

**Ascension Lutheran Church
Council Agenda
Wednesday, June 18, 2025 - 7:00pm
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 - Bonny Chick

Honoring Council Leadership - Carrie Leonard

Treasurer's Report - Dave Harkins

New Business

- **Congregational Meeting Final Preparation** - Carrie Leonard

Recurring Business

- Affirm New Members, Confirmands, and Baptisms

Old Business

- Land Sale - report on any new transaction activity - Pastor Tim
- Nominating Committee / New Board Members - Pastor Tim

Approval of Minutes - Carrie Leonard

- May Council Meeting

Consent Approval of Reports to Council - Carrie Leonard

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

Information Items

- July 16th, Council Meeting - Bethlehem Room
 - Devotions - xxx

Closing Prayer

Adjournment

Treasurer Report for June, 2025

Operating results

May numbers for the church are in development as of this writing, and not yet done for the school. Mike Marvin developed an offering report for the month, and I am glad to say May bounced back from the weak numbers in April. Results exceeded budget for May by \$3K. Shortfall dropped to \$43K YTD, or about 3%. As June is a five-weekend month, we are hopeful to gain further ground before fiscal year-end. I do not recommend any budget revisions based on this result. Note that Mike estimates the results to budget to be favorable by over \$50K thanks to the lower payroll expenses than initially budgeted (due to the open positions last summer).

Results in calendar year 2025 to date

With full staffing at present, it is instructive to compare monthly revenue vs. expenses so far this calendar year:

	Monthly amounts			
	Offering	Other	Op.expenses	Debt svc.
December	\$297,450		\$102,453	
2025				
January	\$102,309	\$2,791	\$134,888	\$8,306
February	\$136,181	\$4,412	\$101,588	\$8,306
March	\$122,921	\$3,479	\$109,081	\$8,306
April	\$93,367	\$3,758	\$98,480	\$8,306
average Jan-Apr	\$113,695	\$3,610	\$111,009	\$8,306
May	\$110,595			

May's receipts are within the ballpark of the average. Adding debt service to the operating expenses, our revenues trail expenses by \$2-3K. However, the large contributions in December make up for that monthly deficit times 11. Also, a three-payroll month (e.g. January) only occurs twice a year so the monthly deficit is even more paltry.

Other comments – for my last report

1. Finance staff works efficiently and effectively to provide services to One Ascension. The reorganization completed three years ago has been an unqualified success and the staff is a joy to work with, as well as managing to take care of the myriad details associated with church, schools and Foundation.
2. In most months, thanks partly to payroll responsibilities, the Finance team has little opportunity to submit full reports within the timeframe for the Church Council packets. I recommend the Council consider pushing back the meeting by one week, similar to the action taken by the School Board over a year ago, I believe for the same reason.
3. Church Finance Committee needs to be reconstituted for next year and following.

4. Finally, I usually eschew hyperbole, but it has been an intense pleasure to serve with the current and immediate past council, as well as the pastoral staff. I feel I've been blessed to participate with this group of dedicated Christians in the ministry of our church.

Respectfully submitted,

Dave Harkins

New Members & Baptisms Report

June 2025

Baptisms for May

Name	Date of Birth	Date Baptized
Kanan James Sparks	02/04/2024	05/17/2025
Brody James Rios	05/13/2024	05/24/2025

New Members for May

No New Members

Ascension Lutheran Church

New Leadership Positions 2025/2026

Church Council



Creighton Van Horn / President Elect

Member of Ascension Lutheran since 1978, after graduating from California Lutheran College in business in 1978. He received his MBA from CLU and married his wife Beatriz in 1980 by Pastor Larry Wagner and they have been members since. He served two terms as Treasurer in the 1990's and served on Land Acquisition Task Force for 20 + years. He served most recently as fundraising help and project manager on the Early Childhood Center and Sanctuary Renovation.

He retired in June of 2025 from Lionscove, Inc, where he worked as Vice President of Investor Relations for the past 5 years. He has two children and 5 grandchildren. He and his wife Bea will be celebrating their 45th anniversary in October. He is firm believer in the One Ascension vision and is a strong advocate of lifelong learning as a member in the Old Boys Bible Study. He regularly attends Chapel on Wednesday morning to support the ECC and Day School.



