



Pastor Tim's Council Report- May 2022

Grace and Peace to you and happy Easter season! I pray that this month of May finds well and "living the resurrection" like we see the people of the church in the book of Acts do. It has been a good and productive month and I truly feel that God is giving us the vision with which, if we are faithful, we can move into the future thriving and growing as a church.

I look forward to the conversation that will happen on May 11th at the joint School Board/Church Council meeting. This has been quite a wonderful year for the TK- 6 School and the ECC. There is a real sense among the staff and greater community that the work we did last year to reshape and rebuild the finance and the board leadership is starting to come to fruition. Some examples of this include, the auction results, the passing of the budget, the intentions to return on part of the teachers and school families, the comments that we get from families at the ECC and the school. Rich and Jenny along with Pastor Julie and the school board and the church's executive are committed to continue to do this work as well. At the meeting we will hear about this, and I will suggest that some of the focus of this work needs to be vision and identity. We need to better define: Who are we as a school? How does who we are differentiate us from other schools and help families looking for us find us? Where are we going? What kind of difference do we want to make in the lives of our students and families? What are our goals behind this? All these questions are ones that we need to ask in order to direct this energy that we are building the future. For the first time in a long time, I am excited about doing more than just surviving as a ministry of the school!

The work of the Nominating Committee is on schedule. At this point the only positions we have left to fill are President Elect for church council and School board, Secretary for School board and an at large position for both the School Board and Foundation. We have asked a couple of people who are currently in the discernment process. It is slow and steady work, but I am always amazed at the leaders God gives us to do our work together.

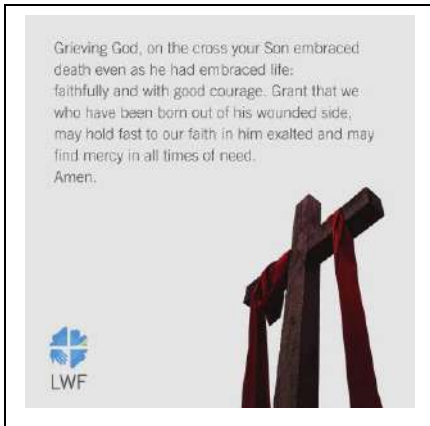
Finally, as I envision next year, I really feel that our church leadership needs to prioritize worship among the major actions of my vision. At this point in the life of the church, as we look at declining worship numbers, coming out of the pandemic and challenging the people of Ascension to serve in ministry, prioritizing worship becomes an opportunity to bring some revival to our church. How do we encourage people to be in the habit of worship? How do we not only ask them to come to worship but also greet one another, welcome visitors, be a part of the Education time (including Sunday School), serve as a greeter, usher, communion assistant,

reader, etc.? These are efforts that we need to make to engage to people of Ascension and get them excited about serving in the mission that we share.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Tim

Church Council Report – Pastor Steve Herder – May 6, 2022

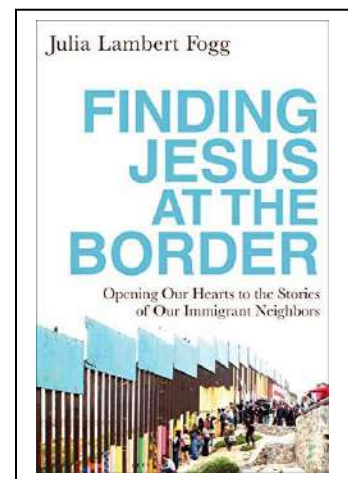


Doesn't it feel great to be back worshipping together, especially during a very special Holy Week and Easter season?!

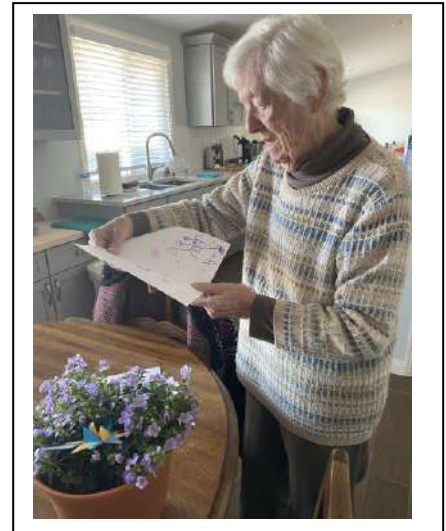
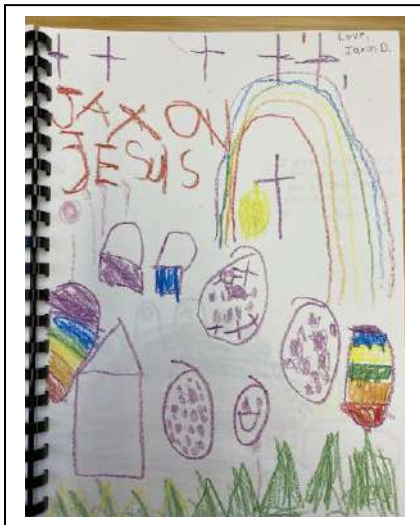
I preached the last weekend of Lent (April 2-3) on Philippians 3, and then was called upon to preach the following weekend, Palm Sunday, for Pastor Tim. Our love and prayers have been with him and his family on the loss of his father Harry. We thank everyone who had a leadership part in all our Holy Week worship services, with a special thanks to Pastor Paul as our Director of Worship, since he'll be finishing his work on Pentecost Sunday, June 5th, as will Christi Labrenz as the director of our Carillons. Come that day to thank them for their wonderful ministries! (The Easter photo below, is from Lauren Godfrey.)



