

**Ascension Lutheran Church
Council Agenda
Wednesday, October 16, 2024
Immediately following Joint Meeting with the School Board
Bethlehem Room**

Welcome and Call to Order - Carrie Leonard, President

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

Motto: Invite - Grow - Serve

Approval of Agenda - Carrie Leonard

Devotion - Provided at the Joint Meeting

Council Education - Accountability and Communication Pathway

Treasurer's Report - Dave Harkins

New Business

Recurring Business

- Affirm New Members, Confirmands, and Baptisms

Consent Approval of Reports to Council - Carrie Leonard

- Pastor Tim Delkeskamp's Report
- Pastor Steve Herder's Report
- Kaylee Searway, Director of Operations Report
- Youth Ministry Report
- School Board Report
- Communications Report
- Global Ministries Team Report
- Be the Blessing Report

Information Items

- November Council Meeting, 7pm in the Bethlehem Room
 - Devotions -

Closing Prayer

Adjournment

Treasurer's Report for October 2024

The September results are not yet available. The accompanying spreadsheets account for Church and schools through August.

Church Operating Results for August

As reported last month, results through August show an offerings shortfall of \$13K+. As both July and August are relatively small months for offerings, the percentage deficit of 6%+ is not too meaningful. As expected, payroll is down substantially from budget. This will change somewhat for September, and considerably for October on. But for now, an expected operating deficit of -\$87K through the first two months came in at -\$68K. There are no changes in the estimate we reported last month that the fiscal year will produce a lower salary/benefit value than budgeted by about \$46,000.

There are two tabs in the Church financial summary. As discussed last month, the second tab provides a snapshot of the balance sheet information as of August year-end, featuring church-only cash balance compared to current debt picture. Unlike last month's church council presentation, the cash does not include balances attributable to the school, but I have grafted that information onto the school results as a separate tab.

School Results

August YTD summary is attached. Tuition is down a little from budget; last indication was 168 students out of the 170 budgeted. Payroll expense more than offsets, so that the surplus to budget increased to \$65K. For both church and school, our cash position is down compared to July 31. August is one of two months with three payroll periods instead of the normal two, which accentuates cash drain. This was expected, and does not influence the positive cash position we highlighted last month.

Other Items

The annual audit is underway; information is being collected and distributed to our auditor, Joy Buller of Feddersen & Co. Fingers crossed, we would like to wrap up this year's audit by the end of November (that would better last year's by several months).

A Church Finance Committee meeting is scheduled for October 29th. We set the date later than normal to give the finance team the time to wrap up all One Ascension documents for the first quarter. This will be an informational meeting only to get everyone up to date on our 1Q results.

Respectfully submitted,

Dave Harkins

Ascension Lutheran Church

Budget Summary

FYE25 YTD through August 31, 2024

	Church '24 - '25 Budget	Church '24 - '25 Budget YTD	Church '24 - '25 Actual YTD	Church '24 - '25 Variance	%
Revenues:					
Offerings (Church)	1,515,371	199,321	185,632	(13,689)	-6.9%
Other Revenues	49,680	11,040	11,508	468	4.2%
Total Revenues:	<u>1,565,051</u>	<u>210,361</u>	<u>197,140</u>	<u>(13,221)</u>	-6.3%
Expenditures:					
Salaries & Benefits	1,261,327	236,853	209,133	27,720	11.7%
Allocated Staff Expenses	(213,912)	(41,137)	(42,999)	1,862	-4.5%
Benevolences	54,068	9,011	9,011	(0)	0.0%
Programs / Committees	61,319	7,083	6,095	988	13.9%
Administrative Expenses	101,700	11,198	11,700	(501)	-4.5%
Property Maintenance	100,770	37,230	36,161	1,069	2.9%
Utilities & Insurance	107,928	20,276	19,577	699	3.4%
Operating Expenditures	<u>1,473,200</u>	<u>280,514</u>	<u>248,678</u>	<u>31,836</u>	11.3%
Debt Service	99,675	16,613	16,613	-	0.0%
Total Expenditures	<u>1,572,875</u>	<u>297,127</u>	<u>265,291</u>	<u>31,836</u>	10.7%
Operating Surplus / (Deficit)	<u>(7,824)</u>	<u>(86,766)</u>	<u>(68,150)</u>	<u>18,615</u>	
Prior Year Surplus Spend	-	-	-		
PPP spend	-	-	-		

Ascension Lutheran School & Early Childhood Center

FYE25 Actual vs Budget results

Through August 31, 2024

	Consolidated				ALS				ECC			
	FY 25 Budget	YTD Budget YTD	YTD Actual YTD	YTD Variance	FY 25 Budget	YTD Budget YTD	YTD Actual YTD	YTD Variance	FY 25 Budget	YTD Budget YTD	YTD Actual YTD	YTD Variance
Revenue:												
Tuition and Fees	\$4,338,177	\$746,780	\$724,193	(\$22,587)	\$2,081,079	\$486,430	\$465,737	(\$20,692)	\$2,257,098	\$260,350	\$258,455	(\$1,895)
Extended Care	\$99,100	\$8,310	\$7,490	(\$820)	\$23,500	\$750	(\$111)	(\$861)	\$75,600	\$7,560	\$7,601	\$41
Summer Staycation	\$412,300	\$200,750	\$190,680	(\$10,070)	\$80,000	\$40,000	\$31,786	(\$8,214)	\$332,300	\$160,750	\$158,894	(\$1,856)
Net Fundraising Receipts	\$153,390	\$500	(\$682)	(\$1,182)	\$153,390	\$500	(\$682)	(\$1,182)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other Income	\$64,525	\$5,878	\$5,146	(\$732)	\$20,900	\$1,483	\$2,403	\$919	\$43,625	\$4,395	\$2,744	(\$1,651)
Total Revenue	\$5,067,492	\$962,218	\$926,826	(\$35,391)	\$2,358,869	\$529,163	\$499,132	(\$30,031)	\$2,708,623	\$433,055	\$427,694	(\$5,360)
Expenditures:												
Salaries & Benefits	\$3,729,794	\$674,269	\$590,178	(\$84,092)	\$1,756,492	\$314,835	\$272,451	(\$42,384)	\$1,973,302	\$359,435	\$317,727	(\$41,708)
Allocated Staff Expenses	\$213,702	\$41,097	\$42,999	\$1,902	\$117,386	\$22,574	\$22,343	(\$231)	\$96,316	\$18,522	\$20,655	\$2,133
School Expenses	\$188,591	\$59,027	\$43,223	(\$15,804)	\$106,241	\$39,360	\$28,857	(\$10,503)	\$82,350	\$19,667	\$14,366	(\$5,301)
Admin & Staff Dev Expenses	\$180,546	\$26,154	\$32,667	\$6,513	\$121,624	\$15,507	\$17,411	\$1,904	\$58,922	\$10,647	\$15,255	\$4,609
Campus Security	\$145,000	\$22,083	\$19,750	(\$2,333)	\$72,500	\$10,000	\$9,875	(\$125)	\$72,500	\$12,083	\$9,875	(\$2,208)
Property Service & Maintenance	\$274,302	\$92,990	\$85,913	(\$7,077)	\$140,026	\$47,117	\$43,277	(\$3,841)	\$134,276	\$45,872	\$42,636	(\$3,236)
Utilities & Insurance	\$201,208	\$37,600	\$39,018	\$1,418	\$91,940	\$16,957	\$18,813	\$1,856	\$109,268	\$20,643	\$20,205	(\$438)
Total Expenditures	\$4,933,143	\$953,219	\$853,746	(\$99,472)	\$2,406,209	\$466,350	\$413,027	(\$53,323)	\$2,526,934	\$486,869	\$440,720	(\$46,149)
Operating Surplus (Deficit)	\$134,350	\$8,999	\$73,080	\$64,081	(\$47,340)	\$62,813	\$86,105	\$23,292	\$181,689	(\$53,814)	(\$13,025)	\$40,789
Less: Debt Service	\$163,440	\$27,240	\$27,240	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$163,440	\$27,240	\$27,240	\$0
Plus: Prior Year Fin Aid Temp Restricted Gifts Offset	\$44,200	\$7,367	\$8,138	\$772	\$44,200	\$7,367	\$8,138	\$772	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Plus: Middle School Activation Fund	\$38,000	\$15,200	\$15,200	\$0	\$38,000	\$15,200	\$15,200	\$0				
Adjusted Operating Surplus (Deficit)	\$53,110	\$4,326	\$69,178	\$64,853	\$34,860	\$85,380	\$109,444	\$24,064	\$18,249	(\$81,054)	(\$40,265)	\$40,789

