



Vision:

Transforming lives one person at a time



Mission:

Creating a community whose members reveal and practice what
a real life is in Jesus

Ascension's Mission to Action to Success

Within 5 years: Reverse Ascension's membership decline and build a vibrant congregation whose members are transformed by Jesus into who God created them to be

Major action #1:
More purposefully position Ascension School and the ECC as conduits for new church members

Major action #2:
Establish generosity as a source of personal blessing and spiritual growth

Major action #3:
Place a big bet on life groups as a pipeline to greater member engagement with the church

Major action #4: Elevate worship to become a central point of the Ascension experience in engaging all age groups

Major action #5:
Encourage all members to engage in personal daily devos that involve scripture and prayer

Success is measured by:

- 10% increase in worship attendance
- 20% increase in members purposefully engaged in at least one ministry
- 10% increase in generosity as measured by giving levels
- Every member has an inspiring story to share

ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL AGENDA

Wednesday, August 17, 2022 – 7:00 PM

Location: Library

Call to Order and Welcome – Ed

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

Devotions – Carrie

Open Forum

Mission to Action – Council Discussion

The Questions:

1. What prevents our members from inviting others into the Ascension community?
2. What can we do to enlarge that pipeline of new members, or at least engage more people from the broader community?

Approval of Agenda – Ed

Old Business

1. Update on School Board President-Elect Position
2. Update on Land Sale
3. Framing Up Council's Mini-Retreat (Sept. 24)
4. Agenda Items and Time of Day for Ascension's Annual Meeting (Sept. 25)

New Business

1. Appoint New Council Treasurer – Dave Harkins
2. Ascension's Five-Week Worship Initiative, Beginning 9/11
3. Request for Thrivent Choice Funding

Presentation of Treasurer's Report – Mike

Recurring Business

Approve New Members & Affirm Baptisms

Action Items

Action Tracker - Kaylee

Approval of Minutes - Ed

Council Meeting

Consent Approval of Reports to Council

1. Administrator's Report
2. Pastor's Reports
 - a. Pastor Tim Delkeskamp
 - b. Pastor Steve Herder
 - c. Pastor Julie McCain
3. Communications Update
4. GMT Report

Information Items

Next Council Meeting – September 21 at 7pm (*Who has devotions and refreshments?*)

Closing Prayer

Adjournment

New Members & Baptisms Report
August 2022

Baptisms for July

Name	Date of Birth	Date Baptized	
Zoe Nadine Coltin	Oct. 10, 2021	July 10, 2022	9am
Jaxson Thomas Horton	Aug. 30, 2016	July 10, 2022	11am
Reese Joy Carnett	April 21, 2020	July 17, 2022	9am

New Members for July

None

Council Action Tracker

Action Item No.	Action Item Description	Assigned To	Date Assigned	Date Due	Notes
2	Leadership Retreat			August	Council typically schedules, secures venue, creates agenda, coordinates speakers/sessions, provides continental breakfast and lunches for participants. 7/20/2022: Ed is looking into Sept 10 or 24th at his home. This meeting is confirmed for Sept 24.
3	Schedule Joint Meetings with School Board				
4	Confirm Director's and Officer's Coverage Annually	Kaylee S		in annual report	8/9/2022: in progress: summary requested from broker. 8/10: Summary received and reviewed for inclusion in the Annual Report.

**Ascension Lutheran Church
Council Meeting Minutes
July 20, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.**

The council meeting was called to order by Ed Klodt at 7:04 p.m.

Council Members In Attendance: Alan Baker, Rachael Bowen, Camryn Force, Ed Klodt, Carrie Leonard, Mike Marvin, Jeanette Ruggiero, Ashlee Steere, Pete Swavely

Others: Pastor Tim, Pastor Steve, Pastor Julie, Kaylee Searway

We Believe: Mission Statement of Ascension Lutheran Church

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

Motto – Invite, Grow, Serve – recited by all.

Devotions – Ed

In Mark 12:30 Jesus shares the greatest commandment which is, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength." What does this love look like? It can feel abstract until we show others by our words and actions what God's love looks like.

Open Forum - No items

Mission to Action - Council Discussion

The question posed to Council this evening: What does Ascension do better than any other (or most other) church(es) that you are aware of, and how might we build on that strength?

Responses:

ALS and the ECC are strengths for Ascension. Pastor Julie has already been building relationships with school families to draw them to worshipping at Ascension.

Our Easter celebration; the Carillons bell choir

The generosity of Ascension members

Members rise to a challenge.

Ascension's grace-oriented theology. All are welcome and all views are welcome.

A robust Global Ministries team which is a meaningful way to live out faith.

Ascension is a community that is welcoming to new members. Pastor Julie recruited some Ascension families to personally welcome two new school families and to worship with them.

The challenge for Council and committees:

How do we leverage these strengths?

Approval of the Agenda

Pastor Tim added a New Business item - Two requests for the use of Thrivent Choice dollars.

A motion was made, seconded and passed unanimously to approve the agenda as amended.

Old Business

1. Update on filling Church Council Treasurer and School Board President-Elect positions

Pastor Tim reported that there are two possible candidates for the Treasurer position and he hopes to have a name ready to present to the Council at our next meeting. The search for someone to fill the School Board position continues and there may be a possible candidate by September.

2. Approval of the May 11, 2022 combined School Board/Church Council meeting minutes.

A motion was made, seconded and passed unanimously to approve the May 11th meeting minutes.

New Business

1. Finance Function Update

Sydney Newmark is back full-time as a staff accountant. She is also managing payables and payroll for Ascension School.

2. Request for Thrivent Choice Funds

a. Pastor Julie, working with ALS principal Rich Gregory is putting together a speaker series on Parenting. They would like to offer dinner prior to each session. The school will cover costs for the speakers. The church would cover costs for advertising and the dinners. Pastor Julie requested \$600 of Thrivent Choice funds to cover the advertising and dinner costs.

b. Rally Day is September 11 and is on the ECC and ALS calendar as well. The school has committed some funds for this event and Pastor Julie requested \$1,200 of Thrivent Choice funds to sponsor this event on behalf of the church.

