

**Ascension Lutheran Church
Council Agenda
Wednesday, April 23, 2025 - 7pm
Bethlehem Room**

Welcome and Call to Order - John Rarick, President-Elect

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

Motto: Invite - Grow - Serve

Approval of Agenda - John Rarick

Devotion - Ethan East

Treasurer's Report - Dave Harkins

- Preliminary Budget Review

New Business

- None at the time of assembling the agenda

Recurring Business

- Affirm New Members, Confirmants, and Baptisms

Old Business

- Land Sale - report on any new transaction activity - Tim
- Nominating Committee - Tim

Approval of Minutes - John Rarick

- March Council Meeting

Consent Approval of Reports to Council - John Rarick

- Pastor Tim Delkeskamp's Report
- Pastor Chamie Delkeskamp's Report
- Pastor Steve Herder's Report
- School Board Report
- Community Concerns Report
- Global Ministries Team Report
- Communications Report
- Be the Blessing Report
- Youth Ministry Report

Information Items

- May 21st, Council Meeting - Bethlehem Room
 - Devotions - Anna Woodward

Closing Prayer

Adjournment

New Members & Baptisms Report

April 2025

Baptisms for March

No Baptisms

New Members for March

No New Members

Treasurer Report for April, 2025

March numbers are still in development. However, the finance team once again put together the general offerings portion of the financials for the month, and further did a total year exhibit of giving month by month (last three months of course use the budget itself (attached). Since March giving, like February, exceeded the budget, we are now in a “surplus” position. Specifically, actual March giving exceeds budget by \$16,620, and for the year to date, we are at \$2,350.

The annual budget development is underway. Target continues to be to have a preliminary FT26 budget in hand for the Church Council meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Dave Harkins

Ascension Lutheran Church

	<u>July</u>	<u>August</u>	<u>September</u>	<u>October</u>	<u>November</u>	<u>December</u>	<u>January</u>	<u>February</u>	<u>March</u>	<u>April</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>June</u>	<u>Total</u>
Department Name: 0 General Accounts													
Net General Offering - Budget													
410111 Envelope Offering	\$105,295	\$93,776	\$105,483	\$120,960	\$134,757	\$202,296	\$133,989	\$124,205	\$106,151	\$141,696	\$107,485	\$118,278	\$1,494,371
410112 Envelope Offering - 100% ALC	\$125	\$125	\$125	\$125	\$125	\$19,625	\$125	\$125	\$125	\$125	\$125	\$125	\$21,000
Total Net General Offering	\$105,420	\$93,901	\$105,608	\$121,085	\$134,882	\$221,921	\$134,114	\$124,330	\$106,276	\$141,821	\$107,610	\$118,403	\$1,515,371
Net General Offering - Actual													
410111 Envelope Offering	\$101,861	\$83,521	\$100,473	\$104,506	\$95,044	\$276,325	\$102,185	\$136,056	\$122,771	Budget	Budget	Budget	\$1,490,201
410112 Envelope Offering - 100% ALC	\$125	\$125	\$125	\$125	\$5,145	\$21,125	\$125	\$125	\$125	\$125	\$125	\$125	\$27,520
Total Net General Offering	\$101,986	\$83,646	\$100,598	\$104,631	\$100,189	\$297,450	\$102,310	\$136,181	\$122,896	\$141,821	\$107,610	\$118,403	\$1,517,721
Total Variance by Month	(\$3,434)	(\$10,255)	(\$5,010)	(\$16,454)	(\$34,693)	\$75,529	(\$31,804)	\$11,851	\$16,620	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,350
Total Variance YTD	(\$3,434)	(\$13,689)	(\$18,699)	(\$35,153)	(\$69,845)	\$5,684	(\$26,121)	(\$14,270)	\$2,350	\$2,350	\$2,350	\$2,350	\$2,350

**Ascension Lutheran Church
Council Meeting Minutes
March 24, 2025 7:30 pm**

The Council meeting was called to order by Carrie Leonard at 7:49 p.m.

Council Members In Attendance: Alan Baker, Rachael Bowen, Dave Harkins, Carrie Leonard, John Rarick, Jeannette Ruggiero

Others: Pastor Tim, Kaylee Searway

Absent: Bonny Chick, Ethan East, Anna Woodward

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*

Approval of Agenda – Carrie

Pastor Tim, rather than Dave and Kaylee, will report on the status of the land sale.

Rachael pulled Pastor Chamie's report from the Consent Approval of Reports for further discussion.

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

Devotion

Devotions took place earlier at the combined School Board / Council meeting.

Treasurer's Report – Dave

Financial reports for February are not yet available. The revenue portion showed improvement from January with the deficit reduced from 2.8% to 1.4%. Actual revenue exceeded budget for February. It is expected that February will show a budget surplus of approximately \$80,000.

A motion was made (Jeannette), seconded (Alan), and passed unanimously to accept the Treasurer's report.

New Business

None.

Recurring Business

Affirm New Members, Confirmations and Baptisms

New members Cindy Ashley, Ioan Belovarski, Paulina Belovarski, Becky Duncan, Frank Lennartz, Linda Lennartz, Laurie Myers, Noelle Porter, Brad Porter, Delores Pratt, and Sue Smits were affirmed by Council.

Old Business

1. Land Sale – Pastor Tim

With momentum seemingly slowed by the city, Ascension has considered contacting city officials. Pastor Tim reached out to the civil engineer, Dax, who advised first verifying if the city is waiting for information from Ascension. Three weeks ago, the buyer's (Robert Youngkin) team submitted Part A of their revision plans to the city. Mr. Youngkin is now working with Dax to complete Part B which relates to lot lines. Mr. Youngkin recently hired a consultant to assist with working through the city processes. He knows the project is resting on him at this time. It's difficult to predict how long it will take to hear back from the city after Part B is submitted. It is recommended that weekly calls are made to Dax as to progress on the project.

2. Nominating Committee - Carrie

For the Council, the search continues for the President-Elect, Treasurer, and Member-at-Large positions. A candidate has been secured for the Secretary position.

There is one open position on the School Board and a potential candidate has been identified.

A candidate for one open position on the Foundation has not yet been found.

Approval of Minutes

February Council meeting

A motion was made (John), seconded (Dave), and passed unanimously to approve the February Council minutes.

Consent Approval of Reports to Council - Carrie

1. Pastor Tim Delkeskamp's report
2. Pastor Chamie Delkeskamp's report
3. Pastor Steve Herder's report
4. Kaylee Searway, Director of Operations report
5. School Board report
6. Global Ministries Team report
7. Prayer Ministries
8. Senior Adult Ministries
9. Communications report
10. Be the Blessing report
11. Youth Ministry report

A motion was made (Alan), seconded (John), and passed unanimously to approve the Reports to Council except for Pastor Chamie's report and the Youth Ministry report.

A motion was made (Alan) and seconded (John) to approve Pastor Chamie's report.

Discussion:

Pastor Chamie's report notes that the Children's Ministries Director position, capably held by Jenni Klemp, has been part-time. She recommends that next year's budget include this as a full-time position. Rachael encouraged the Council to consider this advice as she knows from personal experience as a Sunday School teacher that Jenni's efforts to engage families in youth activities has had a tremendous impact and is key to rebuilding the youth program at Ascension.

The motion to approve Pastor Chamie's report passed unanimously.

A motion was made (Alan) and seconded (John) to approve the Youth Ministry report.

Discussion:

Council would like to see metrics on youth events as to how many youth are attending the events and what methods are used to engage them.

The motion to approve the Youth Ministry report passed unanimously.

Information Items

Next Council meeting will be Wednesday, April 23rd at 7:00 pm.in the Bethlehem Room.

Closing Prayer – John

Adjournment

A motion was made (John), seconded (Jeannette) and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:22 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Rachael Bowen

Ascension Lutheran Church
Church Council and School Board Joint Meeting Minutes
March 24, 2025 5:30 pm

The Council meeting was called to order by Carrie Leonard at 6:14 p.m.

Council Members In Attendance: Alan Baker, Rachael Bowen, Dave Harkins, Carrie Leonard, John Rarick, Jeannette Ruggiero

School Board Members In Attendance: Kyle Jones, Jeanette McNulty, Jocelyn Myers, Chris Poveromo, Ashley Steer, Nelly Nassar-Trumbo

Others: Pastor Tim, Pastor Chamie, Kaylee Searway, Jenni McCoy, Connie Angress

Absent: Bonny Chick, Ethan East, Anna Woodward, Rich Gregory, Scott Bean, Kathy Saneinia

Devotion - Ashley

Considering Paul's words from 1 Corinthians 10:31, "So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.", ask "Is God in it?" when making decisions. Look to Him in everything you do.

Approval of Agenda – Carrie

A motion was made (Ashley), seconded (Jeannette), and passed unanimously to approve the agenda.

State of the School

1. ECC – Jenni McCoy

Operation of the ECC is always done with a growth mindset, always working towards better. This includes being more intentional with time and more purposeful with planning.

a. Staff Development

- Opportunities for mentorship.
- Workshops offered by teachers, staff, and outside professionals.
- Encouraging continuing education for staff.
- Continue to explore teacher experience. Offer staff discounts. Provide opportunities to give feedback.

b. Family Engagement

- Continue to offer workshops for parents.
- Create additional opportunities for parents to be on campus such as service and faith-building projects.
- Add depth to the parent feedback survey.

c. Grow and Develop Arts & Sciences

- Be intentional about connecting it to the outdoor classrooms.
- Invest in the music classroom.

d. Continue to Build the Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Framework for Students, Teachers, and Families

e. Community Collaboration

- Church – Faith building opportunities for students and families.
- CLU – Professional development opportunities.
- Community partners for service projects (retirement communities or an underprivileged local ECC needing gently used items).

2. Ascension School – Ashley Steere (for Rich Gregory)

The School Board's Spring retreat was held on campus. Discussions focused around the 5-year strategic plan. It's time to dive deeper into planning and new ideas. More sub-committees will be formed. The school currently has 169 students and projects an enrollment of 199 students for the 2025 – 2026 school year.

Discussion:

How will neurodiverse students best be served? Neurodiverse learners encompass a wide range of neurological differences such as autism, ADHD, dyslexia, and others. The CVUSD does not provide help or resources. At Ascension, all efforts are funded by tuition. The ECC and School are looking to develop SEL for students since it's a huge need, especially in the younger grades.