Crystal Bryant / Secretary

Crystal Bryant is a mother, wife and 10 year member of ALCTO. She is a Property Marketer for AMS Craig LLC, her family's Agriculture and Property Management Business. In addition to working with her husband and family, she is also a Substitute Teacher for the Pleasant Valley School District, in Camarillo.

Crystal is a graduate of Arizona State University with a degree in Communications. After living in Arizona, Crystal moved to Dallas to work in Public Relations. She later worked in Sales & Marketing for a TX-based Fine Paper company, where she met her husband Matt. After nearly 20 years away they returned to her native Camarillo - in 2014 - to raise their family. Matt and Crystal have a 13 year old son, Ryder and a 10 year old daughter, Harper. They are a house divided between native Texans (Matt & Ryder) and the California Girls (Crystal & Harper) but all Dallas Cowboys fans!

In service at Ascension, Crystal is a substitute Sunday School Teacher, and recently served as a member of the 2024 Call Committee for the ALC Associate Pastor. You can also find her serving communion alongside Matt, Ryder and Harper.

(conts)



Steve Smuck / Treasurer

Why do you serve:

To be a good steward of the incredible resources we share at Ascension Church, the School and Foundation. Our family has benefited greatly from this community and this is a small way of giving back to help ensure these resources are available for others as well.

Family Overview: Joined Ascension as a Church member in 1988 and married Susan Lundeen there in 1990. Susan is also a (Past) Church Council President and currently serves on the Board of Regents at CLU. All three children have attended the ALS, Rebecca (24), Lauren (21), and Zachary (19)

Education: Bachelor of Science, Mechanical Engineering, Univ. of Hawaii // MBA, INSEAD, Fontainebleau, France. Licensed Professional Engineer (ME) in state of CA.

Currently Retired. Previous Occupations: VP of Engineering, Roberts Tool, Chatsworth, CA. Manufacturer of precision aircraft parts for commercial and military markets. Previous owner and President of Deltron Engineering, Burbank, CA. 12 years Civil Servant, US Navy Point Mugu and Port Hueneme.

Ascension Lutheran Church Board, (PAST) Member, President and Treasurer

Ascension Lutheran School Board, (PAST) Member, President

Ascension Foundation Board, (PAST) Member, Investment Sub-Comm.

With Kari Gravrock, led the last offering of Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University (9 week class on Biblical financial living)



Michael Feltner / Member at Larger

Michael Feltner, Ph.D., is currently in his 37th year at Pepperdine University where he serves as the Founding Dean of the College of Health Science. Michael and his wife, Michele, a professor at California Lutheran University, have been members at Ascension since 1997. After becoming a member, Michael has been actively involved in many committees and activities at Ascension, including, most recently, serving on the 2024 call committee. Michael and Michele have two children, Maddie and Max.

School Board



Matt Hurdle

Matt is a teacher who has worked in Christian education for the past 15 years. A San Diego native, Matt attended Pepperdine University where met his future wife, Hannah. Matt has a M.A in American Studies and B.A. in Economics from Pepperdine, a professional certificate from UCLA in Charter School Policy, Finance, and Administration, and California Administrative and Teaching Credentials. Over the past decade, Matt has led a group of high school students to serve in Romanian orphanages with Heart of Hope Ministries. In 2012, Matt and Hannah were married by Pastor Tim and are now proud parents to Ascension Lutheran School students Joanna (7) and Athena (5).

(conts)

Foundation



Mike Kelly

Mike Kelly is a retired high school teacher and guidance counselor at Thousand Oaks High School. He and his wife Linda have been members of Ascension for forty five years. They have three adult children and seven grandchildren, all living in Ventura County. Mike has been a past council president and he and Linda are active longtime Life Group members.

**Ascension Lutheran Church
Council Meeting Minutes
May 21, 2025 7:00 pm**

The Council meeting was called to order by Carrie Leonard at 7:02 p.m.

Council Members In Attendance: Carrie Leonard, Ethan East, Dave Harkins, John Rarick, Jeannette Ruggiero, Anna Woodward, Bonny Chick, Al Baker

Others: Pastor Tim, Pastor Chamie, Mike Marvin (financial part of meeting)

Absent: Kaylee Searway

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

Discussion: Add a new point in information items to discuss disturbance at Saturday 5/17 6pm service.

