaning in the service and what to do during this end-of-service time. The narrative liturgy will again be presented on October 20th. The elements of the liturgy are explained throughout the service. There will be a new member class that day and the narrative liturgy will be informative for members of that class. Pastor Tim would like to make the narrative liturgy an annual practice.

Sarah Morton is leading a group to decorate the sanctuary for Advent. The Advent wreath used in the past is too large for the new layout of the sanctuary. There is not a good space for it. An alternative is to have candle stands behind the altar. Pastor Paul will follow up on this.

Advent services will be held on Sunday this year instead of Wednesday with the hope that this will be a better fit in family schedules. They will be Taize services.

Hanging of the Green

The date is set for December 1st which is the Sunday after Thanksgiving. That may be too soon after Thanksgiving for those that might be traveling. Would the high school youth be able to prepare their lefse and Swedish meatballs dinner?

The committee is in agreement that choirs should be invited to participate in the service this year, including the school choirs. Music should be sacred, not secular. What should be the emphasis or focus for the service? Should the majority of the decorating take place during the service (as was the case when this service first became a tradition) or prior to the service? Pastors Tim and Paul will discuss this further and present their ideas at the next meeting.

Bishop Eaton's Visit

One service at 10:00 is planned for December 8th when Bishop Eaton will be at Ascension. It will likely draw in Lutherans from other congregations. After further discussion it was decided to have two services on Sunday - one at 9:00 with Bishop Eaton and the regular 11:00 service.

Next Meeting

Our next meeting is Wednesday, October 16, 2019 at 6:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Rachael Bowen

New Members

September 2019

Jamie & Daniel Bryant (*Associate member with King of Glory, Newbury Park*)

Emily*

Ashley*

1333 Calle Durazno

Thousand Oaks, CA 91360

(805) 551 - 4430

Lester & Mildred Johnson (*Transfer from Grace Lutheran, Santa Maria*)

(Les & Micky)

425 Country Club Dr.

Simi Valley, CA 93065

Baptism

Wyatt Weckworth

September 15

DOB - 02/06/2019