Reserve Study - Dave

A preliminary report for the Reserve Study was presented and discussed. The report includes a comprehensive list of the physical assets on the Ascension Church, ECC and School campus. Per the report's projections, current funding from the three entities is well below the recommended amount. The study takes into account interest that will be earned on the funds set aside and the tax liability for that interest. The 30-year reserve funding plan includes significant contributions in the next two fiscal years (150% increase for 2025-2026 and 60% increase for 2026-2027) to bring the fund into alignment with the recommended balance. After that the recommended annual contribution increase levels off at 3.04%.

Points to keep in mind:

- Reserve studies are primarily conducted for larger operations such as homeowner's associations where there is a higher level of liability and so the reserve study calculates income (interest earned, taxes paid) and expenses (costs to maintain the property) conservatively so as to avoid being underfunded when maintenance is needed. This does not necessarily apply as stringently for the Ascension's needs.
- It might be possible to obtain a higher interest rate on the funds than the reserve study estimate of 0.5%.
- Likewise, the study's estimated 25% tax rate could be higher than what Ascension would pay.
- Is the forecasted total life for each item accurate?
- Some of the maintenance items on the list are included in the church / ECC / school annual budgets.

The reserve study does not include access to the spreadsheet which would've allowed for modifying data to consider alternate projections. We could ask the company to remove line items, adjust interest rates, and regenerate the report.

With this study in hand, next steps include prioritizing the order in which assets are updated. This means categorizing the possible failure of each asset as catastrophe, security and safety, general maintenance, or

aesthetics. Kaylee and the Finance committee will evaluate what should be the recommended Asset Preservation Fund contribution for the 2025-2026 fiscal year.

Expenditures from the fund are approved by Pastor Tim, Jenni McCoy, Rich Gregory, and Kaylee Searway.

Nominating Committee - Carrie

Carrie applauded the decision several years ago to adhere to our bylaws for School Board terms of three years. The benefits have resulted in more stability, efficiency, consistency, and continuity on the School Board. The search for candidates has been based on who will serve well in any capacity, not just a particular position.

Change to Campus Alcohol Policy - Kaylee

Kaylee is working with church member Carol Bjelland (retired lawyer) to craft Ascension's policy document regarding serving alcohol on campus.

This could result in more weddings at the church for couples who want to be able to serve alcohol at the reception.

Would it be necessary to provide a host at certain events, keeping in mind possible security issues?

What would be the procedure regarding the serving of alcohol while children are on campus?

Ascension's current insurance policy already covers events where alcohol is served.

Perhaps first start with allowing Ascension-only events, no outside events. Identify and vet a list of acceptable caterers who would be responsible for the liability and indemnity related to serving alcohol.

What is the motivation behind this policy change? Outreach? Increased revenue?

The policy change should include identifying the person or persons responsible for approving such events.

Closing Prayer – Pastor Tim

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 pm.

Information Item

The next joint meeting will be hosted by Council on Wednesday, October 15th.

Respectfully submitted by Rachael Bowen



Pastor Tim's Ministry Report- April 2025

Grace and peace my sisters and brothers in Christ, at this point in April, we find ourselves in the midst of the mad scramble of Holy Week. For Pastors it means more than twice the planning and more than twice the amount of preaching. There are many more details to take care of such as extra communion assistants and worship leaders, palms and Easter lilies, logistics for outdoors services, etc. Pastor Chamie is new to all of this but she is embracing it with a wonderful excitement. Jenelle Smith has been excellent at complimenting our planning work with her orientation to detail. We noted in December that Christmas seemed to go much more smoothly than usual, Easter is shaping up to be the same way- which is wonderful.

The **Kingdom Assignment Project** is underway! And the reports on the projects are coming in. I am pleased to report that people are jumping in enthusiastically! People are: Organizing bike rides, putting together pickleball tournaments, inviting neighbors to church (and then breakfast afterwards), building a share library, writing music and putting together a presentation to raise money for Harbor House, giving to fire relief, and so many more things. It is wonderful to watch. At this point, the combined Generosity and Be the Blessing teams are executing their strategies to continue to encourage the recipients and gathering their stories to tell. Those stories will appear in the newsletter, the website, on social media, at the announcements via video and we are looking for more ways to share them. Our team acknowledges Ed Klodt's wonderful leadership and the extra dedication that Mark Foreman is doing to help magnify the stories that are being generated.

As I write this, we are preparing for the last of our **Wednesday Evening Lenten Soup Suppers and worship**. It has been a successful return. The soup suppers have been moderately well attended, and we have, after trying different ways (such as ordering the soup online, picking it up at Costco, catering it from Panera) been able to get a sense of how to keep the costs down. Shannon Lomeli has done yeomen's work helping to organize it all. In all likelihood we will continue these moving forward.

We have ordered the equipment for our **sanctuary sound project**. Though we still have about 8k left to raise, Kung Pow- the company we are working with took a deposit so that we can order the equipment and get it installed by June 1st. Which is a weekend the Outreach team is targeting as a special "invite your friend to church" weekend. Join me in prayer that the equipment comes in, gets installed and that our team gets up to speed on the equipment by that weekend.

As I reported last month, **Nominating Team** is still in the "asking and discerning phase" of the Nominating process. We have identified 4 open positions on church council positions (Treasure, Secretary, At Large and President Elect), 1 open School Board position and 4 open trustee positions on the Foundation. Again, your prayers for this process are very much appreciated.

In His Service,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pastor Tim".

Pastor Chamie's March 2025 Council Report

Children, Youth, & Family

- Prayerful discernment, conversations, and strategic planning have taken place during the month of March as we take steps forward in the process of staffing children's ministry.



- Relationship building... I went to an all-star basketball game that included three of our confirmation youth. Two of our youth were on one team and one on the other - so I was cheering for both teams! It was lovely sitting with the families at the game. On another day, I got to go visit new baby Charlie at his home with his parents and big brother.

- I helped tend the tomatoes planted by our children and youth from the church, school, and ECC. I also coordinated the garden work day which had a great turnout of families from our One Ascension community. We got the weeds pulled, the wood chips spread, and the place beautified for the tomato plant sales and petting zoos and Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday - all coming in April. Our youngest garden day worker was a little girl from the ECC whose grandma recently became a member of the church. I am not sure who our oldest worker was, but it was great seeing children, teens, parents, and grandparents all working together.

- We talked to current families of young children (as Jenni Klemp and I worked on getting a parents' Lent book study group to meet on Wednesdays at Soup Supper) as well as past families. We learned that back in the day, there was a special story time in the library for children while parents attended Holden Evening Prayer. We are considering trying this idea next year. We had some good discussions on how to make worship more child-friendly and help parents understand the different worship services and offerings that we have on our campus.
- Confirmation stayed steady during March. Middle school and high school youth participated in a service project for field workers. The children's ministry also did this and the project pieces that couldn't be finished on Sunday were finished by school students. One of my highlights was packing the care kits for the field workers with our church youth as well as with the first graders at the school.



INTERFACING WITH THE SCHOOLS:

- I attended the school board spring retreat which was one day on the Ascension campus. We have such a stellar group of people serving on the school board. It is so life giving to work with them. One aspect of our day that I found inspiring was the visioning we did on building stronger school and church connections.
- I partnered with Principal Rich Gregory and ECC Director Jenni McCoy and the school students and families to invite them all to Lutheran Schools Weekend. We had student singers and readers and communion servers. Two third grade girls had asked me if they could read the scripture at the 9:00 AM worship on Lutheran Schools Weekend. I said yes and it was obvious they practiced - they both did such an amazing job as scripture readers that they got applause! Another highlight of Lutheran Schools Weekend was school families serving communion together.
- I led the special chapel designed just for the school's Grandparent's Day.
- I led a Lent book club for school parents and grandparents on Monday mornings.
- I spent time greeting at the gate, playing in the sand at the ECC, and wandering the school campus to talk with students and staff.

- I attended the ECC art show which was amazing! I won a piece of student art that they were auctioning and it now hangs in my office.
- I met with Louise Evenson and Vicki Weeks from our Global Ministries Team as we began planning for late summer and fall on how the church, ECC, and school would be a part of packing kits for Lutheran World Relief. We decided that the church would pack personal care kits, the school would pack school kits, and the ECC would pack baby kits. Stay tuned as we continue to meet and bring this project to fruition in the fall.
- I participated in House Color Day (I'm yellow which is Joy House).



Worship

- We made it through Ash Wednesday. If you could have seen “behind the scenes” on Ash Wednesday, there were many missteps at both morning chapel and the evening worship service. Jenelle, Pastor Tim, and I debriefed it all after the evening worship, noting lessons learned. We also had a good laugh (because sometimes you just need to laugh). I am thankful to work with a team that graciously strives to learn from mistakes because we all mutually desire to create meaningful worship services where people can connect deeply with God.
- Though March was busy with adding an additional worship service each week, I absolutely love Holden Evening Prayer and was happy to help coordinate pieces of these special worship services.
- I preached the first and last weekends of March, including the first Sunday of Lent. I worked with all the various worship leaders in tweaking our services for Lent - such as “burying the alleluia.” I was grateful to work with Wyant Morton and his wisdom in adding Lenten pieces to the 9:00 AM liturgy. I invited Melissa Berg, our Praise Alive leader, to sing a song at Ash Wednesday so that not just the 9:00 team would be present. Nancy Lee did a phenomenal job of weaving together an excellent St. Patrick’s Day Saturday night worship which included bagpipes. I joined forces with Nancy Lee and together we made 5 crockpots of Irish stew for fellowship after worship. It was such great night!

Pastoral Care

- I did several hospital visits, served a special communion to those who were struggling to get to worship, and responded to pastoral care needs at the school, including committing to a once a week lunch with a student in hopes that I can provide some needed support through spring.
- I was grateful to participate in Robin Ertel’s memorial as she was a very special lady.