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

Devotions - Anna

Using the Jesus Calling Devotional book of May 19th, this devotion focuses on God's great love for us and how He "has" us all (John 10:28). We need to know how safe and secure we are with God. Not just what/when God will be or come to be, but NOW no matter what. 1 Corinthians 13:12 tells us Gods plan is partially "hidden" now but we will one day see. Closing with that if we trust in God we will be "Held, Known, Strengthen & Blessed with Peace."

Treasurer's Report – Dave

With April's full numbers still in development, a quick look at April was another down month.. Budgeted offerings for April were \$141,821 and actual offerings were \$93,366.31, a deficit of \$48,454.69.

With online given sporadic info, tracking real time numbers with one snapshot is difficult.

Discussion of why the April numbers seemed so far off included concerns of Easter giving's should have helped April month but April is also year end Tax deadline. Also with the current state of finance markets, most people are tightening up short term.

We will review again to see May numbers. At this point, May receipts are in track with budget.

A motion was made (John), seconded (Bonny), and passed unanimously to approve treasurer's report..

New Business

1. School Board Budget Review – Anna

Budget was based off solid numbers of 190 Students, which includes a 2nd Kindergarten classroom. In summary with \$5,485,774 as FYE 26 revenue and \$5,349,412 as FYE 26 expenditures, minus debt service and others, this budget will carry a \$7,922 Surplus.

Discussion of enrollment going forward for 7th & 8th Grades. These will only need to grow as the lower classes come up through the years. There is also lots of competition here now too. Tuition cost was discussed with \$13,500 being Middle School and \$12,600 for elementary school. Tuition was increased by 4% this year and is on par with our closest competitor (Pinecrest). Financial Aid and process was also discussed and Mike Marvin explained process (each case reviewed independently and internally) and using TADS system for all initial applications. Council discussed to proceed to have Dave to present this school budget at June congregational meeting.

A motion was made (Jeannette), seconded (Bonny), and passed unanimously to approve the school board budget as recommended.

2. As the second New Business point, Carrie discussed the agenda for the upcoming congregational meeting on June 29th. This meeting is pretty straightforward and will be according to Ascension bylaws. Dave will include the reserve study with budget presentation. Agenda was reviewed with no added changes or discussion.

A motion was made (Jeannette), seconded (Alan), and passed unanimously to approve the agenda for the June 29th congregational meeting..

Recurring Business

Affirm New Members, Confirmants and Baptisms:

Baptisms for April 2025:

Charlotte Mae Hartson

Henry Robert Hartson

Manon Rinsma Leonard

Olivia Taylor Rinsma Leonard

Kaylee Rey Conrad

Old Business

1. Land Sale – Pastor Tim

Pastor Tim stated we are still waiting for approval from city. He will check in with Robert again soon on it too.

2. Nominating Committee - Carrie

Candidates for the President-Elect, and Member-at-Large positions on Council have been contacted and are discerning this invitation to serve.

Candidates have been secured for Secretary and Treasurer on Church Council.

A candidate has been secured for the one open position on the School Board

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

Approval of Minutes

April Council meeting

A motion was made (Anna), seconded (Bonny) to approve the April 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

Discussion: Noted that there was not a Director of Operations report since Kaylee was absent, so this report was struck for approval. No other reports pulled for discussion but it was confirmed that it will be up to Pastor Chamie to instruct if Jenelle, as the new Children Ministry Leader, will make any reports to council.

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

Information Items:

1. Pastor Chamie explained about an issue/disturbance that occurred on 5/17 after the 6pm Saturday night service. After the service a man and his son approached Pastor Chamie and told her she was "unbiblical" as a women pastor. He gave her his name and phone number and told her to have her husband call her. She also calmly asked him to leave and said that he was not welcome back. After he left the sanctuary, he was waiting in his car, that was partially blocking people to exit, to tell other members leaving that our church was unbiblical for being a member of the ELCA and allowing a woman pastor. After seeing this, members finally asked him to leave and tell him he was not welcome back and, when he did not leave immediately, the police were called. He finally left and said that he would be back to protest with loud speakers. Both Pastor Tim and Pastor Chamie reported this to the officer who arrived and discussed next steps if he were to return.