A motion was made, seconded and passed unanimously to distribute the Thrivent Choice funds as recommended.

3. Annual Meeting on 9/25

The agenda will include ratifying the budget that was approved at the June meeting. This meeting could be held between the 9:00 and 11:00 services.

4. Leadership Mini-Retreat on 8/13

A quick poll indicated that 8/13 will not work for several people. This gathering will be postponed until September. Ed will send out an email to ascertain the best date for everyone.

5. New Signature Authorizations

a. Electronic Voting Resolution - provides the ability for Council to vote on issues via email

A motion was made, seconded and passed unanimously to approve the Electronic Voting Resolution.

b. Signature Authorization Resolution

A motion was made, seconded and passed unanimously to include Carrie Leonard, past Council president, as an authorized signatory for banking relationships until such time as a Treasurer is appointed.

Treasurer's Report

Mike Marvin reported the year-to-date offerings for the fiscal year ending 6/30/2022 were (\$44,911). The overall net income is (\$6,528) but the financials are still a work in progress. Mike expects that the final net income total will be closer to \$0.

The sale of the lot with the former preschool has been delayed due to the sewer line work required by the City of Thousand Oaks. As a result, actual Mission Possible interest payments were \$61,068 rather than the budgeted \$15,190 resulting in a (\$40,503) variance.

The financials will be completed over the weekend in time for the annual audit.

ECC and ALS financials are not yet completed,

Christi Labrenz and Norb have completed the financials for the Foundation.

For Council consideration: Establishing an annual \$25,000 budget item for Maintenance with contributions from the church, school and Foundation. Initial funds could come from PPP church funds. \$11,000 for air conditioning replacement has already been allocated from PPP funds.

A motion was made, seconded and passed unanimously to approve the Treasurer's report as presented.

Recurring Business

There were no baptisms or new members in June.

Action Items

Kaylee reviewed the open and regular action items.

Carrie suggested adding an item for a joint Council / School Board meeting

Approval of Minutes

1. June Council meeting

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

2. June Congregational meeting

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

Discussion - It was noted that the minutes include the motion to approve the slate of leaders but does not include the names of those nominated and approved. That information provides proof of the new signers to our banks. The congregation will be approving the minutes at the September Congregational meeting so the minutes can be amended before then.

A motion was made, seconded and passed unanimously to approve adding the names of the nominated and approved Ascension leadership to the minutes for the June Congregational meeting.

Consent Approval of Reports to Council

1. Administrator's Report

2. Pastor's reports - Pastor Tim Delkeskamp

Pastor Steve Herder

Pastor Julie McCain

3. Communications Update

4. Global Ministries Team Report

5. School Board

A motion was made, seconded and passed unanimously to approve the Reports to Council

Information Items

1. The next council meeting is August 17 @ 7:00 pm
2. Devotions and refreshments - TBD

Closing Prayer

Meeting adjourned at 8:18.

Respectfully submitted by Rachael Bowen

Attendance

I looked at the averages of attendance for 2022 in two groups: before Easter and after Easter. I found that in person attendance is trending up and online is trending down. I'm not sure I'm confident enough to definitively declare that more people are coming back to church, but the evidence points to that conclusion! Our in person weekend attendance was averaging 194 before Easter and is now averaging 239. Online views have dropped slightly from 174 to 149. Let's keep inviting and attending!

Maintenance

By the time the council meets we will be in final preparations to receive students back on campus. Teachers and other staff are expected back on Monday, August 15th with ECC students coming Monday August 22nd and TK-6 students coming Wednesday, August 24th. I couldn't be prouder of the maintenance team. Jeff and Cam did an amazing job delegating and managing some seasonal help that came for summer. Together they tackled a daunting list of tasks to try and fulfill new principal Rich Gregory's vision of the improvements we could make to the campus over the summer. Light poles were painted, cement was removed and replaced, pillars were painted, pathways were improved, power washing and locker cleaning happened as they always do, the list goes on and on...Some of the setbacks they encountered were delays on new window installations, a slide finally being delivered, but with the wrong color scheme, and multiple HVAC failings.

Administration

We have posted the front desk position on our website, and sent blasts out to the church, ECC, and TK-6 families. We have a couple of candidates, and I plan to start interviews the week of August 15th. Mara has been amazing at leaping into her new position as Worship Coordinator while graciously still helping in her old administrative role. She's asked for annual report submissions to be in by Friday, August 12th, so please help in making her job as easy as possible by having reports ready from any committees you work with by Monday, August 15th to compile.

Finance

Mike has been working very hard to have the preliminary numbers ready for the fiscal year. Mike and Christi Labrenz had to "unwind" the work of others to understand how particular items were booked, and discern a consistent and clear path forward. While it's been a season of rolling up sleeves and digging in for Mike and Christi, it has been a season of relief for me. I'm extremely grateful for their dedication and perseverance to ensure that what we report is accurate and correct.

In other great news: Dave Harkins has agreed to serve as Church Council Treasurer! I'm excited to hear your appointment of him to fill the open position and work with him for the rest of the year. We'll be a wonderful add to the Council.

Human Resources

You might know we have three different employee handbooks at Ascension! While I've been maintaining the handbook for church employees, this year is the first time I've been able to dig in and make changes to the TK-6 and ECC Handbooks. I added a Table of Contents and rearranged the TK-6 handbook to echo the layout of the ECC and Church handbooks. The ECC handbook was reviewed by our legal counsel as a representative of the changes we intend for all three handbooks. The School Board will be reviewing the TK-6 and ECC handbooks with an aim to approve them at their August 15th meeting. I'll be there to discuss the slight changes we made to

each. Once they approve the School Handbooks I'll make the same changes to the Church Handbook for distribution, hopefully in September 2022.