Other

- Wednesday Work Blessings included visiting Thrivent Financial where we got to visit several church members and bless their place of work.
- We had our first “power hike” for more serious hikers. The idea is that our “power hikes” hit a different demographic than our “family hikes” which are designed to be shorter and (when possible) stroller friendly with a park nearby. Yvonne Zoetewey, Julie Herder, and I are coordinating the power hikes. I appreciated getting to know church members that I haven’t really gotten to converse with like one can



do on a hike. We had 9 hikers, mostly from church, but one mom from the school.

•I feel so blessed to have been invited to hear some of the Kingdom Builder stories. Yvonne Zoetewey invited me to her home so she could share how the Holy Spirit was moving in her heart. She played a piece of music she wrote while I read a script that she wrote. I am excited that post-Easter, this is going to become a piece shared in worship. Stay tuned. Then I had a lovely kingdom builders meeting in my office with Margie, Pat, and Dianne who attend the Saturday worship service. It was such a treat to get to spend time with them. I learned that Margie and Pat taught Sunday school at Ascension for over 20 years way back in the day and that Dianne had recently been at a

friend's funeral where people told stories about how her friend had really touched the lives of children. So these three are banding together with thoughts on supporting children's ministry.

- I got to officiate at the wedding of Ryan Clem and his new wife Micaela. Ryan was in my first class of 8th grade religion that I taught at Ascension Lutheran School. He was also confirmed at Ascension.
- I was at all the Soup Suppers in March, helping where needed, and connecting with the church family. I love that soup suppers are cross-generational and have such a warmth about them. Many, many thanks to Shannon Lomeli for her generous act of service in coordinating these meals!

With Gratitude,
Pastor Chamie



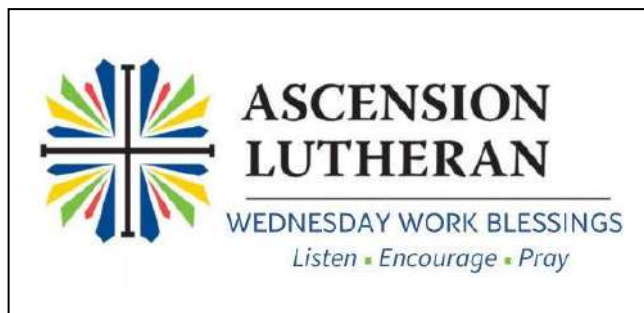
Church Council Report – Pastor Steve Herder – April 4, 2025

On this day we remember what happened on April 4, 1968, when pastor and civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee. With his often-quoted Micah 6:8, let us live his legacy of doing justice, loving kindness, and walking humbly with our God. And I'll add walking in love with every person and seeing the face of Jesus in the most vulnerable among us (Matthew 25:40), and caring for God's creation.

I'm thankful for how the ministry teams, the ministry leaders and friends that I am blessed to work with, do this in their daily life and work - Senior Adult Ministries Team, Prayer Team (and the 365 in '25 prayers), Adult Education classes, Community Concerns Team, and our Global Ministries Team. Stacy, Pastor Chamie and I each day try to do this in our social media posts as well.

Some of the posts that reached the most people in March were our Wednesday Work Blessing photos at the Thrivent office, the Kingdom Builders photo, our Souper Sunday Food Drive, the thank you to Dr. Wyant Morton for his 33 years of teaching and choral work at Cal Lutheran, the thank you to Norm Guetschoff for leading our Christian Life Hours at senior living places and leading Stephen Ministry here, Susanne Hopkins' Monday devotions, our school's Worship Arts prep class and our ECC's first annual (amazing) art show, the memorial services here for Robin Ertel and Barbara Attkisson, the video of Pastor Tim and student Deacon in chapel, the 73 people at Lunch Bunch, the Saturday worship video from St. Patrick's day, my lunar eclipse photos, and my Friday songs. Love those photos of children! Early in the month we were posting daily prayers for Pope Francis' health. This post reached 774 people, with his quote: "To change the world we must be good to those who cannot repay us."

Here are some photo highlights from the month of March for this council and congregational report:



365 Days of Prayer in 2025



Every day I will bless You, and praise Your name forever and ever.
(Psalm 145:2)

Devote yourselves to prayer with an alert mind and a thankful heart.
(Colossians 4:2)

Ascension Lutheran Church, School and Foundation
Thousand Oaks, CA

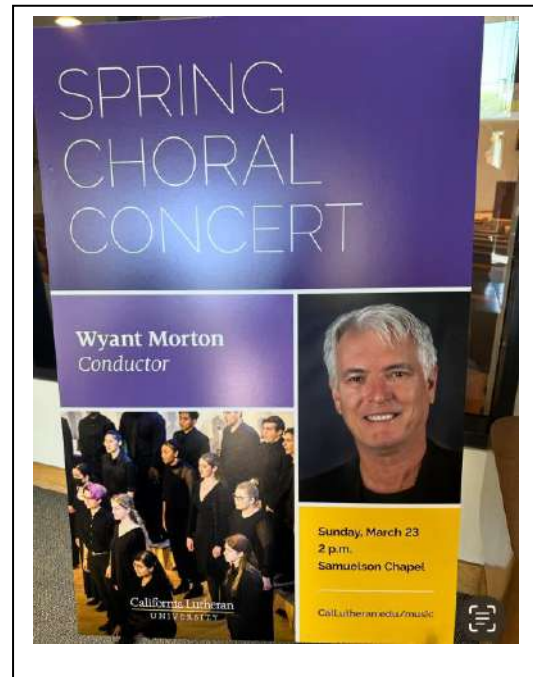


Chris Daleiden

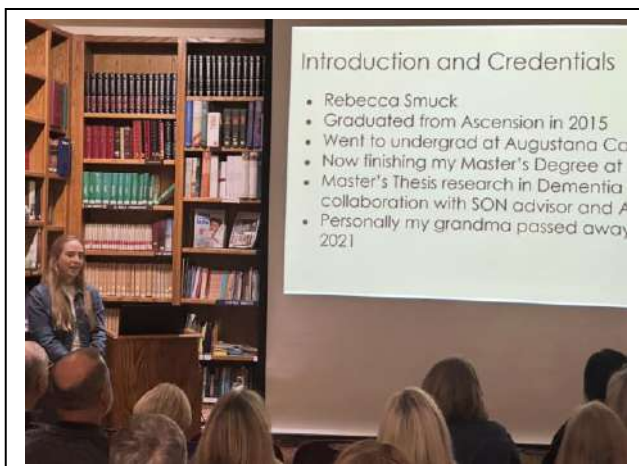
Feb 9 · 🌐

You are all the Best, thank you! [Ascension Lutheran Church \(Thousand Oaks, CA\)](#) Volunteers and Donors working together to make this Souper Sunday Food Drive a success! A huge thank you for all that you all did for Ascensions Food Pantry this week. If you didn't get a chance to drop off today, just drop off at the church offic... See more





Photos on this page include Lunch Bunch, a Christian Life Hour, Pastor Rick Ertel speaking at his wife Robin's memorial Service, Dr. Wyant Morton's Cal Lutheran Spring Concert, last one after 33 years there. Thank you Wyant, and we are glad you'll continue here!



Our adult education classes this month included Rebecca Smuck (speaking on care partners for people living with dementia), and Dr. Max Fuhrmann; Pastor Chamie teaching on Lent; a Foundation presentation by Lisa Higginbotham; Chris Clark and team sharing about our Community Concerns Team (see photos on previous page); and Dr. Colleen Windham-Hughes leading an outstanding class on vocation and the mission of California Lutheran University.

Our Global Ministries Team monthly meeting was focused on our ELCA Advocacy work. We were blessed to have the two leaders from Washington DC office teach us via zoom, Rev. Amy Reumann and Patricia Kisare. To learn more about this, go to www.elca.org/advocacy. In our own state we have the Lutheran Office of Public Policy in Sacramento, led by Ascension's Regina Banks. I'll be going there for Lobby Day, May 28.

Other monthly highlights from our GMT included our Fair Trade Ministries, learning that we are now #4 in sales among all houses of faith in the country! Thanks to Carol Bjelland and team for your work in our congregation and now connecting other congregations with Fair Trade as well. Some of us participated in the Cal Lutheran International Women's Dinner this month and were surprised when we received their community award. The other highlight was our church and school donating and assembling personal care kits for Friends of Fieldworkers of Ventura County. The photos are the CLU recognition, our school children making "strawberry cards" of care, and of our group at the Camarillo event where the farm workers and families received our gifts.



This last page of the report I'll share a few personal photos and a prayer: photos of the joy of singing with our Early Childhood Center children each Friday (178 children there!), my delight in being a personal docent for anyone wanting to see the Dead Sea Scrolls at the Reagan Library, my photo of the Blood Moon from my photography class with David Hessemer (let me know if you'd like to join this photographers' class and community), and lastly, celebrating Julie's birthday the end of the month. Friends came from Colorado, Santa Cruz, Oceanside, Palm Springs, Irvine and here in T.O. We surprised her and my proud moment was baking a chocolate mocha cake, her favorite. Later in April... Julie, Natalie, Julie's mom, and I will be with my family in IL and WI. (I'm grateful that I can do this in my half-time work.)

Thanks for your prayers, friends! You are in our prayers.



April 2025

Praying this prayer each day, from Psalm 145: 6-7

“The might of your awesome
deeds shall be proclaimed,
and I will declare your
greatness.

They shall celebrate the fame of
your abundant goodness,
and shall sing aloud of your
righteousness.”