Pastor Tim explained that this guy is known for this and his agenda and even has a YouTube channel where he "preaches" his beliefs. He is known to have done this at other Churches and Pastor Tim even confirmed with Holy Trinity that he did the same thing there. This guy then did not show up at Sunday services.

Discussion: Security and new security measures were brought up during services. Pastor Tim and Pastor Chamie discussed what a blessing the security team at the school have been and, in short term, they will be asked to be present at services. If the security team cannot be present at services then Pastor Tim will/has asked current retired Police officers to come to each service as a short term "security" option. Pastor Chamie and others voiced their opinions to have security at services or other new security options going forward. Pastor Tim, along with Kaylee, will investigate, the cost of adding the security company guards to all services but also other options. Another option that was discussed was a mobile security button that can be pressed for emergency police dispatch. Pastor Tim and Kaylee to review and report back.

2. Next Council meeting will be Wednesday, June 18th at 7:00 pm.in the Bethlehem Room.

Devotions – Bonnie Chick

Closing Prayer – Pastor Tim

Adjournment

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Ethan East



Pastor Tim's Ministry Report- June 2025

Grace and peace my sisters and brothers in Christ,

As I reflect on our One Ascension Pentecost celebration, I am filled with the warmth of joy. So many good things came “all-together in one place.” From the amazing worship leadership of each of the music teams, to the way the tech team was able manage- even while learning new equipment (which sounded so good!), to the scholarships that the Foundation passed out, to the food and the booths set up by many joyful volunteers that were waiting for people as they came out the doors, it felt like the joy of the Spirit was abounding. It was such a wonderful contrast to the words that were being leveled at us from the sidewalk by two protesters that were accusing Ascension of being an apostate church! How wrong they were.

With respect to those protestors, the experience of having them show up and try to shame us for having a female pastor, our association with the ELCA, baptizing babies, etc., I am motivated to use this event to make Ascension a better church. In a way, I am grateful (not that I want this to be a regular occurrence!) for the event because it has given me (and others) some energy to think about what we stand for, what our identity is and how to respond to situations like this. One important response has been to make security a higher priority. Per our discussion at the last council meeting, I don't believe we need to hire an armed guard to be present at all our services (which would cost \$26k) but I do believe we need to be more deliberate about the process of training our ushers what to do in different security/safety scenarios that may arise during worship. Yesterday, an ad-hoc security team met with David Nell, a retired deputy and an expert in security. While David is impressed with what we already have in place, he is helping us to further develop our security plans and procedures. We are planning to gather ushers from all the services together for a 90-minute training session that David will lead covering various topics like how to interact with a suspicious person, how to evacuate the church, etc. I am hopeful that moving forward this will be a more regularly occurring training.

The work of the Nominating Committee is now complete, and I am very excited for the next version of our church leadership. Please look in the “Old Business” section of this council report to see the pictures and read the biographical information that our candidates have supplied.

The sound equipment has now been purchased, installed and our tech team and musicians at 6pm and 10:30 services have been trained. Our goal to move all the sound off the chancel area so that we can clarify the sound and make it easier to hear has been accomplished. Overall, the sound is an incredible improvement. The learning curve for using the equipment is still there so the work of encouraging the techs and the musicians to grow into the new system goes on. Change even if it is recognized as good change is hard. My hope is that the improved sound will improve the overall quality of the worship experience at both services and that improved quality will help the service grow in attendance.

Our Kingdom Builders initiative continues. Initially we told the recipients of the \$100 that we passed out that the deadline was June 1st to finish their project. Some have pushed back so we have extended grace. We are enjoying the stories that are coming in and trying to tell as many as we can through newsletter articles, videos, social media posts and announcements. Our goal to create a culture of abundance and generosity as we help people experience it is being achieved.

Finally, this is the season of putting together a vision moving forward. What prompts me is the presentation at the congregational meeting on June 29th. Currently 3 areas that I am developing are:

- Staff Stabilization- Continue to grow and develop the Executive Team and Staff Teams
- Integration of Children and Youth into our culture- Continue to expand our engagement opportunities for children, youth, and families
- Ensure our long-term presence in the Conejo Valley- Ascension Lutheran Church is here to stay. Explore the elements required for sustainable ministry, including how we love, serve, give, and save.