We had another month of excellent classes on Sunday mornings, led by Pastor Chamie on Palm Sunday, Pastor Paul on the Sunday after Easter, and Rev. Dr. Julia Fogg, from Cal Lutheran, on May 1st (photo below.)



Our Senior Adult Ministries continued this month, and we appreciate each of our leaders, visitors, and Eucharistic Ministers. I had the joy of delivering 16 flowers and cards from our Early Childhood Center to some of our seniors of our congregation (photo of Norma Cretal).



On the Monday of Holy Week, the Monday Morning Women's Bible Study group that meets in the Bethlehem Room celebrated Carol Ranschau's 90th birthday and gave her the gift of a peach tree which was soon planted in her yard. That week I visited her and took the photo.



On April 19 I attended a zoom meeting with The International Rescue Committee on the process of welcoming refugees into our community. Members of various houses of faith in our community participated. Our local synagogues seem to have the most active support for "Community Sponsorship." "Clients are paired with community groups which commit to provide clearly in-kind and/or financial contributions as well as volunteer services to support the welcome and integration of clients in your local community." Keep this possibility in prayer. Today I received a phone call from a woman who is a Cal Lutheran alumna, an ELCA International Women's Leader Scholar, asking about possible sponsorship.

This weekend (May 7) we are excited to host the Fair Trade Gift Fair!! We thank Carol Bjelland for leading this effort, our Global Ministries Team, and the many people in our church and school, who are helping with this first-of-a-kind for us, community outreach. My next report will share some photos and stories.

Another huge event that I was happy to attend was our School's Gala in Westlake. With the joy and outstanding leadership of Rick and Jenni at our school and ECC, it was no wonder that this event was going to be very fun and very successful. We are so blessed.

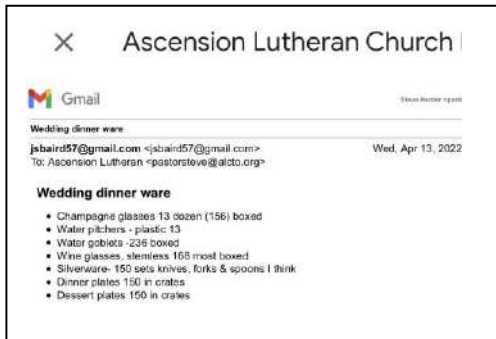


That morning, April 9, at Grace Lutheran Church in Huntington Beach, I had the honor to preside and speak at the memorial service for my friend and mentor in global mission, Karen Merkel, of the World Mission Prayer League. <https://wmpl.org/> She preached here about ten years ago. Several Ascension members would attend the WMPL spring banquet with me through the years.

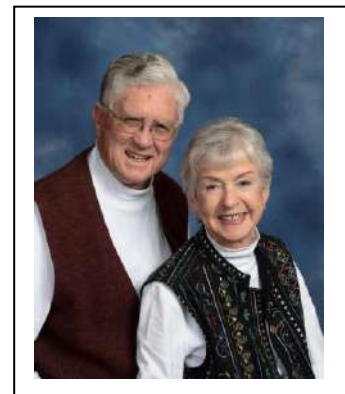
Two more generosity stories from this past month: we received this certificate of appreciation from Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service for Ascension's contributions; and on April 30th we applied for a \$50,000 grant for our Agape Fund and received this email on May 5th saying that the Gene Haas Foundation board of directors accepted our request!



Our Green Faith Team met on April 27th (on the “4th” Wednesday of each month because we are “for” Creation Care!). Our leader is Kristine Werner. She and Pastor Chamie will be leading another adult ed class on May 22nd. We thank Christian Teufel and our youth group for painting the ceramic coffee mugs that we are now using on Sunday mornings (instead of the throw-away cups). At the end of this month, we will receive a generous gift from the Baird family of 150 table settings for Pederson kitchen. Then when the dishwasher is fixed (thank you, Council for designating money for that repair), we will be able to have large gathering meals in Pederson again, without disposable plates, etc.