Every day I will bless You, and praise Your name forever and ever.
(Psalm 145:2)

Devote yourselves to prayer with an alert mind and a thankful heart.
(Colossians 4:2)

Ascension Lutheran Church, School and Foundation
Thousand Oaks, CA

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Our Prayer Chapel is open before and after worship services		1 April Fools Day Thank God for good, clean, humor! <i>1 Corinthians 1:18-25</i>	2 For those who are hospitalized and hospital staff <i>Psalm 33:20-22</i>	3 Happy Birthday Carrie Leonard, Congregation President! <i>Isaiah 43:16-21</i>	4 Our Foundation Trustees <i>Psalm 126</i>	5 Scandinavian Festival, California Lutheran University 10:00am-6:00pm <i>Philippians 3:4b-14</i>
6 For all our music ministries <i>John 12:1-8</i>	7 California Lutheran University <i>Proverbs 16:3</i>	8 Preparations for Holy Week worship services <i>Philippians 3:10-11</i>	9 Lunch Bunch Thank you Pastor Larry & Chris Wagner! <i>Colossians 3:12-17</i>	10 Fair Trade Lane Open 2:30-4:00pm <i>Isaiah 50:4-9b</i>	11 Tomato Sale at School <i>Psalm 31:9-16</i>	12 <i>Passover Begins</i> School Legacy Gala & Auction <i>Philippians 2:5-11</i>
13 <i>Palm Sunday</i> Tomato Sale Church & Petting Zoo <i>Luke 23:1-49</i>	14 Happy Birthday Stacy Smith Bosco! <i>Proverbs 31:8-9</i>	15 <i>Tax Day</i> April Benevolence: Conejo Free Clinic <i>Galatians 2:10</i>	16 Bread Bakers Youth baking bread for Maundy Thursday <i>John 6:35</i>	17 <i>Maundy Thursday</i> How can we serve like Jesus served? Chapel 8:45am 7:00pm Worship <i>John 13:1-17. 31b-35</i>	18 <i>Good Friday</i> Meditate on Christ's Love & Sacrifice Chapel 8:45am 7:00pm Worship <i>Psalm 22</i>	19 <i>Holy Saturday</i> Guests & Visitors who come to Easter Worship <i>Romans 6:3-11</i>
20 <i>Easter</i> Christ is risen! Worship: 7:00, 9:00 & 11:00am <i>Luke 24:1-12</i>	21 SAMs Tram drivers, led by Bob Tokin <i>Mark 12:31</i>	22 Earth Day <i>Psalm 8</i>	23 Administrative Professionals' Day <i>Philippians 1:3-6</i>	24 How can we be bold witnesses of Jesus? <i>Acts 5:27-32</i>	25 Happy Birthday Mary Olson at KCLU! <i>Psalm 118:14-29</i>	26 Those who care for young children in our nursery during worship <i>Revelation 1:4-8</i>
27 Happy Birthday Jude Delkeskamp! <i>John 20:19-31</i>	28 Our oldest members of our Congregation & Community <i>Isaiah 40:30-31</i>	29 Peace & Justice in the Middle East, ELCA Sumud <i>Psalm 125</i>	30 Eucharistic Ministers, led by Pastor Ron Cox <i>1 Corinthians 11:17-22</i>			

**Ascension Lutheran School Board Agenda for 3/24/25 Mtg. at 5:30 pm
On Campus (Founders Hall then Library)**

Joint Council Session and Dinner will start in Founders Hall and then we will break off separately to School Board/Church Council Meetings

Call to Order

Mission Statements

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

ECC: *To nurture the whole child, establishing a lifelong learner and a foundation of faith.*

Elementary/Middle 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** – During Joint Council Meeting
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of Agenda & Consent Agenda
 - Admissions Report
 - February Meeting Minutes
 - ECC Report
 - Principal's Report

Old Business:

1. Discussion on any reports pulled from the Consent Agenda
2. Subcommittee Updates
3. Business Interruption Policy

New Business:

1. Subcommittees for 5 growth pathways
 - a. Nature Explorer, Social Emotional Learning, Leadership and Service Excellence, Religion/Faith, Neurodivergence and Learning Resources.
2. Teacher Surveys

Executive Session:

- 1- One item

Closing Prayer - Pastor Chamie

Adjournment

**Ascension Lutheran School Board Meeting Minutes
March 24, 2025**

Remembering Our Mission:

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

ECC: To nurture the whole child, establishing a lifelong learner and a foundation of faith.

Day 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, Jenni McCoy, Connie Angress, Jocelyn Myers, Nelly Trumbo, Chris Poveromo, Kyle Jones, Jeanette McNulty, Pastor Chamie, Kaylee Searway

Absent: Scott Bean, Rich Gregory, Kathy Roshanai, Anna Woodward

Call to Order:

Ashley called the meeting to order at 7:54pm.

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

Devotion:

Devotion was shared by Ashley in the joint church council and school board meeting prior.

Approval of Agenda and Consent Agenda:

Agenda amended to move Business Interruption Policy discussion to April's meeting.

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

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

Old Business:

Subcommittee Updates

- Chris reported on the Compensation Subcommittee's meeting. Rich, Jenni, Cameryn, Kaylee, Chris, Kyle, and Anna attended. To begin, they started by establishing the

responsibilities of the committee, which should not be to drive the discussion on what employee compensation should be. That conversation should be driven by Rich and Jenni. Chris will have a separate meeting with Kaylee to provide guidance based on his experience in regard to benefits. Goal is to change the benefit structure to better support employees and get better participation in the programs.

New Business:

Subcommittees for 5 Growth Pathways

- Ashley would like a board member to chair each of the following topics on a subcommittee (along with school and ECC staff support), and come up with some concrete asks which can be incorporated into budget planning. Ashley will come up with some guidelines to help shape the subcommittee meeting discussions.
- Nature Explore: Jeannette, Pastor Chamie
- Social Emotional Learning: Nelly, Ashley
- Religion, Faith, Leadership & Service: Chris, Pastor Chamie
- Neurodivergence & Learning Resources: Nelly, Ashley
- Arts, Athletics & Science: (open)

Teacher Surveys

- Ashley reminded that teacher surveys are sent out in Spring to both ECC and day school. These surveys are anonymous and give teachers an opportunity to communicate to the board, as well as indicate each teacher's intention to return. Data should be available for May school board meeting.

Closing Prayer:

Pastor Chamie closed the meeting with prayer.

Adjournment:

Jocelyn motioned to adjourn the meeting. Kyle seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 8:29pm.

April School Board is April 28th. Kyle will lead devotion.

Respectfully submitted by Jocelyn Myers



“We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us – and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. How does God’s love abide in anyone who has the world’s goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses to help? Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and

action” (1 John 3:16-18).

This is not an exhaustive list. We are joyfully aware of many other community (and beyond) ministries that the members of Ascension are involved in. We are truly thankful for how our members are living out their vocational call to be Salt and Light in God’s world! If you are interested in working on any one of these ministries, contact pastorsteve@alcto.org or Community Concerns Chris Daleiden chrisdaleiden2022@gmail.com



ALCTO 3M - Members helping our senior church members with minor maintenance at their homes-contact Chris Daleiden at [Chris](#) for volunteer forms or 3M request forms.

ALCTO Green Faith Team - [Kristine Werner](#)

Angel Tree –ministry, receiving gift cards for families in need. [Sandra Bean](#)

ACLTO Food Pantry ministry-Monday-Friday 10:00am-12:00pm-ACLTO Food Pantry/Project **Response Volunteers**– (Food Drive- Schools and Church) (Volunteers needed) [Chris Daleiden](#)

Blood Drives –[Vitalant Blood Donations](#) Sherie Devilliers (877) 25VITAL

Caring Ones – loose dollar bills in the offering to help those in need [Pastor Steve](#)

CASA of Ventura County (Court Appointed Special Advocates for Children) Rick Ertel

CLU- Cal Lutheran College – Food Cupboard

Conejo Free Clinic – Debbie Kahn

Conejo Elementary Tutoring – GMT

CPR/AED Training – for our church leaders, worship leaders [Di Starzak](#)

Global Refuge [Andrew G. Steele](#)

Guardian Angels and also the Matthew 25:35 - GMT

Outreach Ministry Advocacy helping immigrant children & teens GMT

Habitat for Humanity - Scott Squires

Harbor House - [Denise Cortes](#) , [Sheri Groenveld](#) 805-464-3533





James Storehouse Stacy DeWitte

Jail Ministry in Ventura and Santa Paula - open

Manna – Conejo Valley Food Bank

Many Mansions Bowls of Hope [Hannah Blitstein](#)

Parish nurse - open

Senior Concerns, Meals on Wheels- Andrea Gallagher and [Martha Shapiro](#)

Senior Adult Ministries (SAM), Sams's Tram, Ministries Hillcrest Royale, [Sunrise Westlake](#),

[Atria Grand Oaks](#) , [T.O.Royale](#), [University Village](#), [Sage Mountain](#) "Christian Life

Hour" meets each month (Senior Adult Ministries Team) Norm Guetschoff, Barbara Krum,

Marilyn Reeve, Jan Specks, Jeff Specks, Dennis Gray, Gene and Kathy Coco, [Pastor Steve](#)

Women's Interfaith Network CV (WIN) – Meet once a month

Winter Shelter /ALCTO Hot Meals Ministry - Volunteers needed [Tania and Barry](#)

[Disselhorst](#)



If you are interested in working on any one of these ministries, contact Pastor Steve @

pastorsteve@alcto.org or Community Concerns [Chris Daleiden chrisdaleiden2022@gmail.com](mailto:ChrisDaleiden2022@gmail.com)

If you have ideas for Community Concerns, please share them with Pastor Steve and Chris.

Biblical Basis for the Ministries of Ascension's Community Concerns Team

Genesis 1:26a

Then God said, "Let us make humans in our image, according to our likeness...."



Genesis 12:1,3 (NRSV, most of the passages are from this translation)

Now the LORD said to Abram, ".... I will bless youin you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

Exodus 22:21-27

"You shall not wrong or oppress a resident alien, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt. ²² You shall not abuse any widow or orphan. ²³ If you do abuse them, when they cry out to me, I will surely heed their cry...."

²⁵ "If you lend money to my people, to the poor among you, you shall not deal with them as a creditor; you shall not exact interest from them.... And when your neighbor cries out to me, I will listen, for I am compassionate."

Leviticus 19:18b, 33-34 ^{18b} "...you shall love your neighbor as yourself..."

³³ "When an alien resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the alien. ³⁴ The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the native-born among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God."

Leviticus 25:35-37

"If any of your kin fall into difficulty and become dependent on you,^[b] you shall support them; they shall live with you as though resident aliens. ³⁶ Do not take interest in advance or otherwise make a profit from them, but fear your God; let them live with you. ³⁷ You shall not lend them your money at interest taken in advance or provide them food at a profit."

Deuteronomy 15:7-8, 10-11

"If there is among you anyone in need, a member of your community in any of your towns within the land that the LORD your God is giving you, do not be hard-hearted or tight-fisted toward your needy neighbor. ⁸ You should rather open your hand, willingly lending enough to meet the need, whatever it may be."