Much of the content in the Handbooks remains the same with some minor tweaks. We have made the decision to uniformly classify full time as 32 or more hours per week. We previously listed 30, 32, and 40 hours across the three entities. This uniformity will help us consistent administer health and retirement benefits. I updated some FMLA wording per changes to California state law, and we refined the Communication Pathways to define how the School Board should be notified in the event of a dispute between employees for TK-6 and ECC employees. We added Independence Day as a holiday in the ECC Handbook as their team is actively working during that period, but closed down for that day.

Training

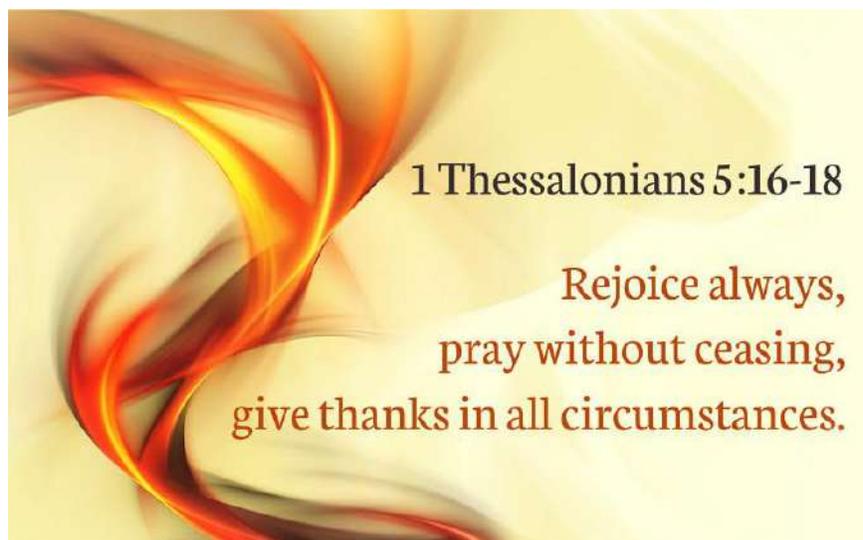
I'm excited about the Professional Development time we will get with all staff the week of August 15th before students come back to campus. I encourage you to join us for devotions at 9:00 on Monday, or Trivia at Figueroa Mountain Brewing Company on Monday afternoon.

A subject we have spent some time developing is organizational culture. Our executive leadership team has spent considerable time to discussing it and developing concepts we have read in books like The Culture Code by Daniel Coyle and The Advantage by Patrick Lencioni. We'll spend about two hours on Monday morning discussing culture as a complete One Ascension Team. We'll articulate some of the values we have and some that we want to develop related to culture. It will be a great session to start with and set the tone for our week of training together and for our year of ministry together.

We've coordinated for Andrea Arey to come and discuss benefits available through Portico. I'll give a presentation on our payroll software and how to use it. Rich will lead a session on Mandatory Reporting. Teachers will attend a variety of sessions on religion curriculum, writing, makerspace, and more in between times of preparing their classrooms. One of the cool things we will do together is pray over each classroom.

Kaylee Searway

Director of Administrative Ministries





Pastor Tim's Council Report- August 2022

Grace and Peace to you and I pray your summer is going well.

For this month's report, I would like to point you to a document called **A Renewed Vision for Worship – Tenets**. It is a document that the me, Pastor Julie, and the Worship Visioning Team has been working hard on. I will be presenting on this at our council meeting and would like you to review it prior to the meeting. Please note that is a working document and only in draft stage right now. Ideally, I would be presenting a finished document, but I realize that your input and the input of our worship staff may cause us to reconsider some of the wording. It is my intention that this document will provide the foundation for our worship leadership to accomplish the goal of prioritizing worship this year. I look forward to our conversation.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Tim

A Renewed Vision for Worship – Tenets (DRAFT)

We desire that each of the worship experiences at Ascension are **Spirit-filled and Jesus-centered** and have the effect of **transforming** each worshipper to be the **body of Christ in the world**. With that in mind, as we **intentionally design and evaluate** worship celebrations allowing for creativity and freedom, we hold fast to these tenets:

Sacred Space – Deliberately attentive to the promised presence of the God we worship, we cultivate/create/set apart the space (sanctuary, outdoors, online) within which we worship. We do our best to create a space that is filled with beauty, free of distractions and points those who are worshipping to the presence of God.

For the worshipper: They recognize the chosen worship space as holy and set apart inviting them into the presence of God.

Word of God – The word of God is the “cradle of Christ” and reveals to us our triune God. The Holy Spirit uses the reading and proclamation of the word to convict us of our sin, convey God’s forgiveness, create, and nurture faith in all who truly hear it. Every worship service should have the purpose of reading and proclaiming God’s word.

For the worshipper: At each worship service they experience the power of Gods word and through the power of the Holy Spirit they are convicted and inspired by it.

Holy Communion – In Holy communion, Christ calls us to remember him and his sacrificial love for us. Communion is a means of God’s grace. Therefor we are called to celebrate Holy Communion when we gather together as a community and we trust its transforming effect upon us.

For the worshipper: Holy Communion is a sacred time of reverence and reflection upon the gift and sacrifice of Jesus’ life. It binds us together as a community.

Liturgy – The “work of the people” is meaningfully integrated into the worship experience for the sake of encouraging to participation of all who come.

For the worshipper: As they actively participate in worship, their actions, words, and music draw an intimate connection with God and the rest of the worshipping community.

Music – Music in worship is an offering to God. In the desire to give of our “first fruits,” we seek excellence in all aspects of producing that offering. Music is also a gift retuned to us in that it has the effect of binding worshippers together in an emotional response, conveying biblical teaching, and reflecting theology. Music is to be selected, taught, sung, and technically conveyed with deep care.

For the worshipper: The singing and special music invokes a spiritual and emotional response to God’s love for them and the world, it teaches us about Gods love for us and the world, and it brings us together as a community with a shared song.