Spend from Prior Year Surplus	\$	9,580	\$	10,820	\$	(1,240)
Spend from PPP Funds	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-

New Members & Baptisms Report

October 2024

Baptisms for September

No Baptisms

New Members for September

Caitlyn Milkovich



Tim's Council Report- October 24

Grace and peace to you my family in Christ,

I am writing this report on October 2nd- the 2nd day of Pastor Chamie's Call here to Ascension. After 10 months of vacancy feels wonderful to have our Associate Pastor in place. And she is working hard on the many assignments we are giving her. In general, and she will report on this at our joint school board/council meeting, she will be spending her first 90 days building relationships, assessing the state of youth/children's ministry and worship against the goals I have given her, developing a vision for moving forward. She will be working with Jen Avalos and Jenni Klemp for the Youth and Children's ministry area and Jenelle Smith and myself in the area of worship. In addition to this she will be participating in pastoral care, running chapel, working with the school board, meeting with the executive team, etc. It is a big learning curve but I am please to see her moving through it so quickly. I am also glad to have some preaching relief! As part of her 90 day plan she will plan to present her observations at our council meeting in January.

I am also grateful that her doing her job will free me up in ways that I have not felt for a long time. I believe that I will get the opportunity to work on the goals that I presented at our congregational meeting. Here they are:

Youth Ministry: Create Critical Mass

This means a group of young people who are excited about their faith, their church and their group such that they are growing in their faith, being a part of the church and inviting their friends to be a part. Jen and I have already been working hard on the strategy for this and Chamie will join us soon. In fact, she already has.

Children's Ministry: Improve our Sunday School program

To grow our Sunday school program by having consistent and high-quality Sunday School offering for children ages 3 to 6th grade. To build the network of families and send consistent communication to them so that they get into the habit of coming to Sunday school and VBS. This includes having a nursery care component which we have (Jenny Klemp) worked incredibly hard to make happen in the right way.

Generosity: Teaching all people the transforming power of abundance and generosity

To educate the congregation on the transforming power of generosity. To encourage especially younger generations to commit to giving to the church as they grow in a sense of God's abundance.

Last year, we not only increased the amount that the congregation gave, but we also increased the amount of people who gave. That is good news. There is an older generation that grew up being taught to tithe. We need to instill that value in the younger generations too. And because we live in an abundant kingdom, we need to do this while not decreasing the outreach that we give through our ministries of Gifts of Hope, GMA and Community Concerns.

Accountability: Creating Biblical Accountability in our church staff to model it for the whole church community.

Accountability process: Since Chamie is coming on and she happens to be both my wife and the Associate pastor we need to be very deliberate about making sure that accountability, conflict resolution and supervision in our staff culture is clear and alive. We have a process that is based on Matthew 18. We need make sure that this process is effective and that each staff person feels safe to use that process when they feel they need it. In addition to this, I want to be proactive about conflict such that we as a staff recognize our different styles of communication and can learn to compliment each other. We will do this by investing in and using tools like Working Genius- which helps us to identify our working styles.

Identity: To help members and visitors understand who we are as a church

Ascension is a big tent church. We welcome people from the whole political spectrum and appreciate the diversity of perspective that comes with it. We can be a community because we have the bond of faith, hope and love given to us by Christ. It is important in this politically polarizing time that we stand in what can be seen as a radical place and experience the pressure place politics over relationships.

I want to be able to articulate this position at our new members class as we reach out and invite new people into community and in sermons directly by talking about concepts such as: The third way, big tent, Diversity in the body of Christ, History of Christian conflicts and 1st order things vs. 2nd order things.

In closing, I am grateful for a very successful One Ascension worship/Annual Meeting/Picnic. Thank you all for helping to make it happen!

God is good!

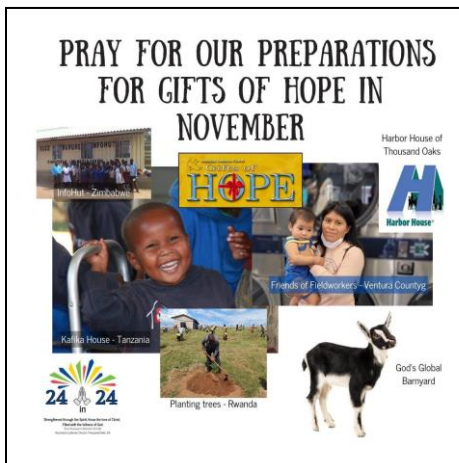
A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Pastor Tim".

Church Council Report – Pastor Steve Herder – October 4, 2024



Our prayer team has worked hard at making “24 in 24” have a big impact both on the faith and life of individual members of our congregation, but also for our congregation, school, and foundation.

We encourage each person to participate in the variety of opportunities for prayer that we are offering these months. I have appreciated the monthly prayer gatherings. Principal and Pastor Rich Gregory led the one in September and Pastor Paul Gravrock will lead it on Oct. 9, at 7pm. I hope that you’ll join us in person or our livestream. Thank you for your prayers as we proceed, asking the Holy Spirit to guide us! Pastors Tim and Chamie have led the weekly prayer walks around our campus on Saturdays before our worship service. We look forward to hearing your stories of what the daily prayer of Ephesians 3:14-21 has meant to you.

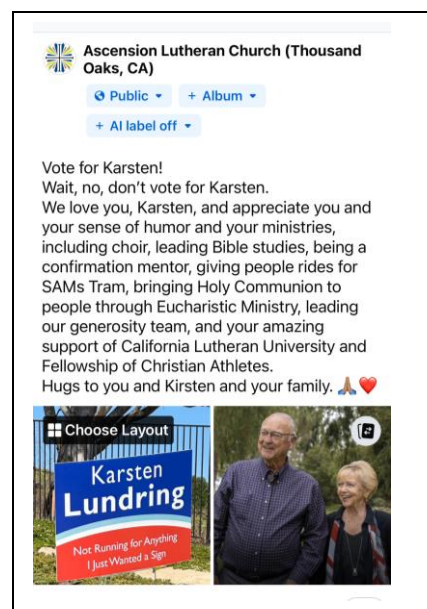
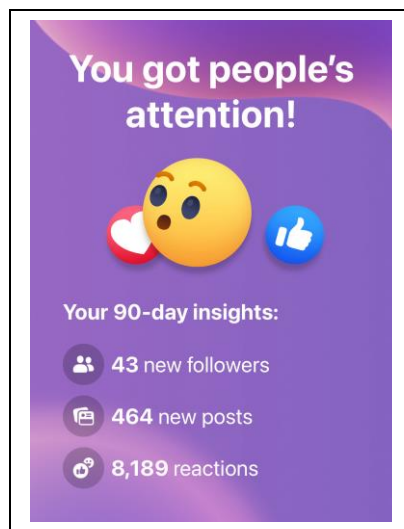
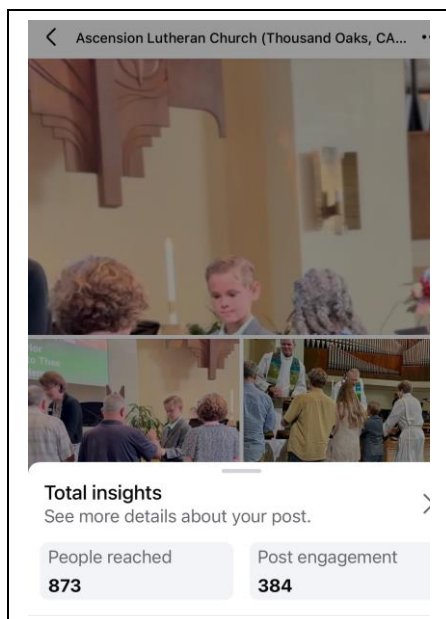


We greatly appreciate our leaders in ministries that continue including: GriefShare, Eucharistic Ministers, Food Pantry, Senior Adult Ministries, SAMs Tram, Christian Life Hours, Community Concerns, Global Ministries (see our report in this Council packet), Gifts of Hope, Fair Trade Ministries, Adult Education and Women’s Ministries. Chris Daleiden has also taken on leading our 3M, minor maintenance ministries. On October 1st I began my half-time work again and that is a focus on Senior Adult Ministries, pastoral care, prayer ministries, Community Concerns, Global Ministries, Facebook posts and singing with the ECC.