¹⁰ Give liberally and be ungrudging when you do so, for on this account the LORD your God will bless you in all your work and in all that you undertake. ¹¹ Since there will never cease to be some in need on the earth, I therefore command you, 'Open your hand to the poor and needy neighbor in your land.'

Deuteronomy 24:14, 17

You shall not withhold the wages of poor and needy laborers, whether other Israelites or aliens who reside in your land in one of your towns.... You shall not deprive a resident alien or an orphan of justice....

Deuteronomy 27:19

" 'Cursed be anyone who deprives an alien, an orphan, or a widow of justice.' All the people shall say, 'Amen!'

Psalm 41:1

Happy are those who consider the poor;
the LORD delivers them in the day of trouble.

Psalm 72:1-4

Give the king your justice, O God,
and your righteousness to a king's son.
² May he judge your people with righteousness
and your poor with justice.
³ May the mountains yield prosperity for the people,
and the hills, in righteousness.
⁴ May he defend the cause of the poor of the people,
give deliverance to the needy,
and crush the oppressor.

Psalm 72:12-13

For he delivers the needy when they call,
the poor and those who have no helper.
¹³ He has pity on the weak and the needy
and saves the lives of the needy.

Psalm 82:3-4

Give justice to the weak and the orphan;
maintain the right of the lowly and the destitute.
⁴ Rescue the weak and the needy;
deliver them from the hand of the wicked."

Psalm 113:5-7

Who is like the LORD our God,
who is seated on high,
⁶ who looks far down
on the heavens and the earth?
⁷ He raises the poor from the dust
and lifts the needy from the ash heap,

Psalm 140:12

I know that the LORD maintains the cause of the needy
and executes justice for the poor.

Job 30:24-25

"Surely one does not turn against the
needy, when in disaster they cry for help.
²⁵ Did I not weep for those whose day
was hard? Was not my soul grieved for
the poor?

First Samuel 2:8

He [God] raises up the poor from the
dust; he lifts the needy from the ash
heap to make them sit with princes
and inherit a seat of honor.

Additional verses from the Psalms

Psalm 9:9, 12, 18

Psalm 10: 2, 8-9, 12, 14, 17-18

Psalm 12:5

Psalm 22:24-26

Psalm 34:6; 35:10; 68:5-6; 94:1-7

Psalm 109:21-22; 112:9; 145:9, 14

Psalm 146:5-9

Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob,
 whose hope is in the LORD their God,
⁶ who made heaven and earth,
 the sea, and all that is in them;
 who keeps faith forever;
⁷ who executes justice for the oppressed;
 who gives food to the hungry.
 The LORD sets the prisoners free;
⁸ the LORD opens the eyes of the blind.
 The LORD lifts up those who are bowed down;
 the LORD loves the righteous.
⁹ The LORD watches over the strangers;
 he upholds the orphan and the widow,
 but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin.

**Proverbs 14:21**

Those who despise their neighbors are sinners,
 but happy are those who are kind to the poor.

Proverbs 14:31

Those who oppress the poor insult their Maker,
 but those who are kind to the needy honor him.

Proverbs 19:17

Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the LORD
 and will be repaid in full.

Proverbs 21:13

If you close your ear to the cry of the poor,
 you will cry out and not be heard.

Proverbs 22:9

Those who are generous are blessed,
 for they share their bread with the poor.

Proverbs 29:4 (NIV)

By justice a king gives a country stability,
 but those who are greedy for bribes tear it down.

Proverbs 29:4 (NIVr)***Additional verses from Proverbs***

Proverbs 3:7; 13:23; 17:25; 22:22-23

Proverbs 28:3; 28:27; 29:14

Proverbs 31:20

By doing what is fair, a king makes a country secure.
But those who only want money tear it down.

Proverbs 29:7

The righteous know the rights of the poor;
the wicked have no such understanding.

Proverbs 31:8-9

Speak out for those who cannot speak,
for the rights of all the destitute.
⁹ Speak out; judge righteously;
defend the rights of the poor and needy.

Ecclesiastes 4:1

Again I saw all the oppressions that are practiced under the sun. Look, the tears of the oppressed—with no one to comfort them! On the side of their oppressors there was power—with no one to comfort them.

Isaiah 1:16-17

Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean;
remove your evil deeds
from before my eyes;
cease to do evil;
¹⁷ learn to do good;
seek justice;
rescue the oppressed;
defend the orphan;
plead for the widow.

Isaiah 58:6-8a

Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of injustice,
to undo the straps of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?
⁷ Is it not to share your bread with the hungry
and bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover them
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?
⁸ Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,
and your healing shall spring up quickly.



Isaiah 61:1-2a

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me
 because the LORD has anointed me;
 he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,
 to bind up the brokenhearted,
 to proclaim liberty to the captives
 and release to the prisoners,
² to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor

Additional verses from Jeremiah

Jeremiah 5:28-29

Jeremiah 7:5-7

Jeremiah 8:19-22

Jeremiah 20:13; 22:3, 15-16**Ezekiel 16:49**

This was the guilt of your sister Sodom: she and her daughters had pride, excess of food, and prosperous ease but did not aid the poor and needy.

Ezekiel 22:29

The people of the land have practiced extortion and committed robbery; they have oppressed the poor and needy and have extorted from the alien without justice.

Amos 5:11-12

Therefore because you trample on the poor
 and take from them levies of grain,
 you have built houses of hewn stone,
 but you shall not live in them;
 you have planted pleasant vineyards,
 but you shall not drink their wine.
¹² For I know how many are your transgressions
 and how great are your sins—
 you who afflict the righteous, who take a bribe
 and push aside the needy in the gate.

Amos 8:4-7

Hear this, you who trample on the needy,
 and bring to ruin the poor of the land,
⁵ saying, "When will the new moon be over
 so that we may sell grain,
 and the Sabbath,
 so that we may offer wheat for sale?
 We will make the ephah smaller and the shekel heavier
 and practice deceit with false balances,
⁶ buying the poor for silver
 and the needy for a pair of sandals
 and selling the sweepings of the wheat."

Micah 6:8

He has told you, O mortal, what is good,
 and what does the LORD require of you
 but to do justice and to love kindness and
 to walk humbly with your God?

⁷ The LORD has sworn by the pride of Jacob:
Surely I will never forget any of their deeds.

Zechariah 7:8-10

The word of the LORD came to Zechariah, saying: ⁹ "Thus says the LORD of hosts: Render true judgments, show kindness and mercy to one another; ¹⁰ do not oppress the widow, the orphan, the alien, or the poor; and do not devise evil in your hearts against one another.

Malachi 3:5

⁵ Then I will draw near to you for judgment; I will be swift to bear witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired workers in their wages, the widow, and the orphan, against those who thrust aside the alien and do not fear me, says the LORD of hosts.

Matthew 25:34-36

Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, ³⁵ for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶ I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.'

Mark 8:1-6

In those days when there was again a great crowd without anything to eat, he called his disciples and said to them, ² "I have compassion for the crowd because they have been with me now for three days and have nothing to eat. ³ If I send them away hungry to their homes, they will faint on the way—and some of them have come from a great distance." ⁴ His disciples replied, "How can one feed these people with bread here in the desert?" ⁵ He asked them, "How many loaves do you have?" They said, "Seven." ⁶ Then he ordered the crowd to sit down on the ground, and he took the seven loaves, and after giving thanks he broke them and gave them to his disciples to distribute, and they distributed them to the crowd.

Luke 1:52-53

He has brought down the powerful from their thrones
and lifted up the lowly;
⁵³ he has filled the hungry with good things
and sent the rich away empty.

Love the Lord your God
*with all your heart and with all your soul
and with all your mind and with all your strength,*
—•••—
Love your neighbour as yourself.
there is no commandment greater than these.
- Mark 12:30-31

Luke 4:16-19

When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, ¹⁷ and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me

to bring good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to set free those who are oppressed,
¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

Luke 6:20-21

Then he looked up at his disciples and said:

"Blessed are you who are poor,
for yours is the kingdom of God.
²¹ "Blessed are you who are hungry now,
for you will be filled.
"Blessed are you who weep now,
for you will laugh.

Luke 10:36-37

Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?" ³⁷ He said, "The one who showed him mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

Luke 14:13-14

But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. ¹⁴ And you will be blessed because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."

John 13:14-15

So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. ¹⁵ For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you.

Acts 9:36 (NIV)

In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (in Greek her name is Dorcas); she was always doing good and helping the poor. [See also Acts 20:35 where Jesus said, "it is more blessed to give than to receive."]

Romans 12:13

Contribute to the needs of the saints; pursue hospitality to strangers.

First Corinthians 13:13

And now faith, hope, and love remain, these three, and the greatest of these is love.

Second Corinthians 8:15

All these passages apply to our Global Ministries Team as well, and for this team we would add these verses:

Isaiah 49:6

Matthew 9:37-38; 28:16-20

Mark 16:15

Luke 24:46-48

John 3:16-17; 20:21

Acts 1:8; 22:21; 28:28

Romans 1:16-17; 10:15

Revelation 5:9; 7:9; 10:11; 11:9; 13:7; 14:6; 17:15



Acts 2:44-45

All who believed were together and had all things in common; ⁴⁵ they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. [See also 4:32-37]

As it is written, "The one who had much did not have too much,
and the one who had little did not have too little."

Second Corinthians 9:7-9

Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not regretfully or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸ And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work. ⁹ As it is written,

"He scatters abroad; he gives to the poor;
his righteousness endures forever."

Galatians 2:10

They asked only one thing, that we remember the poor, which was actually what I was eager to do.

Hebrews 13:1-2

Let mutual affection continue. ² Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it.

James 1:27

Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

James 2:5-6

Listen, my beloved brothers and sisters. Has not God chosen the poor in the world to be rich in faith and to be heirs of the kingdom that he has promised to those who love him? ⁶ But you have dishonored the poor person. Is it not the rich who oppress you? Is it not they who drag you into the courts?