Prayer- Worship at Ascension is filled with and supported by prayer. Inside of service our community, playing the role of the “royal priesthood” intercedes for One Ascension, the whole Body of Christ, for the local community and the world. Outside of the service, the whole congregation is asked to commit to actively pray for worship at Ascension.

For the worshipper: Trusting in the power and effectiveness of prayer, each worshipper is invited into prayer during the service. feel the power of prayer. Outside of the service our church is called to pray for Ascensions worship life and for its worship leaders.

Hospitality- Deliberate effort must be made to welcome all who attend and help visitors to feel welcome in worship and to connect to the whole Ascension community. As we plan worship, we need to keep those who may not know how to worship in mind.

For the worshipper: Everyone, especially visitors, should feel welcomed and be encouraged to engage in worship and connect with other worshippers.

Leading Worship: Lay leadership of all ages are invited to participate in the various worship leadership opportunities. A standard of excellence needs to be maintained through training, practicing and performance of these opportunities.

For the worshipper: We trust that the Holy Spirit has gifted this congregation with members who both can bring excellence to the various worship leadership roles and find the experience of doing so deeply fulfilling as a part of their call.

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

Slowdowns in the summer do not happen at Ascension, and this past month was no exception. Through the highs and lows of daily life we experience the presence of Christ through the Spirit and one another.

Staff and leaders have been fully committed to worship services, Walk to Emmaus retreats, pastoral care, school outdoor and indoor fixit projects, finance updates, VBS, adult education, Sunday School, youth trip, LWR kit fundraising, quilt making, a new brighter projector installed in the sanctuary, planning for the fall (ECC starts Aug. 22 and school Aug. 24, Rally Sunday Sept. 11, a special worship series, LWR kits assembly, Blessings of the Pets Oct. 2, Fair Trade Fair Oct. 9, and Gifts of Hope November 13 and 20).

Sadly, Howie Wennes, Nancy Most, Marty Spadaro, Mark Wolff, Nancy Coffman, Tim Buto, and some other relatives of members, died this past month. We have been caring for these families and planning many services. Thank you for your prayers and support for them. We have witnessed amazing care for loved ones.

Before my sabbatical Howie Wennes gave me the book “All Saints: Daily Reflections on Saints, Prophets, and Witnesses for Our Time.” It’s one that he would read every day. I commend it to you as well. At the end of this report, I’ll include his daily prayer which will also be a part of his memorial service on August 14th at 1:00pm.



As a full-time pastor my last two sermons were last week (on stewardship) and this coming weekend (a thank you to the congregation for your many ministries these last 15 years and an encouragement to grow them in the future). The outline for that sermon will be the four themes in this heart illustration plus Senior Adult Ministries. Fun story: in God’s sense of humor, I recently felt led to subscribe to the “Journal for Preachers.” I am a lifelong learner after all!

Our adult education classes have been well received. Two classes on Michelangelo and two on St. Francis, highlighting the Christian virtues of beauty and goodness. Jim Overton will lead the last class. And Di Starzak had an excellent class on Stop the Bleed that was well attended with an intergenerational group.

Monday Morning Women's Bible Study leaders have been planning for the September start of a year-long study of the Gospel of Luke. It will also include evening zoom studies. Susanne Hopkins and more leaders will be at a west patio table between services in August for women to sign up. Susanne also continues to do her popular online and email Monday morning devotions.

Chris Clark and our Community Concerns Team, and Eloise Cohen and our Global Ministries Team, never stop in their local and global ministries. I'm glad that I can keep working with them and all our Senior Adult Ministries team, and with Linda Morrow and our prayer team.

Our ministries with the Caring Ones and the Agape Fund have been well used this past month. We used to see about one person a day. Now it seems like it's about three a day, not that we can help everyone who calls, but we listen and help as we are able. The staff delighted in one huge success story of getting "Johnny" housed after being homeless. I told part of his story in my last sermon.

Each day Stacy and I post 2-6 prayers, verses, or announcements on our Ascension Facebook page. We are now up to 2,122 people who are connected to this outreach ministry.

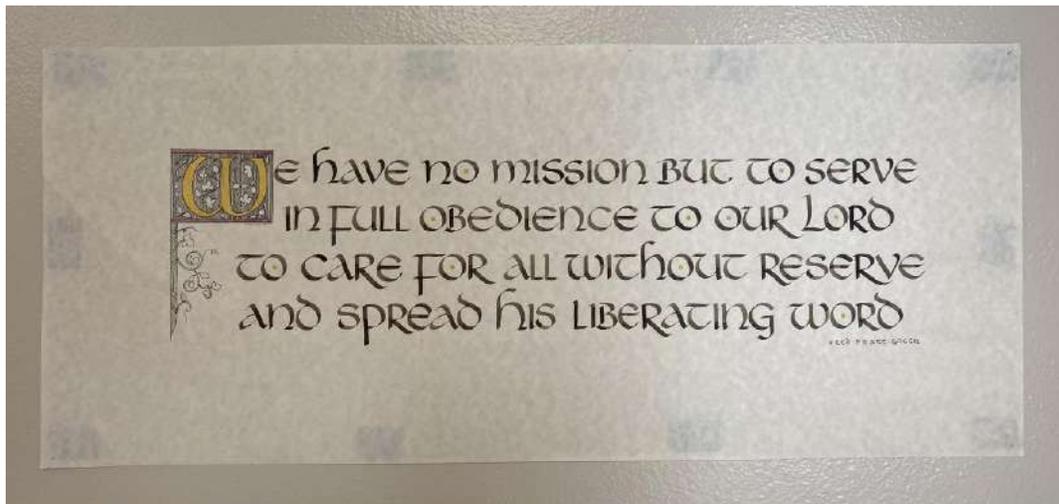
A large and important one-day project was leading our summer [Jubilee USA](#) board meeting, online, on August 3. I was happy with our Jubilee staff and board's commitment to our advocacy work. Ascension will have opportunity to participate in a paper chain project on Sept 11, in prep for the [World Bank Group/IMF](#) annual meetings in DC, October 14-16.