Judy Marshall had a good idea that we train lay people to do hospital visitation. I’ll work with others in planning a training event for that. The initial plan is that Pastor Chamie will do visits on Mondays, Pastor Tim on Wednesdays, and me on Fridays. Our lay team could go on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and weekends. Of course, your pastors can go any day as necessary too. Watch for more info to come on this. Thanks to Stacy for making our logo, as she does with so many of our ministries.



Each day I enjoy doing two to six ministry posts on our [Ascension Facebook page](#). Susanne Hopkins does a beloved devotion each Monday morning. Stacy has been posting daily 24 in 24 posts. Here are some fun facts that Facebook recently told us about our Ascension page. We are now connected to over 2,400 people! Below are two posts that were loved. One was when Luke Graves said “yes” to helping with Holy Communion and the other is a fun one of Karsten Lundring’s sign to vote for him! “Not running for anything. I just wanted a sign.”



Below are more September ministry highlights with photos. What a joy to now to be fully staffed, with Pastor Chamie, Jen Avalos, and Carolyn Bahr! Jen led a class on youth ministry with our adult education class. The fourth photo is of the original model of our sanctuary given to us this month by the family of Neal Scribner, our architect for our sanctuary. I led his memorial service this past month. (I also led the memorial service for Karin Travis, in Westlake.)



Our Women's Monday Morning Bible Study began with 73 women, studying the 12 disciples. The group from Community Concerns that prepares a meal for the unhoused served them at Holy Trinity. Several of us from Ascension attended the Harbor House fundraiser at Emmanuel Presbyterian. It was a very successful event with many in attendance. We thank Mary Wennes and Ken Caudill who represent us on the Harbor House board of directors.



Our Fair Trade ministries had another big month and you can read the stories in our GMT report that follows. Here are photos of the fun tasting event at Lisa Burns' home, and then the gift of Fair Trade soccer balls to our Early Childhood Center and to our school. Here's Jenni McCoy our ECC director with Brittani Childers, assistant director.



One new ministry this month for serving our community was hosting a "Citizenship Fair" in Founder's Hall on a Saturday morning. The community group Buen Vecino organized it, and that morning helped about a dozen neighbor families do the paperwork to apply for citizenship. We will host this good group again in the new year.

Thinking of our care for our neighbors, thank you for your support of our Caring Ones (all loose one-dollar bills in the offering plates) that go to support people who are unhoused, unemployed or underemployed. Last Friday I visited with five people/families who asked for financial help. We were able to help them in small ways. Unfortunately, now our Agape Fund is very low, and we are not able to write as many checks to help low-income people pay their rent, for example.

This week on October 5 we will have a “new and improved” and definitely expanded version of our annual blessings of the pets. Thanks to the broad vision of Bonny Chick, we are planning a very big event for our congregation, school, ECC and community, as you see here. Principal Rich Greogry will be our Emcee and we have a wonderful group of volunteers and many vendors coming to take part in it! Next month I’ll share stories and photos from this event. This ministry is under our Prayer Team.

The other large event that our Prayer Team plans is the Compassionate Friends service for Ventura County, always on the second Sunday of December, at 7pm. This is time of remembrance for families who have lost a child to death. We keep them all in our love and prayers. I think this will be our eleventh year of hosting this prayer time.

If you’d like to be part of our email prayer group, please let Linda Morrow know. We would love for you to be part of that prayer group.

Yesterday, Oct. 3, our oldest member, Irene Sansam, died peacefully at her grandson’s home in Oceanside. Up until her very recent poor health, she had been living at University Village. She was 101 years old. A graveside service will be in Westlake on Oct. 11 at 2pm. God give her daughter Lyn and grandson Sean and family comfort and peace, in Jesus.

Blessings on your fall months, everyone! Julie and I enjoyed having Natalie home from her work in NYC for some time this past month. I also look forward to time in Wisconsin with family there, the last week of October. They all send their love and greetings to you. Thank you for [your prayers](#). You are in ours.

Blessing of the Animals



Ascension Lutheran Church and School
Invites the Community to Join Us

**Saturday,
October 5th
12:00 - 3:00 PM**

1600 E. Hillcrest Dr., Thousand Oaks

Free Activities • Fun for All

- BLESSING OF YOUR PETS
- PET ADOPTIONS
- DOG EXHIBITS/ENTERTAINMENT
- FOOD TRUCKS • VENDOR BOOTHS

Accommodation for In-Car Drive Through Pet Blessings 3:00-3:30 PM





ALCTO.org

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
Rachael Bowen
Bonny Chick
Ethan East
Dave Harkins
Carrie Leonard
John Rarick
Jeannette Ruggiero
Anna Woodward

School Board

Scott Bean
Kyle Jones
Jeanette McNulty
Jocelyn Myers
Chris Poveromo
Kathy Saneinia
Ashley Steere
Nelly Nassar-Trumbo
Anna Woodward

Foundation

Alan Baker
Stefano Borzone
Anita Cohen
Paul Evenson
Susanne Hopkins
Sandra Howe
Lori Hillman
Greg Korshavn
Doug Morrow
Roy Sanchez
Jim Thompson
Don Weeks

ECC STAFF

Christina Alfaro
Stacy Andrews
Micaela Bavaro
Jessica Bunting
McKyla Byrd
Victoria Chavez
Brittani Childers
Tiffany Chivaroli
Brooke Costi
Esperanza Flores
Laurie D'Alonzo
Kayla Fromberg
Lauren Jajja
Liz Hoskinson
Stacy Kealty
Arely Kendall
Jen Ledesma
Nicole Lewis
Karen Martinez
Tanya Mathews
Jenni McCoy
DeAnna Means
Amanda Munoz
Michele Paniz
Jessica Placas
Kelsi Ramirez
Vanessa Reyes
Karyn Ring
Lindsey Robinson
Marissa Saldivar
Mariela Sanchez
Nasha Sobieski
Elizabeth Van Mourik
Greta Weinstein
Josie Zapata

CHURCH STAFF

Jen Avalos
Carolyn Bahr
Melissa Berg
Stacy Bosco
Matt Cahill
Cayla Campbell
Anthony Carrillo
Jude Delkeskamp
Pastor Chamie Delkeskamp
Pastor Tim Delkeskamp
Maddie Feltner
Camryn Force
Nathan Halvorson
Tyler Hassenbein
Ella Hengst
Jeff Hengst
Pastor Steve Herder
Charlie Hulse
Jenni Klemp
Jude Klemp
Diane Kusnierek
Nancy Lee
Camden Lorentson
Mike Marvin
Lan Merrill
Wyant Morton
Margaret Ricci
Cameron Ruggiero
Kaylee Searway
Jenelle Smith
Custodians:
Christian, Jessenia,
& Noe Gonzalez

TK- 7 ELEMENTARY STAFF

Connie Angress
Vanessa Arias
Ashley Babich
Michielle Beckley
Brian Bishop
Ethan Bishop
Elizabeth Bonilla
Caitlin Burditt
Mike Burditt
Cindy Cina
Anita Cohen
Aidan Delkeskamp
Jennifer Farrell
Spencer Gottmer
Pastor Rich Gregory
Camille Harrington
Heather Hartson
Natalie Heyman
Carolina Lopez
Karen Manion
Joy Marrs
Christy Martino
Zach Martino
Devin Milligan
Charlotte Miranda
Tina Mohler
Kelsey Packman
Stephanie Pagano
Erika Quiroga
RJ Ray
Kendra Saunders
Robert Steere
Sara Wallace
Michael Woodward
Stephanie Yates

Attendance

Our fall attendance averages 320, with the lightest weekend being our single service preceding the annual meeting.

<u>Date:</u>	<u>Total</u>	-
<u>9/1/2024</u>	<u>316</u>	-
<u>9/8/2024</u>	<u>378</u>	-
<u>9/15/2024</u>	<u>320</u>	-
<u>9/22/2024</u>	<u>240</u>	<u>single service, annual meeting</u>
<u>9/29/2024</u>	<u>287</u>	-
<u>10/6/2024</u>	<u>379</u>	-

Maintenance

My hope is that when we meet on October 16th that the grinding on the patio will be complete and we will have two proposals in hand for a finished surface on the patio. Jude, Camden, and Jeff have worked hard to finish the grinding, but also clean the stairs and driveway at intervals so church members can access parking lots 1 and 2 and the stairs into the sanctuary.