James 2:15-17

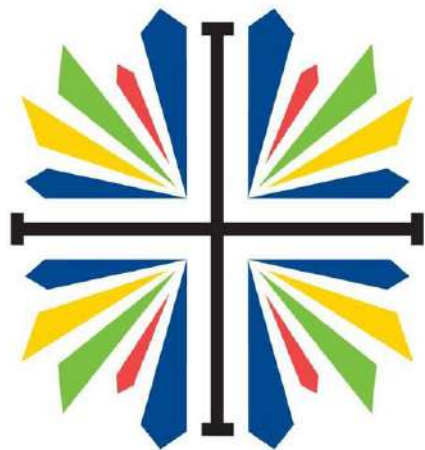
Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. ¹⁶ If one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? ¹⁷ In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

First John 3:16-18

We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us—and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers and sisters. ¹⁷ How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help? ¹⁸ Little children, let us love not in word or speech but in deed and truth.

First John 4:7-8

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. ⁸ Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love.



ASCENSION LUTHERAN

Community Concerns
Team

March 23, 2025

Our Guests —



Pastor
Steve

Community Concerns
Pastor



Barry and
Tania
Disselhorst
Hot Meals Ministry



Bob
Tokin
Food Pantry
SAM's Tram



Di Starzsak

CPR
AED

Today's Agenda

- 1 About
- 2 Pastor Steve
- 3 Hot Meals Ministry
- 4 CPR/AED
- 5 Project Response-Food Drive-Food Pantry
- 6 Food Pantry and SAM's Team
- 7 3 M's
- 8 What's on the List
- 9 Future
- ? Questions Open Throughout Class

About Community Concerns

Pastor Steve



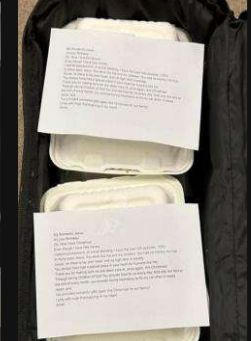
Tania/Barry

Hot Meals Ministry

The Ascension Hot Meals Ministry, led by Tania and Barry Disselhorst, provides meals to the unhoused and low income people at Harbor House on the third Tuesday of each month.



Hot Meals





CPR/AED Training

Di Starzak

CPR/AED Training for church and worship leaders and Ascension staff.





Food Drive, Project Response, Food Pantry

Together we help feed our
community!

Food Drive & Volunteers

43-70

Food Pantry & Volunteers



44-70

Food Distribution Sites & Other Resources



Local Food Distribution Sites

Food Resource Site	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Adelante Comunidad Conejo - Glenwood Elementary School- 1135 Windsor Drive TO, CA 91360 805-495-7058						Every other Saturday 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM PST	
Adelante Comunidad Conejo at Conejo Elementary School- 280 North Conejo School Rd, TO, 805-495-7058						Every other Saturday 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM	
Adelante Comunidad Conejo at Shadow Apartments- Walk Up Pantry- 1949 Los Feliz Drive Thousand Oaks - 805-338-7066			6:00-7:30PM		6:00-7:30PM		
ACLTO Food Pantry Ascension Lutheran Church, 1600 E Hillcrest Dr TO, CA (805) 496-2419					10:00AM-12:00PM		
Calvary Community Church Food Pantry (by appt. only) 5495 Via Rocas Westlake, CA (818) 575-2271		Pick Up- 11:00AM-12:00PM					
Christian Church of Thousand Oaks- Food Pantry- 301 Avenida de las Flores, Thousand Oaks, CA - (805) 492-2474	1st & 3rd Mondays 4:00-6:00PM						
Conejo Valley Food Resource Network @ Fiore Playfields- Food Pantry- 1550 Avenida de los Arboles Thousand Oaks (805) 381-2791					1st and 3rd Friday 9:00-10:30AM		
Harvest Food Pantry Walk Up-Distribution United Methodist Church 1000 E. Janss Rd, Thousand Oaks					1st, 3rd, 5th Fridays 11:00-12:00		
Lighthouse Church 3353 OLD CONEJO RD, NEWBURY PARK, CA 91320 805.480.9999					5:30-7:00pm		

FP Volunteer and SAM's TRAM



Food Pantry Discussion about
Bob's Unique Role

Sam's Tram

Hospitality through transport
for those who need help
getting to worship, Bible
studies, church meetings,
doctor appointments or other
local destinations



3 M's- Minor Maintenance Ministries



What's next _____

Now

- Create New Monthly Pantry Wish Lists and get Posted
- Find Volunteers for 3M's
- Build Food Drop Off boxes to place around schools and church.
- Find Hot Meals Volunteers
- Many Mansions-Bowls of Hope
- Find SAM'S Tram Volunteers

Wish List

- Reusable Bags
- Revisit stores for donations
- Not to keep running out of food and extra's
- Have Food for Summer
- Birthday Bags
- Get members to spread the word to donate to the pantry and/or other ministries like hot meals etc...

Dates to be looking for _____

Sept 2025
Food Drive/Project
Response

Specific Date TBD

Fridays-
10:00am-12:00pm

ALCTO Food Pantry is
open. People can drop
food off in the office
during the week.

Many Mansions-
Bowls of Hope
Painting Party
Date TBD

Many Mansions Bowls of
Hope Painting Party

3rd
Tuesday of the
Month

Hot Meals Ministry Cook
and Package

Wrap up

“There is no better exercise for your heart than reaching down and helping to lift someone up.

~John Holmes, Veteran

“Give your hands to serve, and your hearts to love.”

~ Mother Teresa

Galations 2:10 “Only they asked us to remember the poor, the very thing I was eager to do”



Wednesday, April 9, 2025

4-5:30 PM, **The Bungalow and Garden**

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-Louise Evenson

OPENING PRAYER- Andy Binsley

Topic: CREATION CARE

1. 4:10-5:00 **Pastor Chamie Delkeskamp, pastor, gardener, leader**
2. 5:00-5:30 GMT - **REFLECTIONS, PLANNING and REPORTS**

Review/discussion of GMT Monthly Reports

Discussion Items:

WELCOME KITS needed for Conejo Interfaith Refugee Team.

Graduation recognition for Julia Raska, ELCA International Women's Leader, CLU Education for Immigrant Allies, Holy Trinity, 5/18, 3-5PM.

REPORTS:

Fair Trade

Lutheran World Relief-Update: Kits planning

Be a Beacon of Light with Dave Nonnemacher-Final Report

Friends of Fieldworkers- Personal Care Kit project-Final Report

Calendar Items for April, May, June and GMT meetings:

May 7 Topic: Planning for GIFTS OF HOPE, 2025

June 4: Topic: Planning and budgeting for GMT 2025-26

Global Ministries Team Meeting

Wednesday, April 9, 2025

Meeting Notes

Attendees: Pr Chamie Delkeskamp, Louise Evenson, Paul Evenson, Andy Binsley, Jill Binsley, Carol Bjelland, Carol Bartell, Mary Wennes, Marcia Koenig, Jack Koenig, Debra Papageorge, Beverly Selle, Pastor Steve Herder, Jenni Klemp, Lori Brietzman, Lyn Klodt, Susan Gramme

WELCOME-Louise Evenson

OPENING PRAYER- Andy Binsley

Topic: CREATION CARE: Presented by Pastor Chamie Delkeskamp, pastor, gardener, leader

Pr Chamie affirmed that creation care is grounded in scripture (including Genesis and Revelation) and in our liturgy. Pr Chamie shared an article she wrote, “ROOTED”, which told the story of her personal/professional call to grow and harvest her own food to stay connected to her roots and the rhythms of nature.

Additionally, she shared videos and quotes from people who have informed her vision and mission to care for the Earth including Wendell Berry (“The care of the Earth is our most ancient, and most worthy, and, after all, our most pleasing responsibility.”), Fred Bahnson (Soil and Sacrament), as well as a Baptist minister and congregation who created a prayer park for the community.

Through these leaders who bridge their faith and creation care, Pr Chamie has lead Ascension ECC and School to become a Nature Explorer certified school in 2019. She hopes that Ascension will become known as a church and a school IN a garden, and that the church will become a nature explorer church.

After the GMT planted their own basil seeds in small pots, Pr Chamie invited the GMT to visit the garden and green house adjacent to the bungalow classroom to see what Ascension school children experience first-hand in an effort to eliminate nature deficit disorder in their lives. The green house was filled with 700 tomato plants that will be sold on Palm Sunday. Funds will be used to extend the gardening efforts for Ascension School.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Welcome Kits are still needed for Conejo Interfaith Refugee Team. The most needed items are kitchen items. We decided that our group would collect items for at least TWO kitchen kits and bring them to our next meeting. We will not involve other groups in the church at this time.

Sign-up sheets were circulated. Louise will reconcile the sign-ups to ensure coverage and avoid duplication. Carol Bartell will provide bins for the kitchen items. Welcome kit items should be brought to our next meeting, May 7th.

Graduation Recognition for Julia Raska, ELCA International Women's Leader, CLU. We decided that anyone who is available will celebrate graduation with a brunch or lunch on a day that Julia and her family are available. Possible dates: May 12, 13, or 15. When the best date is determined, Christina Sanchez will send the invitation to the GMT to attend.

Education for Immigrant Allies. An information session will be held at Holy Trinity, on May 18, from 3:30-5PM. Paul Evenson, Carol Bjelland, Carol Bartell, and Pr Steve have been participating in the planning discussions. This will be a session for church leaders, lay and clergy, in the local area to inform them about immigrant rights and the churches' response. The full program is under development. A flyer for the event is being prepared and will be shared with the GMT.

REPORTS

Fair Trade. Summary report attached. Carol highlighted the CLU Earth Day/Sustainability Fair to be held at CLU on Earth Day, April 22nd. Ascension's Fair Trade team will have a booth at the fair and all are invited to attend.

Lutheran World Relief Kits. Last year Ascension prepared 540 personal care kits for LWR. Louise indicated that we would be assembling kits again this year. Planning is underway, with the next planning meeting to be held on April 23rd. See attached report for more details.

Be A Beacon of Light. A Final Report (attached) has been submitted by Louise Evenson on this completed service project. Dave Nonnemacher continues to correspond with us regarding current humanitarian needs/efforts in Ukraine. On

his most recent visit, he was able to connect with Olha's father and give her word of his safety.

Friends Of Fieldworkers- Personal Care Kits. Final Report attached. 145 personal care kits were distributed at the FOF's Fair on March 24th at Somis Ranch. See attached report for details.