Two years ago, I said "yes" to being on the local committee for the [14th International Congress on Luther Research](#), at Cal Lutheran, Aug. 14-19. My roles are coordinating transportation for our keynote speakers. (I'll do a thank you to drivers in my next report.) Also, with a team, I'm organizing the five morning worship services with preachers and presiders

from around the world. There will be about 140 Luther scholars present. The public is welcome to the morning sessions.

Yes, I'm counting down the days until my work transitions to about half-time beginning September 1. I thank Pastor Tim, the Council and congregation for giving me this opportunity to continue to be an associate pastor here, and the grace of working hours per month, not hours per week, to give me flexibility to spend more time with family.

Let's all "make room for the Spirit," as Howie Wennes was fond of saying. Your One Ascension leaders and staff are planning a fabulous fall for us. Come, worship, pray, learn, witness, serve, advocate, give, in response to Jesus' amazing grace for us and the world.



A calligraphy of verse five of ELW #729, my favorite hymn, "The Church of Christ, in Every Age." This is a photo from my office wall, and the artwork was a gift from my friend Dr. William Lock whose memorial service was on July 9. He was the professor of voice and church music at Biola University for many years. I called him "BB," or Barnabas Bill, because he was such an encourager to so many people.

"Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing." First Thessalonians 5:11

Who could you encourage today? Or pray for?

Wennes Daily Prayer

Luther's Morning Prayer ~

"Almighty and Everlasting God, you have brought us in safety to his new day. Preserve us with your mighty power that we may neither fall into sin, be overcome by adversity (nor disabled by disease), but in all we do lead us to the fulfillment of your purpose in Christ's name." (Lutheran Book of Worship)

I worship you "O God" and bless your holy name, as Creator, you're the author of all life. Make us grateful caretakers of your precious creation.

I adore you "O Christ" and bless your holy name, through your ministry and message of "sacrificial love" you have redeemed and are reconciling the whole world to God and to one another. Help me take on the "mindset of Christ" each day so I can see through your eyes, hear with your ears, speak with your lips, think with your mind, feel with heart, touch with your hands.

I praise you "O Spirit" and bless your holy name, in mysterious ways you inspire Faith, ignite Hope, and empower Service. Breathe your spirit into ours each day each day and lead us on a "faith adventure."

Lord for the gift of a night's rest and the possibility of a faithful, fruitful, and healthy new day, thank you, thank you, thank you.

Help us to be open Lord to how you may enter this day, so we may follow along on faith adventure. I pray Lord for health to enjoy this day, energy to engage in it, community to share it with and faith to keep it all in perspective.

Lord, help me to be committed to Kingdom Values, such as mercy and justice and to speak up when they are denied.

Help me to be supportive of Kingdom Ventures that increase faith and decrease suffering. Help me to affirm in others and grow myself in the Kingdom Virtues of compassion and generosity.

Help me to work for the Kingdom Vision of peace and reconciliation of the families, tribes, and nations of the world.

Help me to speak the truth in love and be not afraid of anything except that which could separate me from you and your family of faith.

Lord forgives me for my self-absorption and my preoccupation with self-gratification.

Lord heal me of my emotional and mental shortcomings, so I can be more available to those I meet today.

Help me to listen, ask questions and remember names.

Lord, lead, speak, energize, and help me to listen, discern, obey, and abstain from unhealthy habits and embrace the many great blessings I have in my life.

Prayers for family, friends and those who are suffering or in need of help and support. (Fill in names.)

Pastor Julie August 2022 Council Report

Classroom Buddies

On Aug. 14 at 10:10, I'll hold an information session for our classroom buddies, which is something new we're going to offer. It was Ashley Steere's idea, and will be a program where we match interested adults up with a classroom and provide them with opportunities to come to the classroom and share a skill or read. Not only can this provide some help for teachers, but it also provides another friendly face for each of these kids at our church. Building these relationships is crucial, and it fits right into my vision—that every child/youth/young adult have 5 adults who can call them by name and who will ask them how they're doing. If you want to help us get to this place of being deeply connected to the young people in our community, consider becoming a classroom buddy.

Youth

Dianne and I are brainstorming ways to get more youth at worship and involved in worship. My first brainstorm was offering breakfast or Starbucks after worship, so this weekend, she is getting Panera for the youth and already has 13 RSVP's, and they'll talk about the Bishop's sermon between services. This is not insignificant as we usually don't have more than 3 youth in worship. We will be trying out other strategies for getting the youth to worship and engaging them in it, and we'll also be brainstorming with them about what ideas they have.

4 of the youth also just returned from a trip. Dianne Beck and Jeff Hengst attended with them, and there were 180 people from across the country, and they came home energized and faith-filled. This was a very small turnout for an event like this for us, but it was not helped by the National Youth Gathering being cancelled, and also by the fact that many of our youth have never done a big trip due to covid. Dianne is working to capitalize with the energy that came out of that trip by going on a Pismo Beach Trip in September, and hoping to get 18 kids to go, which would be quite the achievement.

Summer Sunday School and Fall Sunday School

This summer we switched Sunday School back to being during the 9 am worship based on the feedback of many of our families, and the fact that many families who were in worship would not stay for Sunday School when it was between services. That change seems to have caused a bit of an automatic increase in numbers, as our first day of summer Sunday School on July 11, we had 14 kids, up from the 4-8 we had throughout this school year. The rest of the summer has been up and down, with numbers like 11, 5, etc. We are also simultaneously working to make it more hands-on and the teachers are all zooming in on ensuring it's fun every week. In the fall we'll start new curriculum that I've mentioned before, and Michele McDonald is working on a display for me for Rally Sunday about the activity for the following week.

Children's Ministry Positions

I am currently working on two 10-15 hour/week job descriptions that will divide up the children's ministry position into one administrative/supportive position and one programmatic position (leading programming). My goal with this would be to find more stability in hopefully finding an internal administrative person who would stay with me for

the longer term and could support me through things like vacation bible school. The programmatic one may be harder to fill and so I am prepared to simply do that work myself, but am actively trying to recruit someone for the role and will also post at CLU. For this role, someone in college who has worked at camp would be the ideal fit. Please think about whether you know anyone who might be a good fit for either role.