We are adding finishing touches to a sand pit for the TK-8 campus and an outdoor break area for the ECC teachers.

The church choir has inquired about a handrail to the sanctuary from the choir loft. Jeff and I will investigate those possibilities in the near future.

I have engaged the carpet vendor to start planning ne carpet for the Bethlehem Room, church offices, and downstairs church offices.

Reserve Study

Our onsite visit will be November 14th. While I would have loved to have results to discuss with the Council and School Board by our joint meeting this month, a great deal of backup information including financials, maintenance records, and proposals were needed as the first step of engaging the vendor. Having finally completed that work a couple of weeks ago, mid-November was the earliest availability for our onsite visit.

Possible New Payroll System

We've experienced some pain points with our current software since its implementation in 2019. We've made some major improvements in our finance reporting and organizational structure since that time. We are looking into a new system that we believe will be relatively cost neutral or offer a slight savings while automating the time keeping process. I'll be sharing some more details at the joint meeting.

Onboarding

Please stop by our office and welcome Carolyn Bahr if you have the opportunity. She's our Church Relations Assistant, has been a wonderful add to our team, and is already adding value and helping us with key tasks. It's time consuming, but important work to be sure that Carolyn and Pastor Chamie onboard well and are set up for success. I am so excited to be working with this dream team!

Open Enrollment

I am going to keep my report brief, as I need to get back to sending personalized health enrollment options to 42 school employees by the end of the day. The range of plans offered by the school means calculating costs for 15 options for each employee: 5 levels of coverage for employee, employee + spouse or dependents, and employee + spouse + dependents, and then calculating the employees' cost portion for each of those options. Carolyn and Camryn both assisted me in completing the calculations and the individualized worksheets. The difficult part is completed, open enrollment will start in a couple of weeks.

Thank you,

Kaylee Searway

with God
ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE... MATTHEW 19:26

Church Council Report

Youth Director: Jennifer Avalos

Date: October 9, 2024

Confirmation Update

I'm excited to share that our confirmation program kicked off on September 29th! We currently have **16 students enrolled** for the 2024-2025 year, with more parents expressing interest in signing up their children. This growth is truly encouraging!

From **October 6th to November 3rd**, our confirmation curriculum will focus on the "24/24 Prayer" initiative. This series aims to help students deepen their understanding of prayer in their daily lives and strengthen their relationship with God. Each month, we'll explore new curriculum themes that will enrich our journey together.

Recognizing the desire for fun activities, we are committed to creating a balanced experience where students can grow in their faith through prayer and scripture while forming lasting friendships. To achieve this, we will have a fun activity after completing each unit. Keep an eye out for exciting announcements about these activities!

Our first event is scheduled for **October 27th**, when we'll visit the **Seasonal Adventures Pumpkin Patch**. This outing will provide an opportunity for students to enjoy themselves, foster fellowship, and grow together in faith. Confirmation parents have already received a "Save the Date" flyer, and more details will follow soon.

Senior Luther League Update

The Senior Luther League has been actively engaged in various service projects, demonstrating their commitment to the church community. Recently, they participated in the **9/11 service project** and the **God Work, Our Hands**. We have shared photos and updates on our social media platforms to highlight the amazing work being done.

In preparation for the upcoming holiday season, we will start assembling **Thanksgiving boxes** on **October 27th**. We are eager to motivate our youth to get involved in service, and we welcome ideas for new projects. A list of potential service initiatives has been compiled and will be presented to the Senior Luther League to help them discover their passions and talents in service to our community.

Our Bible study sessions every Sunday continue to be a source of inspiration. It has been a joy to witness the spiritual growth among our youth, particularly their enthusiasm for the **24/24 Prayer** initiative, which we incorporate into our studies. I am proud of their progress and the connections we are building.

In addition to our studies, I am making an effort to connect with our youth outside of regular meetings through monthly fun activities. Whether it's meeting for coffee or cheering them on at their sports events, I want them to know I am here to support and encourage them as they navigate high school.

Upcoming Senior Luther League Events:

- **Sky Zone:** October 13th

- **Pumpkin Carving & Movie Night:** October 20th

These events were designed based on the requests of our youth. It's essential that this program reflects their needs and interests, providing a safe space for them to grow in faith, learn scripture, and enjoy fellowship with their peers.

Blessing of the Animals Update

I had the privilege of hosting a booth at the **Blessing of the Animals** event to promote our youth programs, including high school and middle school initiatives, alongside Jenny Klemp's children's ministry. We are thrilled to report an increase in sign-ups for both children's ministry and confirmation programs! It was a wonderful opportunity to connect with families, hear their stories, and encourage them as part of the community.

**Ascension Lutheran School Board Agenda for 09/23/24 Mtg. at 6:30 p.m.
On Campus (Library) & on Zoom**

Call to Order

Mission Statements

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

ECC: *In a loving Christian community that is rooted in nature, our young learners have large amounts of time to investigate, explore, and have hands-on learning experiences. Our teachers facilitate problem-solving, encourage collaboration, and foster independent thinkers through play-based opportunities.*

Elementary School: *Ascension Lutheran School is dedicated to nurturing each student, providing academic excellence and creating bold, compassionate leaders who inspire and serve others in their walk with Jesus Christ*

ONE ASCENSION Motto- COMMUNICATION, COLLABORATION & COMMUNITY

1. **Opening Devotion/Prayer** – Chris
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of Agenda & Consent Agenda
 - Admissions Report
 - August Meeting Minutes
 - Financials Report
 - ECC Report
 - Principal's Report
 - Church Council Rep Report

Open Forum:

1. PALS
2. Catherine Blythe

Old Business:

1. Discussion on any reports pulled from the Consent Agenda
2. Tech Policy Update
3. Budget Update
4. Subcommittee updates

New Business:

1. Disaster Kits
2. New Fundraisers
3. Succession Planning (School Board)

Executive Session:

1. 1 item

Closing Prayer - Rich

Adjournment

**Ascension Lutheran School Board Meeting Minutes
September 23, 2024**

Remembering Our Mission:

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

***ECC:** In a loving Christian community that is rooted in nature, our young learners have large amounts of time to investigate, explore, and have hands-on learning experiences. Our teachers facilitate problem solving, encourage collaboration, and foster independent thinkers through play-based opportunities.*

***Elementary School:** Ascension Lutheran School is dedicated to nurturing each student, providing academic excellence and creating bold, compassionate leaders who inspire and serve others in their walk with Jesus Christ.*

ONE ASCENSION Motto: COMMUNICATION, COLLABORATION & COMMUNITY

Attendees:

Ashley Steere, Scott Bean, Rich Gregory, Jenni McCoy, Connie Angress, Jocelyn Myers, Nelly Trumbo, Chris Poveromo, Kyle Jones, Kathy Roshanai, Jeanette McNulty, Mike Marvin, Jennifer Farrell

Absent: Anna Woodward

Guests: Rob Steere, Leigh Day, Jamie Dickey, The Blythe Family (husband and wife)

Call to Order:

Ashley called the meeting to order at 6:32pm.

The board recited together the mission statements of the church, ECC and elementary school.

Devotion:

Chris led the devotion with a reflection on the prayer service Rich led on Wednesday night. A young student who is suffering from leukemia was able to attend the prayer service. His presence was a poignant reminder of Mark 10:13-16 and Jesus's command to let the children come to him.

Approval of Agenda and Consent Agenda:

Agenda amended to add Rob Steere and the topic of disaster preparedness.

Motion to approve agenda initiated by Jocelyn. Nelly seconded. Motion passes.

Church council report will be circulated as part of next month's consent agenda materials.
Admissions report and financials pulled for discussion.

Approval of consent agenda items initiated by Jocelyn. Kathy seconded. Motion passes.

Open Forum:

Leigh Day and Jamie Dickey spoke as PALS representatives. They commented how successful the 2023-2024 year was for PALS. Fundraising and better organization of PALS materials allows for PALS funds to be designated for more meaningful school improvements, which they would like to consider this year and onward. They have a bathroom remodel on their radar (due to student complaints, etc) which is outside of PALS's budget. They presented the idea of a fundraiser to complete the bathroom remodel, which they would like the board to consider.