UPCOMING CALENDAR ITEMS

May 7

Topic: Planning for GIFTS OF HOPE, 2025

June 4

Topic: Planning and budgeting for GMT 2025-26

Meeting notes submitted by Carol Bartell and Paul Evenson

APRIL

- April 5-6 Scandinavian Days, CLU, Kingsmen Park.
- April 6 Crossing Lines: Cruelty, Compassion and the Real Border Crisis, Calabasas Community Center, 27040 Malibu Hills Rd, Calabasas. 2-4 PM. **NOTE change in location.**
- April 9 Fair Trade Lane open. 1:30-2:00 PM
- April 9 **GMT Meeting: Topic: CREATION CARE, 4-5:30 PM The Bungalow and Garden**
- April 10 Fair Trade Lane open, 2:30-4:00 PM
- April 12 Ascension Lutheran School Legacy Gala and Auction, Sherwood Country Club
- April 13 Palm Sunday and Tomato plant sale.
Fair Trade Lane open, 8:30-9:00 AM and 10:00-10:30 AM.
- April 20 EASTER
- April 22 Earth Day. CLU Earth Day/Sustainability Fair. 11:15-1:00 PM CLU Kingsmen Park
- April 26 Citizenship Fair. Sponsored by Buen Vecino. Founders Hall.

MAY

- May 7 GMT Meeting: TOPIC: Gifts of Hope planning
- May 14 Fair Trade Lane open: 1:30-2:00 PM
- May 15 Fair Trade Lane open: 2:30-4:00 PM
- May 18 Fair Trade open: 8:30-9:00 AM and 10:00-10:30 AM
- May 18 Education for Immigrant Allies, Holy Trinity LC, 3-5PM
- May 19 CLU Graduation
- May 28 Lobby Day, Sacramento

JUNE

- June 8 PENTECOST SUNDAY AND FAIR 10 AM Worship. Fair following.

OTHER UPCOMING DATES:

May 21-June 3, 2025 ELCA WORLD HUNGER Donor trip to Indonesia. Contact Pr Steve for details.

UPCOMING GMT MEETING DATES, 2025

Most all GMT meetings are at 4:00-5:30 PM in the BETHLEHEM ROOM, unless otherwise stated.

April 9	Global Ministries Team Meeting TOPIC: CREATION CARE in the BUNGALOW
May 7	Global Ministries Team Meeting TOPIC: GIFTS OF HOPE planning
June 4	Global Ministries Team Meeting TOPIC: BUDGET, BENEVOLENCE, PLANNING

As of April 4, 2025

PEACE BY PIECE

Journal about your favorite place on campus	Do a favor for someone	Make a card or present for someone	Write down 3 things you're grateful for for a week	Talk through the news with someone	Read about someone who has worked for peace	Send a thank you note
Volunteer in the SEEd Garden	Give to the Community Cupboard	Try out a new group or club	Take a break from social media	Listen to someone's story	Spend time in a library	Compliment someone
Sustainable habits: reuse containers or reduce waste	Donate time, money, or blood	Ask a curious question	Do a thing you loved when you were 6, 7, or 8 years old	Take a walk to work out a conflict with someone	Ask about important mentors in someone's life	Light a candle for peace in the Chapel
Learn about Indigenous peoples & plants of your region	Donate clothing	Call someone you haven't spoken to in awhile	Participate in <i>Perspectives</i>	Write a message of encouragement for someone	Go to an event to learn something new	Create a piece of art that represents peace
Volunteer for trail clean up	Leave an extra big tip	Support a locally-owned business	Learn how to settle your body with deep breaths	Thank someone who has impacted your life	Learn how to meditate or pray	Make a new friend
Complete an upcycle project	Do one random act of kindness	Visit someone in a nursing home	Tell some of your story	Hold the door open for someone	Learn how to do a nature awe walk	Share a story about important mentors in your life
Attend a local farmers' market	Leave a positive review online	Create and share a vision board of peace	Meet with a Peer Support person	Offer your expertise or knowledge to someone	Ask how values shape someone's POV	Make eye contact and say hello to someone

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MINISTRY OF Global Ministries Team- BE A BEACON OF LIGHT

DATE April 4, 2025 **SUBMITTED BY Louise Evenson**

REPORT ON COMPLETED SERVICE PROJECT

Over **60 thank you notes** have been written to people who contributed to the February benevolence offering for humanitarian response in Ukraine. **Nearly \$30,000** was given to Be a Beacon of Light which included a grant from the ALC Foundation and a Be the Blessing grant. The Ray of Life solar light kit designated account will remain open for future gifts.

Twenty thousand (\$20,000) has been transferred to New Horizons Foundation-USA for the purchase of a replacement vehicle for the Mariupol Chaplains Battalion and was subsequently wired to Ukraine. Additionally, \$6,250 was sent for 50 Ray of Life solar light kits as well as \$2,000 to be used by Dave Nonnemacher while he is in Ukraine for the greatest needs that he observes when he is with the MCB in rural villages. Generous donors sent \$1,250 directly to Dave Nonnemacher for 10 solar light kits that ALC youth and confirmation students assembled.

Expenses were \$446, primarily for shipping of the 63 solar light kits from/to Dave Nonnemacher. Other "in kind" donations were contributed for hospitality for Dave while in Thousand Oaks and for the reception on February 2.

Five hundred dollars (\$500) was given from the GMT Travel Fund to Dave Nonnemacher for his sixth trip to Ukraine, April 2-17.

On March 7, thirty (30) solar light kits were assembled by eleven middle school students in Alton, Ia. On March 23, twenty (20) solar light kits were assembled by members of United Church, Two Harbors, MN. Along with the 13 that were assembled by ALC youth in February, all 63 solar light kits have been delivered to Hand in Hand Logistics, Isanti, MN for shipping to Ukraine. Ascension and friends have funded **283 Ray of Life solar light kits** this past year, many are in use in Ukraine today.

Updates and photos were included in This Week at Ascension (TWAA) 3/15-16, 3/29-30 and 4/5-6.

FOLLOW UP:

Send a thank you to ALC Foundation for their grant as well as a final report of this project.

Send final report with thanks to faith communities and individuals who contributed to this project.

Share photos, when available, from Dave in Ukraine of the replacement utility van, delivery of solar light kits, and other relevant photos.

Pray for justice and peace in Ukraine. Pray for the continuing ministry of the Mariupol Chaplains Battalion.

Pray for Dave's safety while in Ukraine and for his meeting with Olha Isaieva's father in Kremenchuk.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Louise Evenson at Lpevenson@gmail.com or 925-518-5795.



GMT Fieldworker Personal Care Kits

DATE: March 28, 2025 For April 2025

SUBMITTED BY: Carol Bjelland

1. WHAT'S COMING UP? (What? When? Where?) – REPORT ON COMPLETED SERVICE PROJECT

REPORT:

Connecting with Friends of Fieldworkers, making & sharing 145 Personal Care Kits (& standalone materials) for Fieldworkers in Ventura County. Kits & materials were distributed by Ascension & Friends of Fieldworkers at FOF's 1st Resource Fair, March 24, 2025 at Somis Ranch.

Each Kit included: 2 pr socks, 2 granola bars, 1 bar of soap, 1 toothbrush, 1 tube of toothpaste, 1 shampoo & 1 deodorant (regular, not travel or XL size). Each Kit included a hand-painted note of love & gratitude on paper strawberry shapes. Kit items will be assembled & placed in large-size reusable clear ziplock plastic bags. Additional toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap & deodorant were distributed as well.

Ascension's Children's Ministry assemble kits Sunday, March 16th (in conjunction with Sunday School. Carol led a message about where our food comes from & how we can help/serve those who grow & harvest food we eat. Ascension's Youth, leaders & family members assembled kits Sunday March 16th at 11:30 AM. Carolina Guillen/Friends of Fieldworkers Board member spoke with the Youth about her experience as a fieldworker starting at age 7. ALS students in 1st & 3rd grade assembled the remaining 45 kits Tuesday, March 18th during school & Jenni Klemp share a message with the students about food & fieldworkers.

Summary & photos shared in TWAA March 22-23, 2025

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

3. LOOKING AHEAD (Important calendar dates)

Ascension is invited again to come to a Laundry Love event (Feb/2024, Ascension shared craft projects, books, snacks & friendship for/with children while adult family members did the family's laundry.)

4. OTHER INFORMATION

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



MINISTRY OF Global Ministries Team-Lutheran World Relief Kits project, 2025

DATE April 5, 2025

SUBMITTED BY Louise Evenson

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

Planning is beginning for the LWR Kits project at ONE Ascension, 2025. Pastor Chamie Delkeskamp, Vicki Weeks, Jenni Klemp and Louise Evenson met on March 19 to begin formulating a plan for this ONE Ascension service project. Anyone who is interested in helping with the planning of this project is welcome to join us on Wednesday, April 23rd from 2-3 PM in Pr Chamie's office.

The Early Childhood Center wants to assemble baby kits for LWR. The Ascension School wants to assemble school kits in the fall. The emphasis for God's Work Our Hands on September 7th will focus on personal care kits for the congregation to assemble. We encourage individuals to join one of the teams for each kind of kit. Anyone is welcome to join any or all of the teams for the organizing, assembling and packing of kits. Most of the kits will be assembled in September/October to coordinate with the fall Ingathering of quilts and kits in October for shipping to LWR.

In observance of Lutheran World Relief's 80th anniversary year, we set a goal of shipping 800 kits to LWR in the fall.

In June, the benevolence offering at Ascension will be designated for Lutheran World Relief. A plan and theme for this giving opportunity will be developed. The results from this benevolence offering will be used for materials for the kits for LWR and will determine what other financial resources will be required from other sources to meet our goal. (Thrivent Action Team grants, Be the Blessing grants, Ascension Foundation grant)

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

Volunteer to join one of the kit teams---baby care kits, school kits, personal care kits.

Indicate if you have a Thrivent Action Team grant (s) available for the LWR Kits project.

Since most of the boxes that were given to us for shipping kits have been used, if you have contacts with any manufacturing or retail group that may have boxes appropriate for shipping kits, please let us know. Please save any copy paper size boxes for packing/shipping kits.