One Ascension Staff Day

I have also been doing some significant work on healthy culture alongside our leadership/executive team. It comes about because as a leadership team, we realized that we were leading the way in living into some values that relate to healthy culture, and we wanted the rest of the staff to know what we are doing and also be empowered to move in the same direction with us. You should know that our leadership team is truly functioning as a team and that we are all enjoying the work. It is a good snapshot of what One Ascension can be when we all work together to help each other and toward common goals. Kaylee and I spearheaded this work we are excited to get to share it with the whole staff, and also to take a next step in building healthy culture at Ascension.

Building Relationships

Baby Book group and Park Playdates continue to have good turnouts—I didn't hold them in July and had 7 people ask for them, so I won't skip them in August. One family who is starting at the ECC this fall already attended one Baby Book Group, and emailed me this week to ask what worship is like and to let me know they're going to come on the 21st for the first time. On a similar note, next week, I'll bring coffee the home of a school parent whose child was at VBS, while her child naps. I have also been taking each of our new board members out for coffee, just in an effort to get to know everyone on the board.

We are building the One Ascension bridge!

Updates and preparations – that’s a main focus on the communication front at this time. For example, in accordance with a back-to-church checklist offered by a fellow member of a church communication group I’m part of, I’ve been going over our various listings to see if anything needs updating, e.g.: our Yelp listing --

<https://www.yelp.com/biz/ascension-lutheran-church-thousand-oaks-thousand-oaks> (If anyone on Yelp wants to add a review, please do!) and Google business -- <https://goo.gl/maps/CZuGoMwBzP3syktY8> (Reviews welcome here, too). Free advertising. Free is good.

The same post stresses always showcasing our core values, and *looking for creative ways to display our core values in new ways*. I find this inspiring and again, invite ideas! Below is one: a version of our logo with our mission statement added, for anyone’s use as desired.

A quick note – following our dip in newsletter subscribers last month (-12), it’s nice to report we have added 19. This audience has 1,047 contacts. 922 of them are subscribers.



In gratitude for your service,

Stacy Bosco

Ascension Lutheran Church-Global Ministries Team
Wednesday August 10, 2022
Global Ministries Team
7:00 p.m. VIA Zoom call in

REPORT

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.

Report: Welcome and Opening Prayer

Report: Pastor Steve’s Report

Care 4 Creation/Green Team

Pr. Chamie and Pr. Steve updated us. Kristine and Chamie walked the campus in July and looked for ways to beautify, and add compost, recycle bins. The Team will meet again on Aug. 31. Season of Creation is Sept 1-Oct 4 (St. Francis Day), and plans will be shared soon. Oct. 2 at 6 p.m. is Blessing of the Animals.

Becoming Conference

Pastor Steve, Eloise, and Carol Bjelland will attend the ELCA *Becoming Conference* in Chicago Aug 25-28. We will meet ELCA missionaries and Global Mission, ELCA World Hunger and Lutheran Disaster Response program staff to experience more deeply the work we are supporting.

Luther Congress

This event is happening at Cal Lutheran the week of Aug. 15 with scholars from all over the world. Morning worship at 8:15 a.m. daily and the morning lecture is open to the public. Pastor Steve is coordinating the local team and transportation.

Jubilee

A possible advocacy project is making paper chains for “Linking our Voices” Jubilee USA’s “Change not Chains” Campaign. This could also be a GWOH Sep.11 (see attached). We will have more discussion about this before September.

Report: Hunger and Health -Mt. 25:43-45

LWR Kits Planning (see attached)

Louise reported on the planning so far. The goal is to make 1000 personal care kits. Louise thanked those who submitted Thrivent Action Grant requests which along with current offerings, Foundation request, Agape funds and ALS offerings will go to cover costs of materials and shipping costs. A shout out for volunteers will come in September, with assembly the end of Sept and early Oct.

LWR Bible Study

We may do this in the second semester of Adult Ed, or another time TBD.

Report: Global Missions- Act 1:8

New dedicated email: global@alcto.org

We approved GMT Budgeted Funds use of up to \$ 70 .00 for August 22 ALS Welcome gifts table and the use of \$189.00 to augment VBS offering for water bottles to NELM

Gifts of Hope (GOH)

Plans are underway for the Global and local focus the weekends of Nov. 13 and 20. Pastor Christie Manisto from St. Andrews Refugee Center in Cairo, Egypt will send a recorded sermon for Nov. 13 weekend and participate in a Zoom that Sunday for Adult Ed. Friends of Fieldworkers and Harbor House will do the Adult Ed the following weekend Nov. 20. We hope to lift the connections with the Iskander family's memorial in Cairo and through St.ARS. {Chamie reminded us of the prayer vigil for the Iskander family on Sept. 29 from 4-6 p.m. at Three Springs Park. Please sign up so the city has an idea of the numbers. Focus will be on Thanksgiving for the lives of Mark and Jacob.}

Report: Justice & Advocacy-Ps. 33:5

Fair Trade (see attached)

Deadline for ordering is Aug. 12 by 5 p.m.

We will have Fair Trade gifts at the ALS School Fair on Aug. 22.

Oct. 9 is now set for an outdoor Fair Trade Gift Fair. All are encouraged to participate and help that day.

Matthew 25:35

Pastor Steve and Eloise met with Hussain Aqa about his new Security company he is starting. He is in need of sales and marketing help and wants to begin hiring newly arrived refugees and paying it forward after he gets started. His determination is admirable. He remembered Ted Bartell with gratitude for his help when he was getting started. We are reaching out to find Hussain some pro bono services. Christine Sanchez says she may have students or helpers at the School of Management and will talk to us more about it.