Rob Steere presented on disaster preparedness. The church offices, school and ECC currently have an incomplete stock of disaster kits. These kits have a 5-year shelf life, with an expiration of Oct 2026, and cost \$30 per person/kit. What is missing is a complete stock of kits for all students and staff, as well as a replenishment and sustainment plan for these kits. Additionally, canopies/easy ups would be needed (cost approx. \$6000), plus a handful of miscellaneous medical supplies to complete the campus's disaster preparedness. The total cost to address all mentioned deficiencies would be \$10K.

The Blythe family spoke, who are parents of a TK student who was enrolled for the 2024-2025 year, but decided to cancel their enrollment in July. They did not have a good experience with the Summer Staycation program, which prompted their decision to pull their child from enrollment in TK. They are asking for a refund of the prepaid tuition of \$6342. Principal Gregory offered them several options prior to this meeting in order to remedy their situation. First, to be released from their obligation to pay the full tuition. He also offered them a refund of one half of the tuition they have already paid for the year, provided that the open TK position is filled before the beginning of the school year (it is currently not filled). If the spot is filled during the school year, he would prorate the fore-mentioned refund based on the start date of that new student. In the unlikely event that the TK spot which was reserved for their student is not filled, no refund will be issued. The fees (which are separate from tuition) that were already paid are non-refundable. He also offered them a hold on the paid \$6342 tuition as a deposit for a future year's enrollment/attendance.

Old Business:

Admissions Report

- Clarification in admissions report that enrollment of 165 is accurate. Connie also clarified that there is one enrollment space open in TK.

Financial Reports

- Mike clarified that the financial reports present expenses on a cash basis. Revenue is recognized at the beginning of the fiscal year (July 1st).
- Interest income is also beginning to accrue for the \$700K which was moved to the high interest-bearing account.

Chris makes a motion to approve the financial reports. Nelly seconds. Motion passes.

Tech Policy Update

- Rich reported that the tech contract which was circulated with a voluntary parent pledge was well received. He is also calling the device lock boxes "Freedom Lockers," which the students love. Teachers are also adapting well.

Budget Update

- Rich reported that the July results are on par with the budget (modest surplus.)

Subcommittee Updates

- Ashley questioned whether any of the subcommittees had met and/or have updates. Current subcommittees are: Financial Aid, Teacher Compensation, and Discount Standardization.
- Chris requested Scott be added to a future teacher compensation meeting. He plans to reconvene his subcommittee before Thanksgiving.
- Scott reported that the principal review and evaluation went well (meeting with Rich completed) and it is on to the next stage (on file with Kaylee).

New Business:

PALS

- If PALS would like to move forward with the bathroom remodel fundraiser, they will have to make a formal presentation and follow the handbook policy regarding the same. It will be discussed further if that transpires.

Disaster Kits

Jocelyn makes a motion to spend \$10,000 of short-term available cash to bring the disaster preparedness materials up to compliance for full campus coverage as presented by Rob Steere. Scott seconds. Motion passes.

Succession Planning

- Ashley remarked that executive roles within the board are open for the coming year and anyone who is interested is welcome to volunteer and will be considered.

Executive Session:

The school board meeting moved into executive session at 8:31pm. Rich and Jenni were invited to stay. All other guests were excused.

Closing Prayer:

Rich closed the meeting with prayer.

Adjournment:

Jocelyn motioned to adjourn the meeting. Kyle seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 8:31pm.

School board retreat is schedule for Thursday, October 3rd.

Next school board meeting is October 16th, following the Fall, joint church council meeting. Rich will lead devotion.

Respectfully submitted by Jocelyn Myers

Here are a few points of interest from amidst this busy, happy whirlwind of the Ascension, October 2024, comms department.

It was such a pleasure working with Bonny Chick on Blessing of the Animals. What a pro. From collaborating on the logo design through designing the signage (Hooray for Gary and Signarama!), to promotion and advertising – Bonny’s vision, creativity and exacting standards showed. Her professional background was obvious. There are important lasting impact benefits for all of Ascension beyond the fun clearly had by the hundreds of people and pets at the event. Among those are a fresh burst of community awareness for Ascension, and media cooperation. After months of having my press releases shunned by the Acorn, I was suddenly back to open lines of communication and a friendly response to story suggestions after two Blessing of the Animals ads. The Conejo Valley Guide featured our event beyond the listing we purchased. That’s good to remember.

Regarding the church website, ALCTO.org now has a full index (accessible on both the top menu and fat footer menu on the front page) and a top-of-page slider. The latter affords us a better opportunity to billboard current events. Updating continues.

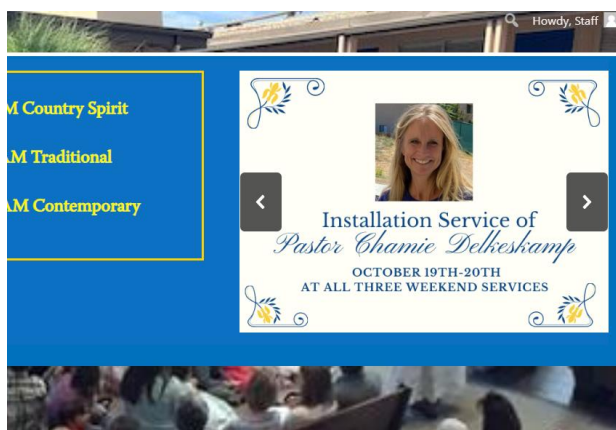
After a couple of fruitless attempts in past years, we were approved a few weeks ago for not-for-profit status with the Canva graphic design platform. The pro version includes capabilities such as a valuable resizing function that are not part of their free version. It also includes more and better stock photos, video, music, and even – yes – AI assistance. We get to share a brand kit that includes our Ascension, BtheB, etc. logos, typefaces, colors, and more. This account allows for a much bigger team to use the platform than we had with our pay plan, too. In fact, going by today’s standard price for Canva Pro, we get \$6,000 worth of capabilities for free. Not only that, but we also get their Affinity software line for free – photo editing, design, publishing. While a number of us prefer/are used to the Adobe suite, free is good. I look forward to expanding my training and discussing how to use this opportunity to our best advantage.

Below is Jenelle’s beautiful image announcing Pastor Chamie’s installation on the new website slider. I was able to resize it from the original in-worship-service slide to the size for this website marquee instantly using the Canva resize function. Great time saver.

Thanking you all for placing your time, talents and commitment in the Lord’s service,

Stacy Smith Bosco

Communication Coordinator





Wednesday, October 9, 2024

4-5:30 PM, 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 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.

AGENDA

WELCOME

OPENING PRAYER- Marcia Koenig

1. FAITH AND FAIR TRADE-Carol Bjelland, presenter

2. Review/discussion of GMT Monthly Reports

Gifts of Hope

Fair Trade

Tourniquets for Ukraine

LWR Kits

Center for Global Engagement-CLU

OTHER: CALENDAR for October/November highlights.

Next GMT meeting, November 6, 2024, 4 PM Bethlehem Room.

OCTOBER

Oct 1	Conejo Interfaith Refugee Team WELCOME BASKET Sign up to Donate items (See flyer)
Oct 5	Blessing of Animals, Ascension Parking Lot, noon-3PM
Oct 9	Global Ministries Team meeting, 4-5:30 PM Bethlehem Room
Oct 10	VOTE YOUR CONSCIENCE, zoom, 7 PM, with Regina Banks, LOPP. (See flyer)
Oct 14	Drop off WELCOME BASKET Items, 7pm United Methodist Church, Westlake Village. Stay to assemble kits, 7-8 PM (See flyer)
Oct 15	WORLD FOOD DAY, ELCA World Hunger zoom, 5 PM. (See flyer)
Oct 17	Fair Trade Lane open, 2:30-4PM
Oct 19-20	Lutheran World Relief Quilts and Kits Dedication at worship
Oct 24	LWR Quilts and Kits INGATHERING, Mt Cross LC, Camarillo, 10-noon.
Oct 20	Fair Trade Lane open, 10-11 AM

NOVEMBER

Nov 2	TENTATIVE: Meet CEO Krish O'Mara Vignarajah, Global Refuge (LIRS)
Nov 6	Global Ministries Team Meeting, 4-5:30 PM, Bethlehem Room
Nov 10, 17	Gifts of Hope: Adult Class, 10:30 AM, Library
Nov 18-22	International Education Week, Center for Global Engagement, CLU. See flyer.
Nov 22	WORLD FAIR at CLU, Lundring Events Center, 5-8 PM.
Nov 21	Fair Trade Lane open, 2:30-4PM
Nov 24	Fair Trade Lane open, 10-11 AM

DECEMBER

Dec 4	Global Ministries Team meeting, 4-5:30 PM, Bethlehem Room
Dec 5 & 12	Fair Trade Lane open, 2:30-4PM
Dec 15	Fair Trade Lane open, 10-11 AM

FAIR TRADE MINISTRY

DATE: September 30 2024

SUBMITTED BY: Carol Bjelland

1. WHAT'S COMING UP? (What? When? Where?)

Fair Trade Lane is open Thursday, October 17th (2:30-4 PM; there will be a special art project) and Sunday, October 20th (10-11 AM).