Of the fifteen people who attended the zoom meeting for the Southwest CA Synod Conference Assembly, six of us were from Ascension, so we were well represented! We elected new leaders to our synod council, none from Ascension. This month we say congratulations and God's blessings to Amanda Berg who graduates from Wartburg Theological Seminary, in Dubuque, Iowa, on May 15th! We pray God's blessings on all our college and university graduates this month, including those at Cal Lutheran on May 14th.



The photo on the right is of our friends Calvin and Vickie Beard. Vickie died this week and I visited Cal the next day on his 94th birthday. Thank you for keeping Cal and his three children (David, Calla, and Tim) in your prayers. Cal and Vickie have been here for almost 20 years. She was an Associate in Ministry (AIM) and then a Deacon in our ELCA, serving congregations in South Gate and Encino as a parish administrator. She loved her work, and we thank God for her life, faith and ministries.

God's love and blessings in Jesus,

Pastor Steve

Prayers for One Ascension Leadership

“Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with thanksgiving.”

Colossians 4:2

“In our prayers for you we always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love that you have for all the saints.”

Colossians 1:3-4

LEADERSHIP

Church Council

Alan Baker
Louise Evenson
Camryn Force
Ed Klodt
Carrie Leonard
Mike Marvin
Debra Papageorge
Pete Swavely

School Board

Scott Bean
Naomi Little
Paul Hoffmeier
Ricky Pfeifer
Kathleen Rudrud
Ron Rudrud
Steve Smuck
Ashley Steere

Foundation

Alan Baker
Stefano Borzone
Anita Cohen
Paul Evenson
Sandra Howe
Lori Hillman
Doug Morrow
Norb Rud
Kris Swavely
Don Weeks

ECC STAFF

Donna Adams
Christina Alfaro
Stacy Andrews
Brittani Childers
Esperanza Cortez
Laurie D'Alonzo
Maryann Dib
Lyn Derla
Kayla Fromberg
Shelby Hormell
Liz Hoskinson
Arelly Kendall
Jen Ledesma
Nicole Lewis
Grace Ma
Karen Martinez
Tanya Mathews
Jenni McCoy
DeAnna Means
Jessica Peters
Jessica Placas
Karyn Ring
Ariana Stevenson
Sonya Sweet
Alex Trundy
Heather Udell
Elizabeth Van Mourik
Greta W
Josie Zapata

CONTRACTED

Cleaning Staff from Millennium: Columba, Ady and Alex
Landscape Staff from Malibu Landscape: Efrain, Jose, Manuel

CHURCH STAFF

Dianne Beck
Stacy Bosco
Cecille Clayvielle
Jude Delkeskamp
Pastor Tim Delkeskamp
Amy Gonzalez
Jean Gravrock
Pastor Paul Gravrock
Jacob Halvorson
Malia Hassenbein
Mara Hassenbein
Jeff Hengst
Pastor Steve Herder
Cody Knapp
Debra Kusnierek
Diane Kusnierek
Christi Labrenz
Nancy Lee
Yohan Lopez
Camden Lorentson
Pastor Julie McCain
Lan Merrill
Wyant Morton
Sydney Newmark
Margaret Ricci
Cameron Ruggiero
Kaylee Searway
Aidyn Searway
Christian Teufel
Sara Wallace

TK- 6 ELEMENTARY STAFF

Maria Ackerman
Connie Angress
Corinne Angress
Ashley Babich
Elizabeth Bonilla
Mary Bordokas
Monica Bryant
Danika Bursvold
Pastor Chamie Delkeskamp
Jennifer Farrell
Holly Foster
Spencer Gottmer
Rich Gregory
Staci H
Camille Harrington
Heather Hartson
Sohee Kim
Devin Milligan
Charlotte Mirada
Christine Mohler
Stephanie Pagano
Kendra Saunders
Carolyn Shields
Sara Wallace
Ryan Weber

Updated 5-4-22

Ascension Green Faith Team Calendar

We meet the 4th Wed. of each month because we are "4" creation!



September

September 1 – October 4 Season of Creation

September 21 – Zero Emissions Day

October Oct. 4, St. Francis

First Sunday in October – Blessing of the Animals

November

December

Dec. 4 – Wildlife Conservation Day Dec. 5 – World Soil Day

January

January 5 – National Bird Day

February

March

March 22 – World Water Day, work with our synod team for an event

April

April 22 – Earth Day April 29 – Arbor Day

With our School, tomato plant sales

May National Bike Month (May 20, Bike to Work Day)

Third Friday in May – Endangered Species Day

June

June 8 - World Oceans Day June 22 – World Rainforest Day

July

August



Earth Care Pledge

Our **worship** and discipleship will celebrate God's grace and glory in creation.