Conejo Interfaith Refugee Team

The team meets weekly. Ascension contributed to help a recently arrived Ukrainian family. Housing is the number one issue for all, plus jobs.

Report: Peacemaking- Mt. 5:9

Women's Interfaith Network -WIN

The group completed 150 backpacks for homeless CVUSD students. Many gathered at the Islamic Center to assemble. New projects are determined each month.

Global Engagement Cal Lutheran

Christine reported that she will contact Carol Bjelland about the Fair-Trade Fair and a local artisan from Mexico. There is a new ELCA student Women's Leader arriving to join the two others. Campus pastor Rev. Scott Adams is now here, and Christine will see about having a social event to welcome him. There are discussions about an International Social Justice Film series late Nov. or Spring, She is looking for ideas and partnerships. All had a strong interest in this.

Report: Prayer and Education- Mt. 28:18-20

Great Music at Ascension

Edith was not in attendance but at the previous meeting announced that plans are underway to have concerts again.

Report: Other Items:

CLU pastor Scott Adams is looking for an apt. or condo. Please let Christine know of any leads.

Next Meeting:

September 14, 2022, in person, location TBD

Closing Meditation and Prayer

Eloise led us in "A prayer for the Power of the Spirit among the people of God". See attached

LWR KITS PROJECT, 2022

UPDATE to Global Ministries Team of JULY activities

1. COMMUNICATIONS

- a. Printed and mailed offering letter to people who supported the LWR Kits project in 2021 but not yet in 2022. Included an LWR offering envelope with LWR KITS written on the offering envelop. Mailed: July 23, 2022.
- b. Worked with Tamara Nowlin and Stacy Smith on a slide for the TWAA and worship service slides to remind people to give to the LWR kits project. The slide has been in TWAA for 3 weeks, beginning July 21. It has also been on Facebook and Instagram.



2. FINANCIAL

1. Received approval for (8) THRIVENT Action Team grants. Grants were approved for Paul Evenson (2), Louise Evenson (2), Pastor Steve Herder (1), Julie Herder (1), Tamara Nowlin (1) and Eloise Cohen (1).
2. With 8 Thrivent grants (\$2,000), the current offerings of (\$5,410.70) and the Agape Fund donation (\$2,000) the total fund for materials is \$9,410.70 as of August 4, 2022.
3. Eloise Cohen, as chair of the Global Ministries Team, applied for a \$2,500 grant from the Ascension Lutheran Church Foundation for shipping costs. Each personal care kit costs \$2.65 to ship which includes a tube of toothpaste at the time of distribution to recipients.

3. MATERIALS

1. Beginning on line search for materials for the personal care kits.
2. Setting goal at 1,000 personal care kits, depending on financial support and materials cost.

TO DO in August

Contact TARGET and KOHL's corporate retail sales office for bulk order for some kit items such as bath towels and shoe laces.

Order on line items such as toothbrushes, combs, clippers and soap.

Confirm storage space for materials at ALC.

When orders are placed, let office and Jeff Hengst know to alert them to deliveries.

Request volunteers to help with the verification of each order of materials received.

Participate in August 22 WELCOME BACK to SCHOOL Day with information about LWR Kits as one of the service projects the day school children will be assembling in Sept/Oct and where their September chapel offerings will be designated.

Prepared by Louise Evenson, LWR Kits Project Coordinator, August 7, 2022

A PRAYER FOR THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT AMONG THE PEOPLE OF GOD

(created by Episcopal and Lutheran Church, ecumenical prayer from Pentecost through first Sunday in September)

God of all power and love,
We give thanks for your unfailing presence
And the hope you provide in times of uncertainty and loss.
Send your Holy Spirit to enkindle in us your holy fire.
Revive us to live as Christ's body in the world:
A people who pray, worship, learn,
Break bread, share life, heal neighbors, bear good news, seek justice, rest and grow in the Spirit.
Wherever and however we gather,
Unite us in common prayer and send us in common mission,
That we and the whole creation might be restored and renewed, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen



Fair Trade Products Order Form For July - August 2022

Name _____

Address _____

Phone # _____ Email: _____

Ascension’s Fair Trade Ministry Team is currently taking orders for the products listed on this order form. You can place orders by: (1) sending your completed order form by email (as an email attachment) to fairtrade@alcto.org; or (2) sending an email with the items you wish to order along with your name, address, phone number to fairtrade@alcto.org; or (3) completing an order form at the church office or at the Narthex Information Desk.

All orders must be placed by 5:00 PM - Friday, August 12, 2022

Payment (by cash, check or credit card) at the time of pick-up.

Items will be available for pick-up at an outside location near the Narthex @ Ascension Lutheran Church. We will notify you by email of confirmed pick-up date(s), time(s), and location.

Pre-orders are required. The Team will only order products and quantities based on all preorders timely submitted.

There continue to be shipping delays and challenges for farmers and producers worldwide. Some items may not be available at the time the aggregate general order is placed with Equal Exchange & LWR. We will notify you of any changes in your order as soon as such information is available to us

Thank You for Supporting Fair Trade!

Product	Cost per Unit	Quantity Ordered	Total Cost
Equal Exchange & LWR Ground Coffee			
EE Organic Mind, Body, & Soul, Ground, 12 oz	\$8.00		
EE Organic Ethiopian, Ground, 10 oz	\$8.00		
EE Toffee Caramel, Ground, 12 oz	\$8.00		
EE Hazelnut Cream, Ground 12 oz	\$8.00		
EE Organic Columbian, Ground, 12 oz	\$8.00		
EE Organic Decaf, Ground, 12 oz	\$9.00		
EE Organic Sisters' Blend, Ground, 1lb	\$9.00		
LWR Dark Roast, Ground, 12 oz	\$8.00		
LWR Medium Roast, Ground, 12 oz	\$8.00		