2. VOLUNTEERS NEEDED (What? When? Where?)

Volunteers invited to help with Fair Trade Lane Thursdays & Sundays.

3. LOOKING AHEAD (Important calendar dates)

Fair Trade Lane Open Dates/Times October to December 2024:

Oct 17th (2:30-4PM)

Oct 20th (10-11AM)

Nov 21st (2:30-4PM)

Nov 24th (10-11AM)

Dec 5th (2:30-4PM)

Dec 12th (2:30-4 PM)

Dec 15th (10-11AM)

Special Event: Sunday Nov 3rd (5-8 PM) – Details TBD

4. OTHER INFORMATION

We thank Pastor Amanda & Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church congregation for inviting us to join them for worship and for their Adult Ed hour (9/29/24) to talk about Faith & Fair Trade. We've connected with a team of their leaders on Monday, 9/30 in a meeting on Fair Trade Lane – we shared resources & ideas. We look forward to being helpful to them as they plan ways to celebrate & promote justice for people & planet through Fair Trade in their faith community. We're so happy that Fair Traders from SVLC & HTLC are in our email group. (Our email group currently includes 81 email addresses). It was great fun to have Fair Traders invite friends to the Wine event 9/28.

5. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION. Contact: Carol Bjelland (carolb@netscape.com; fairtrade@alcto.org); 805-657-3731



MINISTRY OF Global Ministries Team-TOURNIQUETS FOR UKRAINE

DATE October 1, 2024

SUBMITTED BY Paul Evenson

Summary Report

1. What was accomplished with this ministry project?

After the Global Ministries Team affirmed to explore options to provide tourniquets for Ukraine, the team for this project (Pr Steve, Paul Evenson and Andy Binsley) assessed the costs of ordering ready-made military grade tourniquets from an international vendor. Their minimum order was 1,000 tourniquets at the cost of \$13 each. The team determined, with Dave Nonnemacher's counsel, that we send \$2,000 from Ascension's AGAPE Fund to New Horizons-USA to have 300 military grade tourniquets at \$6 each assembled in MN by his team. Due to a delay in the shipment of tourniquet materials, this assembly will take place on October 9th. Dave will take these tourniquets to Hand in Hand Logistics in Isanti, MN to make sure they are on the next container shipment to Ukraine, arriving in Ukraine in November or early December.

It was decided that we would not have a congregational wide fundraising appeal for this project due to the current fundraising effort for GIFTS OF HOPE. It was also decided that due to the critical need for tourniquets, the AGAPE fund was preferred to an ALC Foundation grant as the foundation's next meeting is November 2nd. If anyone wants to make a contribution to the AGAPE fund to help replenish what was sent for the tourniquets, a gift can be given on line through ALCTO.org.

2. Follow up Communications

An article will be written for TWAA telling the story of Ascension sending \$2,000 for military grade tourniquets for Ukraine. Photos of the MN team assembling the tourniquets will be included. Additional photos and information will be available when Dave Nonnemacher returns from his fourth trip to Ukraine in November.

Prayers are requested for the people of Ukraine, for safe travel for Dave and for his safety in Ukraine in November, and for the delivery of the tourniquets to people in Ukraine.

3. LOOKING AHEAD (Important calendar dates)

4. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

CONTACT _____ **AT** _____



MINISTRY OF Global Ministries Team-Lutheran World Relief Kits Ministry

DATE October 5, 2024

SUBMITTED BY Louise Evenson and Vicki Weeks

1. WHAT'S COMING UP? (What? When? Where?)

With 10 volunteers from the GMT, materials for the assembly of the kits were set up within an hour on September 7th in Founders Hall.

On September 7-8, 525 Personal Care kits were assembled as part of God's Work Our Hands. Since the Saturday night worship attendees were so enthusiastic to assemble kits, we had assembled all 525 kits before the 9AM service was over. (It was the first day of Sunday School and about 20 children also came in to assemble kits with their teachers and Jenni Klemp during the 9 AM worship.) Consequently, there was no opportunity for people worshipping at the 9 AM (unless they came before worship) or 10:30 AM services to assemble any kits. Obviously, we have the capacity to assemble more kits in future years if we use a similar schedule of before and after worship services.

Individuals and families have assembled an additional 15 personal care kits and 40 school kits. It is estimated that 100 quilts will be sent by the ALC quilters this year.

A one-minute video using slides of people assembling the kits was shown at worship services Sept 14-15. Sara Wallace created the video.

An Ascension Foundation grant for the shipping costs of the kits (\$1,000) was submitted for the board's consideration at their board meeting on November 2nd.

New Hope Lutheran Church assembled 200 personal care kits and reimbursed our account for their materials.

2. VOLUNTEERS NEEDED (What? When? Where?)

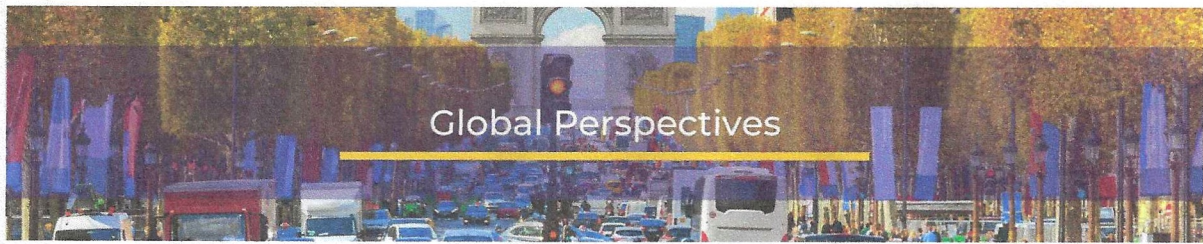
Anyone who would like to help set up our display of kits are welcome to join Vicki Weeks and Louise Evenson in the sanctuary on Friday, October 18 at 11 AM. We also welcome any ideas for the display.

3. LOOKING AHEAD (Important calendar dates)

The dedication and prayers of the kits and quilts will be at church services on October 19-20, which will include a video "Long-Distance Neighbors In Our Own Backyard". LWR has announced they will be delivering quilts and kits domestically as well as globally. See flyer "BIG NEWS".

The Ingathering of quilts and kits for our area will be on October 24 at Mt Cross Lutheran Church, Camarillo from 10-noon. Cam Lorentzen will load our boxes and deliver them for us. If you are interested in going to the Ingathering, contact Louise or Vicki.

4. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT Louise Evenson Lpevenson@aol.com or Vicki Weeks at 3weeksboys@gmail.com



October 2024

International Education Week



International Education Week 2024, from November 18 to 22, celebrates the power of education in fostering global understanding and collaboration. This event highlights cultural exchange and international partnerships, with activities and discussions aimed at promoting awareness of diverse perspectives. Join us in recognizing education's vital role in building a more interconnected and inclusive world.

This year, the Center for Global Engagement is holding its annual **World Fair** on **Friday, November 22** at **The Lundring Event Center** from **5:00 PM - 8:00 PM**. Please join us in celebrating all of the different countries and their cultures showcased by our wonderful students.

More events and programs are coming as well, so look at our [CGE website](#) for more updates.



Wednesday, September 11

4-5:30 PM, Bethlehem Room

MEETING MINUTES

WELCOME

Welcomed Susan Gramme as a new member to Ascension and the GMT.

Attendees: Andy Binsley, Jill Binsley, Mary Wennes, Marcia Koenig, Paul Evenson, Christina Sanchez, Susan Gramme, Bonnie Chick, Dave Harkins, Louise Evenson & Pr Steve Herder

OPENING Prayer of St Francis of Assisi as we remember September 11th.