Our **education** will encourage and support each other in keeping and healing the creation.

Our **facilities** will be managed, maintained, and upgraded to respect and cherish all creation.

Our **outreach** will encourage community involvement and public policy to protect and restore the earth as well as oppressed and neglected people.



Earth Care Pledge:

Worship

Preservice slide on creation care; Second prayer of intercession is on creation

Education

School; ECC; Sunday School, Confirmation, Adult Education, Life Groups

Facilities

One Ascension Oasis what does it mean to be a green campus?

Outreach

helping others catch the vision and urgency for care for all of God's creation,
locally & globally

Topics:

Protection of oceans, rivers, lakes, watersheds, coral reefs

Clean air

Water conservation

Forest preservation

Recycling Reduce Reuse Reusable containers for leftovers at restaurants, reusable water bottles

Food waste

Composting

Gardening

Reducing/removing use of plastic

Endangered species and habitats

Electric vehicles

Mass transportation

Recharging stations

Bicycles. Electric bikes.

Eco friendly

Travel Clothing Cleaning supplies Homes Investments Gift wrapping

Carbon offset

Solar energy

Saving energy ideas

Policy advocacy Clean energy tax incentives Energy efficiency & fuel economy standards

Contact your Representative....

Caring for those affected the most by climate change

Hear the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor

Events/ Webinars/ Classes/ Seminars/ Conferences/ Documentaries/ Books

Partners and social media connections

Lutherans Restoring Creation, Lutherans Restoring Creation California

Water Is Sacred (Facebook page)

Creation Justice Ministries

Interfaith Power & Light

Southwest California Synod Green Faith Team

Center for Climate Justice and Faith, PLTS/CLU

Catholic Climate Covenant

The Climate Reality Project

World Wildlife Fund

Pastor Julie Council Report May 2022

This month it was an absolute delight to baptize Luke Miller, whose family had been waiting a long time for the baptism and was so excited for it to finally come together. They were also grateful to be warmly welcomed!

I was at the ECC many nights, for orientations at Mom's Nights. Today I was at the ECC for outdoor classroom time—the students decided to bury me in the sand (12 of them were a part of this plan!), and as I write this, I still have sand in my socks! As I went to dig myself out and leave the ECC, they begged me not to leave. Then this evening at Mom's night, one of the buriers introduced me to her mom. We had a great conversation, and at the end of the night when the children were teaching us a song, that girl ran to get me so that she had me and her mom each on one side of her. Now I also have excellent flyers for the ECC-specific things we are offering: Baby Book Group, Park Playdates, Sunday School, VBS. I am building some really good energy around our Baby Book Group and Park Playdates and am excited by these opportunities to connect.

I was at Camp El Camino Pines for 3 days. First, I was at our Bishop's Colloquy—a gathering of pastors and lay leaders where we engaged in group spiritual direction and reflected together on emotional intelligence and especially how to lead in the midst of exhaustion. The time together with other pastors led us to reflect that there are insufficient opportunities to gather with other pastors, and I am currently working on gathering together a group of pastors who might help plan additional retreats and gatherings.

Then, I stayed at El Camino Pines to be with our 5th and 6th graders. This was rich and fun time together (and camp did not even charge me to stay—they are such excellent partners in ministry!). They were there for outdoor education, and Pastor Tim's son was even one of our instructors. I didn't stay the whole week, and as I went to leave, the girls especially all begged me to stay. This relationship building is such an investment.

Camp joined us for worship and Sunday School this weekend. I am planning to invite incoming 6th, 7th, and 8th graders to join me for a week of camp this summer, as that will be the same youth who I was with at camp for Outdoor Education.

Children's Ministry had a craft table at the Fair Trade Fair. We saw mostly church families come through. We did have at least one family who had never set foot on our campus and heard through a friend of a friend about it. They stayed for a long while making crafts with me and we had great conversations. Mara has worked with me to tighten up our advertising, and so we are using a similar flyer from Easter, but with dates updated. I also reflected with several others that a general sign for the church that we could pull out for events like this (with a message like: "Welcome! We're glad you're here! We'd love to see you at worship..."). I had flyers with children's ministry information, but not general information. When we have events that we want to have non-church families show up at, what do we want them to see? How do we want to invite them to further engage?

The Confirmation students have worked hard and we get to Confirm them this weekend!

We are in the midst of recruiting for VBS and have a significant need for volunteers. I am also currently in the midst of gathering together a team of people to brainstorm around Sunday School and how we can improve it and increase its attendance.