3. LOOKING AHEAD (Important calendar dates)

Next planning meeting April 23rd, 2-3 PM, Pastor Chamie's office.

4. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT Louise Evenson lpevenson@gmail.com , Vicki Weeks 3weeksboys@gmail.com or Pastor Chamie Delkeskamp pastorchamie@alcto.org



FAIR TRADE MINISTRY

DATE: March 28, 2025 for April 2025

SUBMITTED BY: Carol Bjelland

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

Fair Trade Wednesday Chapel Message for April will focus on pollinators in the context of the Chapel Scripture & message focus for that week. Special balloon animals & slides will be used to highlight the message.

CLU Earth Day/Sustainability Fair – April 22, 2025. Ascension Fair Trade has again been invited to participate. Thank You CGE! The event starts at 11:15 AM. We will be setting up around 10:30 AM & plan to stay until around 1 PM. We will bring some FT products. We will share samples (chocolate & dried mango) Volunteers to help set-up & be present at our table are invited.

Equal Exchange Summit – June 13, 2025 (Wheaton College/Norton, MA) - Carol has been invited to participate.

Fair Trade Federation Conference/Expo – September 8-11, 2025 (St. Louis, MO) – Carol has been invited to participate

Ascension Fair Trade 24th Anniversary Celebration – October 2025 (currently in prelim planning)

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

Volunteers invited to help with Fair Trade Lane Wednesdays, Thursdays & Sundays and with special events & opportunities.

Volunteers invited to help with our participation in the CLU Earth Day Celebration 4/22.

3. LOOKING AHEAD (Important calendar dates)

Fair Trade Lane Open Dates/Times January & February 2025:

Wednesday, April 9th (1 -1:30 PM)

Thursday, April 10th (2:30-4 PM)

Sunday, April 13th (8:30-9 AM & 10-10:30 AM)

Wednesday, May 14th (1-1:30 PM)

Thursday, May 15th (2:30-4 PM)

Sunday, May 18th (8:30-9 AM & 10-10:30 AM)

4. OTHER INFORMATION

The March 25th field trip to Ten Thousand Villages in Pasadena was a great outing. Treasures to wear & share were found. We learned about financial factors shaping re-organization of network of stores & closure of many around the country. We also learned about how tariffs on goods coming in from Canada & Mexico will affect their inventory/prices/business – Fair Trade products from various artisans & farmers come in to the US via vendor organizations in Canada & Mexico). We learned about MADE by DWC & the products they make/are sold at Ten Thousand Villages (possibly a visit to their café/gift shop in the future)

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

COMMUNICATION UPDATE FOR APRIL

As we wind up the Lenten season and move into Holy Week and Easter, I'm finishing setting up a lot of online and print advertising, making website changes and additions, getting TWAA together, and in general doing my best to keep up with the surge of great energy going on at Ascension.

I'll be back with details of how all the Holy Week/Easter promotion goes next month. As a quick note for now, I'll just say I'm already kind of blown away by just a day and a half of views of the boosted reels on Facebook promoting Palm Sunday. The reel featuring Sunday Schoolers engaged in Holy Week-related activities had 4,487 views and 110 link clicks from Monday evening to Wednesday midday. The reel featuring Pastor Chamie talking about the garden festival/tomato sale/petting zoo had 6,555 views and 158 link clicks in the same time frame. These are being boosted on Facebook and Instagram. It's taking the strategy decided on by Pastors Tim and Chamie at Christmastime a step further. I look forward to seeing numbers for a full run.

Great numbers on FB content!

Page overview

Last 28 days

[See more insights](#)

Views ⓘ

81,620

Reach ⓘ

10,214

Content interactions ⓘ

3,612

Follows ⓘ

15

Meanwhile, ALCTO.org had 4,515 pageviews for the past 28 days. (This does not include the newsletter, which is on a different site.) Top performing pages for March were Livestream, Calendar, Signups/Announcements, Seasonal Worship (this is where users were directed to find information about Lenten services, soup suppers, etc.), Meet the Pastors, Index, Staff directory, About Our Worship Services, and Contact Us. We've recently added new pages including Kingdom Builders and Pickleball.

Speaking of new things, the new Solid Food podcast has been downloaded 87 times. I believe that shows it's a nice option for people who can't make it to church, who might have to work on weekends, or can't view the livestream for whatever reason, but still want to hear the sermons.

Also for March, our Google Business Profile had 601 interactions, according to Google, resulting in 388 website visits, 193 people asking for directions, 1,506 profile views and 678 searches. We'll check back on this next month, since we have Easter promotion underway with Google.

Thanking you for your devoted service,

Stacy Smith Bosco

Be the Blessing Report for April 2025

The Be the Blessing team has been meeting monthly this year with the Generosity Team in order to launch, then follow-up on, the Kingdom Builders project. A combined meeting of the Generosity Team and Be the Blessing committee is scheduled for April 14th.

In the meantime, after a couple of quiet months, the team received three new grant requests. One was approved electronically based on the requested time frame. The other two will be discussed at a separate meeting April 14th prior to the Kingdom Builders discussion. Time permitting, there will also be some discussion of future activities, including funding replenishment (if the two pending requests are approved, our balance will be about \$17,500, from the original \$60,000).

Respectfully submitted for the committee,

Dave Harkins

Church Council Report

Youth Director: Jennifer Avalos

Date: April 2, 2025

Confirmation Program Update:

As we near the end of the season of Lent this month, it continues to be a time for deep spiritual reflection. For our students, Lent has provided a unique opportunity to remove distractions and create space to connect with God. This season has called us to step away from the noise of everyday life and focus on what truly matters. Throughout Lent, the Confirmation curriculum has focused on deepening our students' faith by exploring Scripture more profoundly, helping them to understand and grow in their relationship with Jesus as they reflect on His teachings and the transformative power of faith in their lives.

Senior Luther League Update

Our Senior Luther League is currently diving into the Book of Romans, and it's been incredible to witness how our high school students are growing in their faith. Each week, we focus on one to two chapters from Romans. Throughout the week, the youth are encouraged to read the chapter on their own. Then, during our Sunday Bible study, we begin with prayer and read through the chapter or chapters together as a group. This allows those who may have missed the reading during the week to catch up, and it's always refreshing to hear the chapter or chapters with new perspectives.

Afterward, we break into small groups with mentors, where students are given questions based on the chapter to discuss with their group. These conversations allow for deeper insights into Scripture and foster meaningful connections. If time allows, we come back together as a larger group to reflect on the chapter with wrap-up questions. We also take time to share highs and lows from the week and pray for each other's requests. The evening ends with social time, giving the youth a chance to relax, enjoy snacks, and connect with one another.

It's been amazing to see the youth engage in small group discussions and dive deeper into Scripture. As we near the completion of Romans chapters 1-12 in the next few weeks, it's been a blessing to walk alongside them in this journey of faith.

The 25/25 Prayer Initiative

Our 25/25 Prayer Initiative will continue after our following study of Romans. We are nearing the end of Romans chapters 1-12 and will be diving into Romans chapter 9 this coming week. The students have truly embraced this initiative and have enjoyed exploring part of the book of Romans.

The goal of this prayer initiative is to encourage our youth to dedicate time each day to both prayer and Scripture, helping them develop a deeper relationship with God. We are excited to see how it continues to impact their faith journeys, and it has been inspiring to witness the growth already taking place!

Youth Events Update:

9th-12th Grade Pickleball, Bible Study, & BBQ – April 6th

This Sunday, we will be gathering at our local park for a fun and meaningful afternoon with our 9th-12th grade students. We'll start with a brief Bible study, discussing Romans ch. 9 , before diving into a friendly game of pickleball. To top it off, we'll enjoy a BBQ with hot dogs, hamburgers, and some tasty treats for everyone. This event offers a wonderful opportunity for our youth to connect, engage in fellowship, and grow in their faith, all while having a great time and sharing a meal together. I'm really looking forward to these moments with our high schoolers, as it's a perfect blend of faith, fun, and community.

April Senior Luther League Coffee Shop Gatherings

In March, we had two coffee meetings with our Senior Luther League students, and it was amazing to witness the students encouraging and uplifting each other. Their support for one another truly reflects the light they bring and the glory they give to God. It was a joy to be part of these gatherings—laughing, talking about life, and hearing about what's going on in their schools. Watching them grow in their faith was a highlight. I'm already looking forward to April's coffee meetings with excitement!

In April, We will be having two coffee shop gatherings for our Senior Luther League students. On April 23rd and 30th, we'll head to local coffee shops after school. These gatherings provide a relaxed space for students to connect outside of Sunday Bible study or monthly youth events. It's

a great opportunity for high schoolers to chat about faith, life, and even work on homework while supporting each other. The coffee shop locations were chosen by the students themselves, and we're excited to spend time together in a casual setting!

Supporting Senior Luther League Students at Events in April :

In March, Tyler Hassenbien, one of our Senior Luther League Students, earned a third-place medal in the 300-meter hurdles at his track meet. It was incredible to see his focus and dedication as he worked hard for this achievement. I was grateful to be there to cheer him on, and it reminded me of how important it is for us as a youth program to support our students and celebrate these significant milestones in their lives.

Looking ahead to April, I'm excited to support another Senior Luther League student at their upcoming game. It's always a joy to be there and cheer on our youth as they continue to shine in their pursuits!

7th-12th Grade Fundraiser: Easter Breakfast – April 20th

We are excited to announce our upcoming traditional Easter Breakfast on April 20th! We are truly grateful for the opportunity to bring this event together, and everything is coming along smoothly. Sign-ups for both families and students are now available, and flyers with pricing details for both adults and children have been distributed. The centerpieces for the tables are ready, and we are tying up the final details before the big day.

Easter Breakfast Details:

Please mark your calendars for April 20th—we would love for you, your friends, and your family to join us for this special event. This year's Easter Breakfast will be a wonderful time for our congregation to come together in worship and fellowship as we celebrate our Lord and Savior. It's an opportunity to enjoy a delicious meal, connect with one another, and build community within our church family.

Pricing:

- Adults: \$10
- Children (Ages 10 and under): \$6

This will be an exciting time for youth and families to come together in community and fellowship, all while supporting our youth fundraising efforts. We hope to see you there!

Sincerely,

Jennifer Avalos

Youth Director