1. GIFTS OF HOPE, 2024, Presented by Pr Steve

Mary and Howie Wennes brought the concept of Gifts of Hope to Ascension in 2002. Since 2002, over \$1.5 million dollars has been donated to various organizations locally and globally. [Handout provided of the projects and donations.] Global projects have primarily been focused in Africa. A comment was made that the group should consider Namibia (50% Lutheran) and South Sudan in the future.

Featured programs for GOH 2024 include:

Kafika House (Tanzania) was started by Mark Jacobson, an ELCA physician in 2008. Kafika House provides a safe, loving home away from home for children receiving pre-and post-operative care and rehabilitation for a surgically correctable disability. Kafika House serves about 1,000 children per year with an average stay of 3 months. Pastor Steve and Kathleen Rudrud previously visited Kafika House.

Tree Planting (Rwanda)—Ascension has supported the ministry of Pastor John Rutsindintwarne in Rwanda for a decade. Pastor John preached at Ascension 10 years ago. This is the first Creation Care project for Gifts of Hope which will provide community education, planning and implementing climate mitigation activities like tree planting in Rwanda.

InfoHut (Zimbabwe)- The present project is for InfoHut and Life Skills program in Burure, Bulawayo and Manama, Zimbabwe. InfoHut is a shipping container modified to be a computer classroom. The project began with a health focus to raise awareness about Malaria and HIV-AIDS, but it has expanded to teach youth and adults computer and academic preparedness skills. CLU student, Nina Dube attended classes at an InfoHut and her sister just completed the program as well.

Friends of Fieldworkers (CA)—This Ventura County based non-profit supports farmworker families. There are 42,000 farmworkers in Ventura County. Our fundraising efforts this year will include support for their scholarship program. This year, several students received admission to prestigious schools (e.g., UCLA, UC Santa Barbara, etc.) Additionally, funds will be raised for the Laundry Love program which offers resources to help cover/offset the expense of laundering clothes of farmworker families.

Harbor House (CA) –The Harbor House of Thousand Oaks supports unhoused community members and youth transitioning out of foster care. Services provided include: food assistance, shower facilities, gas/electric support, rental assistance, support housing, social worker consultations, and more!

Communication Plan: The Gifts of Hope team plans to provide updates in worship services, outreach to the parents/families with the ECC and Ascension School, information in TWAA (the weekly newsletter), and showcasing opportunities two Sundays in November for Adult Education classes. A brochure describing the projects along with an order form will be mailed to the Ascension membership in early October.

2. General Benevolence addition of ALC General Fund

Currently, the General Fund monthly benevolence of Ascension is \$4,489. Of this total, the following receive monthly benevolence: ELCA (synod): \$3,917, ELCA Missionaries (2): \$166 each (\$332), Pico International (Pastor John, Rwanda): \$80, and Bread for the World: \$110. With Pastor Tim and Pastor Steve's approval, \$50 to ELCA Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM) was added beginning in September.

There are 25 YAGM recipients for 2024-25; none of the recipients are from our synod. The GMT would like to encourage young adults from Ascension and CLU to submit an application to be considered for a YAGM international volunteer opportunity through the ELCA. The due date for applications is February 1st for consideration in 2025-26.

3. New Opportunity for Ascension to support Ukraine: Tourniquets

Dave Nonnemacher (Solar Light Kits contact) reached out to Louise to update the GMT of recent bombings in Ukraine. These bombings on the civilian population in cities have raised a critical need for military grade tourniquets. All people in Ukraine who work in emergency response, medical teams, firefighters, humanitarian teams as well as civilians, always carry a tourniquet. All tourniquets are single use only (due to contamination). Due to the circumstances, a military grade tourniquet is needed, and they are in short supply.

Paul has investigated tourniquet providers and their cost. A sample tourniquet was passed around to the meeting attendees. The materials cost to hand make a military grade tourniquet is around \$6. A NATO military grade online option from Combatkit.net is \$13 with a minimum order of 1,000 tourniquets. The group endorsed a team (Pr Steve, Paul Evenson and Andy Binsley) to investigate the cost and availability of tourniquet materials, shipping costs, and funding sources.

4. Review of GMT Monthly Reports

Everyone was encouraged to review the submitted reports and ask questions for clarification.

OTHER:**1. CALENDAR for September/October highlights (handout)**

The group reviewed upcoming important dates. Flyers for events were shared.

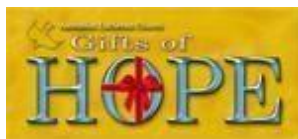
2. Congregational Annual Meeting, September 22

The Annual Report for 2023-24 for the GMT, Fair Trade and Gifts of Hope was shared with attendees.

3. Next meeting, Oct 9, 2024, 4PM Bethlehem Room.

Submitted by Christina Sanchez

Ascension's Gifts of Hope Ministry 2024



Greetings from Ascension's Gifts of Hope Team! Welcome to Ascension's 2024 Gifts of Hope Ministry catalog filled with wonderful "alternative gifts" (e.g. a grandparent buys a gift of healthcare or education or planting trees, to be given in the name of a grandchild or vice versa). Gifts of Hope will be happening the second and third weekends in November. We're bringing the catalog and order form to you by U.S. Mail. Extra copies will be available in the Church Office and the West Narthex.

- This year, Gifts of Hope lifts up the work of the church in three places in Africa: the Kafika House in Tanzania for children's medical care; InfoHut in Zimbabwe for children's education; and caring for God's creation in Rwanda by planting trees with the Lutheran church and Pastor John Rutsindintwarane!
- God's Global Barnyard (part of our ELCA World Hunger Ministry) that we love so much is back with seven gift choices including honeybees, chickens, piglets, goats, and more.
- Our local neighborhood extends throughout Ventura County. This year, Gifts of Hope's local focus lifts up the ministries of Harbor House in Thousand Oaks, and Friends of Fieldworkers in Ventura County.
- Ascension's Early Childhood Center and our Ascension Lutheran School are lifting up these gifts as well!

We will learn more about the focus areas of this year's Gifts of Hope in special Adult Ed Classes on Sunday, November 10th & Sunday November 17th in the Ascension Library at 10:30 AM. We look forward to having you join us.

More information about these global and local ministries is included in the special Gifts of Hope insert.

Here are the many ways you can give:

1. Use the online order form and electronic payment options on Ascension's website, www.alcto.org. Simply click on the button from the main website to get started. You will find all the options from the catalog listed on the site.
2. Complete the enclosed order form and mail with check in payment to Ascension's church office (mailing address: 1600 E. Hillcrest Blvd., Thousand Oaks, CA 91362). Keep the second copy of the form for your records.
3. Bring in your completed form with payment by cash or check to our church office in person during office hours. Keep the second copy of the form for your records.
4. Bring your completed order form and payment to Ascension at these times. We can accept credit cards at these times.

***Sunday November 10th & Sunday, Nov. 17th
8:30-9:00 AM and 11:30 AM- 12:00***

Information Desk – West Narthex

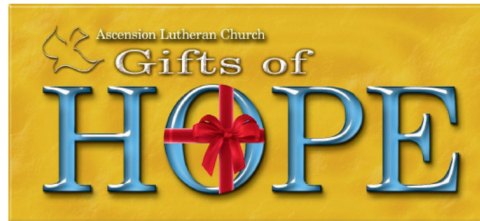
***Thursday, November 21st, 2:30 - 4 PM
Thursdays, Dec. 5th & 12th, 2:30 - 4 PM
Sundays, Nov. 24th & Dec. 15th, 10-11 AM***

Ascension's Fair Trade Lane

Additional information about this year's celebration of Ascension's Gifts of Hope Ministry will be shared with This Week at Ascension (the weekly newsletter), the school's weekly Chatter, by email and on social media.

In Matthew 25, Jesus says that we serve Him even as we serve those who are hungry, thirsty, without clothes, in prison, or a stranger. Giving the gift of hope and love in Jesus' name brings them and us joy and life!

Thank you for participating again this year! May it bring you great joy!



ASCENSION'S GIFTS OF HOPE MINISTRY 2024

ALTERNATIVE GIFT GIVING FOR CHRISTMAS,
GIVING GIFTS OF HEALTH CARE, EDUCATION, FOOD, HOUSING, AND A
HEALTHIER EARTH

KAFIKA HOUSE, (formerly Plaster House) NORTHERN TANZANIA

Kafika House, started by ELCA missionaries in 2008, has the goal of reaching 1,400 children with corrective disabilities through community visits, screening and bringing them back to their facilities for surgery and rehabilitation. On average the children stay for three months. For the first time in many of these children's lives, they have access to nutritious food, education, and the opportunity to embrace childhood. They are surrounded by others like them, and adults who show acceptance, support, care, and Christ's love.