EE Bulk Whole Bean (WB) Coffee			
EE Congo Coffee Project, WB, 1 lb.	\$10.00		
EE Organic Breakfast Blend, WB, 2 lb.	\$19.00		
EE Organic French Roast, WB, 2 lb.	\$19.00		
Single Serve Coffee			
EE Organic Breakfast Blend – 12 pods/box	\$7.00		
EE Organic French Roast – 12 pods/box	\$7.00		
EE Organic Unwind Decaf – 12 pods/box	\$7.00		
Equal Exchange Chocolate, Fair Food & Tea			
Organic Hot Drinking Cocoa – <i>*Reg or Dark</i> , 12 oz can	\$6.00		
Organic Unsweetened Baking Cocoa, 8 oz can	\$6.00		
Organic Semi-Sweet Chocolate Chips, 55% cacao, 10 oz bag	\$4.00		
Organic Bittersweet Chocolate Chips, 70% cacao, 10 oz bag	\$4.00		
EE Organic Chocolate Bars (% cacao)			
Organic Milk Chocolate Caramel Crunch w/sea salt (43%)	\$3.00		
Organic Milk Chocolate (43%)	\$3.00		
Organic Dark Mint Chocolate with Crunch (67%)	\$3.00		
Organic Panama Extra Dark Chocolate (80%)	\$3.00		
Organic Orange Dark Chocolate (65%)	\$3.00		
Organic Dark Chocolate Caramel Crunch w/Sea Salt (55%)	\$3.00		
Organic Dark Chocolate Lemon Ginger w/Black Pepper (55%)	\$3.00		
Organic Dark Chocolate Whole Almonds w/Sea Salt (55%)	\$3.00		
Organic Very Dark Chocolate (71%)	\$3.00		
Organic Extreme Dark Chocolate (88%)	\$3.00		
Organic Chocolate with Coconut Milk (55%)	\$3.00		
Organic Dark Chocolate Bag of 20 Minis (55%)	\$4.00		
Organic Milk Chocolate Bag of 20 Minis (43%)	\$5.00		
Equal Exchange Fair Food			
Natural Pecans, 10 oz	\$8.00		
Organic Natural Almonds, 8 oz	\$7.00		
Organic Roasted Salted Cashews, 8 oz	\$7.00		
Organic Natural Cashews, 8 oz	\$6.00		
Organic Extra Virgin Olive Oil, 500 ml	\$13.00		

Red Barn Family Farms Heritage Cheddar Cheese (square pkg)	\$5.00		
Red Barn Family Farms Weiss Cheddar Cheese (wedge pkg)	\$6.00		
Brewer's Crackers – Sea Salt, 5 oz pkg	\$5.00		
Brewer's Pita Chips – Sea Salt, 7 oz pkg	\$5.00		
Equal Exchange Tea			
Organic English Breakfast Tea	\$4.00		
Organic Earl Grey Tea	\$4.00		
Organic Darjeeling Tea	\$4.00		
Organic Irish Breakfast Tea	\$4.00		
Organic Jasmine Green Tea	\$4.00		
Organic Hibiscus Tea	\$4.00		
Organic Green Tea	\$4.00		
Organic Rooibos Tea	\$4.00		
Organic Peppermint Tea	\$4.00		
Organic Chamomile Tea	\$4.00		
Organic Chai Tea	\$4.00		
Organic Ginger Tea	\$4.00		
		Total Cost	

Orders must be turned in at the Ascension Church office or the Narthex Folder (Information Desk) or emailed to fairtrade@alcto.org by 5:00 PM on Friday, August 12, 2022

***EE Hot Cocoa comes in regular and dark varieties. Please specify the type you wish to purchase.**



LINKING OUR VOICES: Make Paper Chains with Jubilee USA's Change, Not Chains Campaign

Who: You and thousands around the country will link your voices to break the chains of global poverty, debt, and economic injustice. COVID 19 takes lives, impacts jobs, affects healthcare and drives a global economic crisis.

What: Your chain symbolizes the chains of debt and poverty felt by impoverished people around the world.

How: Using a regular size sheet of paper cut it to form a flat paper chain link and write your name, city and state, and a short message to global leaders. Then send it to our Washington DC office. We will link your chain with the others, stapling each into a circle. Send completed flat paper chain to **110 Maryland Ave NE, STE 210 Washington, DC 20002**

When: Make a chain now and organize chain-making parties in your community so Jubilee can use your chains at G20, IMF and World Bank Meetings. As you make your paper chains upload a picture of you and your friends/family making the paper chains and upload them on social media. You can use the following hashtags to spread the word about paper chain-making efforts. #IMFMeetings #G20 You can also email us your pictures so that we may upload them to Jubilee's social media. Send pictures to Mizraim Belman at mizraim@jubileeusa.org

Where: Jubilee USA will deliver your chains in October at the G-20, IMF and World Bank meetings in Washington DC. The G20 is a group of the richest countries' finance ministers who are making new rules for the global economy.

Why: At the upcoming annual G20, IMF and World Bank meetings, world leaders will make some of the most consequential decisions in our lifetime on climate, poverty and inequality. The decisions made will impact our children's children. We are also aware that the leaders from wealthy countries who are making the decisions are more insulated from the impacts that most of the world feels. Jubilee USA is sending messages to these meeting participants to push world leaders to action.

Many countries, including Ukraine and several African Nations—continue to struggle in the chains of debt, diverting precious resources from education, health care, and clean water to pay back onerous debts. We need to build on the successes of the past and expand debt cancellation for the poorest countries. We should also create new rules for fair lending and borrowing and stop illicit financial flows that deprive them of revenue, so countries can save lives, build inclusive economies and protect our planet.

For more information, visit www.jubileeusa.org and contact Mizraim Belman, Jubilee USA Network's Communications and Outreach Director at mizraim@jubileeusa.org or 202-783-3566.

Jubilee USA Network is an alliance of more than 75 US organizations and 750 faith communities working with 50 Jubilee global partners. Jubilee USA builds an economy that serves, protects and promotes the participation of the most vulnerable. Jubilee USA wins critical global financial reforms and won more than \$130 billion in debt relief to benefit the world's poorest people. www.jubileeusa.org