The wording of these goals is subject to change as we develop them and share them with staff and leadership. I hope that they will help focus our efforts and energy moving into the future.

In His Service,

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

Pastor Chamie's May 2025 Council Report

Children, Youth, & Family

Children

May was a transition month for children's ministry. I worked with Jenni on closing her time as the interim director of children's ministry. I am so appreciative of Jenni. She went above and beyond and greatly blessed our children and families. She did an excellent job in onboarding Jenelle. It was fun working with the Sunday school teachers to have the students secretly make Jenni cards and be able to thank her during the children's message on her last day, June 1. Jenni says she is looking forward to being a great volunteer at the church as we move forward. Jenelle officially began as the new Director of Children's Ministry on June 2, but the onboarding process began in May. She is already a known and beloved person on our campus. I have enjoyed seeing people's excitement that she is taking on this role.

Our 9:00 AM Sunday school for children celebrated their last day of the school year on June 1. There will be no 9:00 Sunday school during the summer. I am so thankful for our faithful Sunday school teachers: Erin Gray, Vicki Weeks, Rachel Bowen, Chelsea Ruggiero, and Chandler Ruggiero. Also thank you to our sub Emily Dobrowalski.

I am also thankful for Kari Keit, who after a very wonderful "trial run" of children's choir during the season of Lent, agreed to continue the children's choir through the spring to prepare the children to sing on Pentecost Sunday.

Jenelle and I began working together on Summer Sunday school which will be during the 10:30 AM service from June 15 to August 10. The children will begin in worship and then after children's time go with Jenelle and volunteers to the gym for "Happy Campers" to learn more about Jesus. The children will return to worship at Holy Communion. We want to give our 9:00 volunteers a rest for the summer. We want to see how Sunday school works at the 10:30 service. By the end of summer, we will be solidifying our fall plans for Sunday school and children's choir.

Youth

Confirmation came to a close for this school year in May. All the confirmands - 7th and 8th grade - had a "last hurrah" at our Confirmation Overnight. I loved designing the night

which included an all campus scavenger hunt, getting to explore church attics, a late night candlelit prayer time in the sanctuary, and morning devotions at the picnic tables. We are grateful for Jeff Hengst who volunteered to be the chaperone for the boys who slept in the Bethlehem Room. Suffice it to say, Jeff didn't get much sleep! Jen and I slept in the Bethlehem Room with the girls and we slept really well! Jen led Capture-the-Flag and crafts. Mentor Carlah Schneider also joined us.



Confirmation Sunday for our 8th graders was so beautiful. I loved seeing our confirmands share their favorite Bible verses. I think the whole congregation was very touched by the students who read their faith statements. One of

things I so enjoyed in the month of May was getting to sit down for individual meetings with each confirmand and their family for about a half hour or so and talk about their faith statement and pray for them.

High school Bible study and coffee shop meetings averaged about 2 students in attendance for the month of May. Our high school ministry continues to try to find its footing. I have been coaching Jen on how to lead a Bible study and coaching her in how and why it is so important to get our 8th grade students connected to high school youth group now that they are confirmed. This led to Jen putting together a welcome BBQ for the incoming freshman students on May 31. Thanks to Dave and Cathi Peterson for hosting the event at their home. High schooler Ella F said she enjoyed leading games for the incoming freshman.

Church & School Combined

Dr. Charlotte Miranda (the school's Nature Lab teacher) and I led a family hike at Oakbrook Canyon Loop Trail. After our little hike, we had a snack and played games in a meadow. We had about 30 in attendance. Several families said they hoped we do hike/park dates in the summer, so that is something we need to get on the calendar.



Interfacing with the Schools

May included some very special events with our schools:

- I attended "Muffins with Moms."
- I attended the TK-8 spring musical, *Moana*. It was an absolutely amazing production led by music teacher Kelsey Packman.
- Tim & I shared a few words and a greeting at the ECC's end-of-the-school year ceremony for the 4's. It was delightful. Later that day, I got to attend the ECC end-of-the-school year party. I really enjoyed getting to talk to so many families. I still have so many names to get to know at the ECC, but am happy to be getting to know more and more people.
- I attended the end-of-the-year athletic banquet for the Ascension middle schoolers.