INFOHUT IN BURURE, BULAWAYO & MANAMA, ZIMBABWE

InfoHut in Burure, Bulawayo & Manama, Zimbabwe, is a project that we have supported in the past with our ELCA Global Mission. The InfoHut is a renovated shipping container that is used by the Lutheran churches there as a classroom for youth and adults to learn computer skills, life skills, and be connected for global learning and faith sharing. Other examples in South Africa and Zimbabwe have proven what a blessing these InfoHuts are for the people of southern Africa, especially in the rural areas.



PLANTING TREES TO HELP THE ENVIRONMENT IN RWANDA

Planting trees and healing the environment in Rwanda. Farmers there are losing crops, homes and small businesses from cycles of flooding and drought. Our friend in mission there, Pastor John, is asking us to help the Lutheran church reach their goal of planting 20,000 trees this year.

The cost to organize villages and schools to plant trees and protect the environment is \$7,200 each year. In previous years, they have already planted 45,000 trees, so they have seen success and looking to improve their care for God's creation even more!

ELCZ Bishop Michael Dube said, "The InfoHut is about empowering young people with the knowledge, skills, and values they need to lead healthy, productive, and responsible lives."



FRIENDS OF FIELDWORKERS



Locally, we are supporting Harbor House in Thousand Oaks, which is our first resource for helping those in our community who are unhoused. They are in extra need since LSS closed their office here this year. (www.harborhouseto.org). We are also supporting Friends of Fieldworkers, helping those who labor in Ventura County fields producing fruits and vegetables. Did you know that our county has 42,000 fieldworkers? Did you know that Ascension received an award from them for being their "Organization of the Year!"? (www.friendsoffieldworkers.org)

HARBOR HOUSE



ELCA WORLD HUNGER, GOD'S GLOBAL BARNYARD



Each year we joyfully support our ELCA World Hunger Program, specifically through a ministry called "God's Global Barnyard" to help feed the hungry and to advocate for them. This is a very popular gift item for us to support, especially to children, and from children! This year we commemorate the 50th anniversary of our ELCA World Hunger program, now working in over 60 countries, and here in our country as well #UntilAllAreFed.

GIFTS OF HOPE ALTERNATIVE GIFT OPTIONS INCLUDE...

Kafika House - Tanzania

\$25	Accommodation - providing a safe place for children to stay here
\$50	Transportation - bringing the children to Kafika House
\$75	Medical care - surgeries for children
\$1,000	Average cost for one child's surgery
\$ __	General gift

Planting Trees - Rwanda

\$2	Seedling of a tree
\$10	Supplies for tree planting
\$100	Training churches and schools in this care for creation
\$ __	General gift

Harbor House of Thousand Oaks

\$25	Bag of groceries
\$75	Tank of gas
\$100	Rental assistance
\$ __	General gift

InfoHut - Zimbabwe

\$30	Bibles & Devotion Materials for InfoHut students and lay evangelists
\$100	A computer
\$ __	General gift

Friends of Fieldworkers in Ventura County

\$50	Laundry Love Program - allow families clean clothes and linens, provide 4+ loads of wash, including supplies
\$100	Scholarships to colleges, universities and tech schools
\$ __	General gift

ELCA World Hunger, God's Global Barnyard

\$10	Ten Chicks	\$250	Fish Community
\$20	Honey Bee Hive	\$715	Family Farm
\$30	Piglet	\$ __	General gift
\$50	Goat		

Donor's Name								
Address								
Gift	Cost	Qty	Amount		Gift	Cost	Qty	Amount
Kafika House Tanzania					Environmental Care for Creation Rwanda			
Accommodation -safe place for children	\$25				Seedling of a Tree	\$2		
Transportation - bring children to Kafika	\$50				Supplies for tree planting	\$10		
Medical care - surgeries for children	\$75				Training for churches & schools	\$100		
Average cost for one child's surgery	\$1,000				General Gift for Environmental Care			\$
General Gift for Kafika House				\$	Total Gift for Planting Trees		4:	
Total Gift for Kafika House		1:			Gift	Cost	Qty	Amount
					Friends of Fieldworkers Ventura County			
					Laundry Love Program - allow families clean clothes and linens			
Gift	Cost	Qty	Amount		Provide 4+ loads of wash, including supplies	\$50		
InfoHut Zimbabwe					Scholarships - univs./colleges/tech schools	\$100		
Bibles/Devotions for students & evangelists	\$30				General Gift for Friends of Fieldworkers			\$
A computer for the InfoHut	\$100				Total Gift for Friends of Fieldworkers		5:	
General Gift for Zimbabwe Infohut				\$				
Total Gift for InfoHut		2:			Gift	Cost	Qty	Amount
					Harbor House Thousand Oaks			
Gift	Cost	Qty	Amount		Bag of Groceries for a family	\$25		
ELCA World Hunger Appeal: God's Global Barnyard					Tank of Gas for a Family	\$75		
10 Chicks	\$10				Rental Assistance	\$100		
Honey Bee Hive	\$20				General Gift for Harbor House			\$
Piglet	\$30				Total Gift for Harbor House		6:	
Goat	\$50							
Fish Community	\$250				TOTAL (1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 5 + 6)			
Family Farm (cow,goats,chicks,pigs,tools,seed)	\$715					Check	Cash	Credit Card
General Gift for World Hunger				\$	Payment Method (check one):			
Total World Hunger Gift		3:			Credit/Debit Card 3.5% Convience Fee			
					Total			

Donor's Name								
Address								
Gift	Cost	Qty	Amount		Gift	Cost	Qty	Amount
Kafika House Tanzania					Environmental Care for Creation Rwanda			
Accommodation -safe place for children	\$25				Seedling of a Tree	\$2		
Transportation - bring children to Kafika	\$50				Supplies for tree planting	\$10		
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Average cost for one child's surgery	\$1,000				General Gift for Environmental Care			\$
General Gift for Kafika House				\$	Total Gift for Planting Trees		4:	
Total Gift for Kafika House		1:			Gift	Cost	Qty	Amount
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General Gift for Zimbabwe Infohut				\$				
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Piglet	\$30				Total Gift for Harbor House		6:	
Goat	\$50							
Fish Community	\$250				TOTAL (1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 5 + 6)			
Family Farm (cow,goats,chicks,pigs,tools,seed)	\$715					Check	Cash	Credit Card
General Gift for World Hunger				\$	Payment Method (check one):			
Total World Hunger Gift		3:			Credit/Debit Card 3.5% Convience Fee			
					Total			

Be the Blessing Report for October 2024

October has been a big month for the Be the Blessing team. It started with the Blessing of the Pets, with the t-shirts created by Bonny's team prominently displaying the Be the Blessing logo, and with a booth at the event showing several of the many projects the program has funded to date. Several people dropped by the booth for a closer look and a brief discussion of the BtB purpose.

The team had their monthly meeting October 7th. Six new grant requests were reviewed, with four being approved, one being deferred for further discussion, and one declined. The four approved projects were:

- Quilting ministry - \$150 for additional supplies for new volunteers
- New church ministry - \$1400 for supplies & bags for newly fostered children (20 volunteers)
- 7th Grade school ministry – \$400 for Thanksgiving packages for the needy
- School new extracurricular project - \$2400 for afterschool SEL enrichment for grades 2-5.

It is exciting to see both new and existing ministries involved, and activity for both church and school. The six projects submitted represent the largest number of applications in any month to date, and provides evidence of the growing awareness and responsiveness of One Ascension to Be the Blessing.

The total amount disbursed through this week is \$18,690 of the \$60,000 "Be the Blessing" funding. There is also an undetermined amount to be disbursed for the nursery attendants – in the vicinity of \$4.5-6K, leaving plenty of room to support additional projects.

This week, the team is preparing an adult education discussion on Be the Blessing for Sunday, October 13th. All five of the team members will be involved in discussing and displaying the various aspects of the program. We also continue to solicit and are receiving information and pictures for completed projects, for future videos and TWAA articles.

Respectfully submitted for the committee,

Dave Harkins