- Jenelle, Jen, and I all worked at the book fair on the night of the school's open house. That was a fun way for the three of us to interact with the school families. I may or may not have bought too many Christian children's books for my office.
- I spent a lot of time with a whole crew of amazing people as we worked on a very special gift for Connie Angress who is retiring after 29 years! As of this writing, she hasn't yet been presented the gift, but I will say it had been so fun to work with past and present school people, including former principal Diann Lavik, on this project. And that the project wouldn't be possible without Anita Cohen.
- I continue to simply be present, roaming the ECC and school campus and sometimes having students visit my office and take a picture with Jesus.



Worship

One of my worship highlights from the month of May was planning the confirmation service and getting to work with our confirmation students on that service.

All of the worship leaders collaborated as we began preparing for Pentecost Sunday and the one worship service.

I worked with Tim in planning and sermon-prepping for the special "invite a friend" weekend .



Other

Steve, Tim, and I got to do another work day blessing, this time with Kai Hoffmeier. Kai grew up at Ascension and was confirmed at the church. He also graduated from the school and I got the blessing of being Kai's 8th grade homeroom and religion teacher many years ago.

Pastor Steve, Mary Wennes, and I attended the Synod Assembly together.

I did quite a bit of pastoral care and counseling for children, moms, and families.

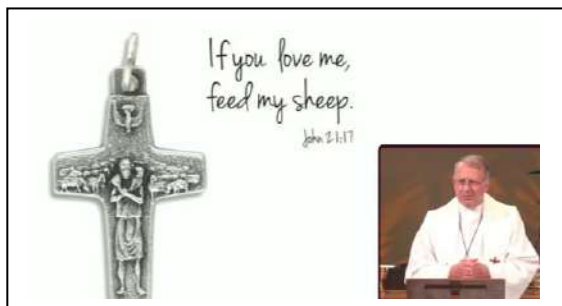
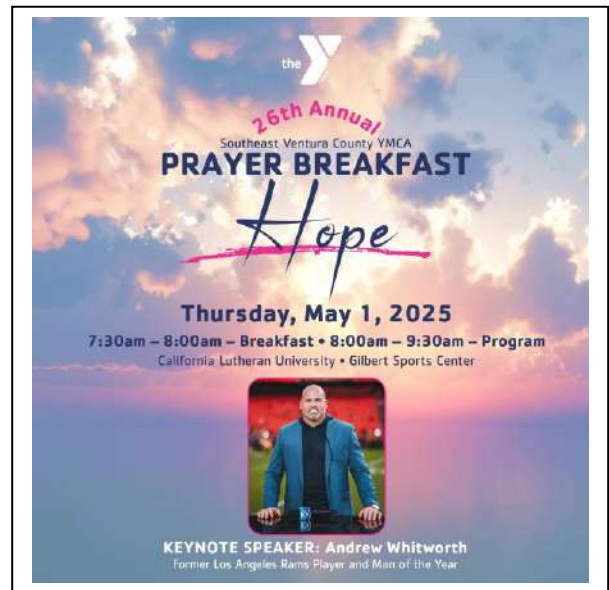
We celebrated two big things as a family in the month of May: our niece Katie's wedding and our son Aidan's graduation from California Lutheran University. It was very special being with our Delkeskamp family and our church family - including Karsten Lundring - at Aidan's graduation.



Grace & Peace,
Pastor Chamie

Church Council Report – Pastor Steve Herder – June 1, 2025 (for May)

The month of May started with the Ecumenical and Interfaith Prayer Breakfast at Cal Lutheran on May 1st. Ascension's and KCLU's Mary Olson did another great job in hosting this event and being one of the speakers. Andrew Whitworth, formerly of the LA Ram, had a terrific speech as well. This was a good example of a positive unifying experience for our community. The month ended with the challenge of the two protesters outside on the street before our worship services. I thought both Pastor Tim and Pastor Chamie did outstanding work in leading us through that anxious time. We do pray for our neighbors. Here at Ascension, we lead and we respond with love, compassion, mercy, and prayers.



The first weekend of May was very unusual for me (since going to half-time work two plus years ago), in that I preached at all three services, on the rich text of John 21, of Jesus asking Peter three times, “Do you love me?” and Jesus’ response “Feed my sheep.”

We have so many ways that we seek to do that through all our ministries. Here are some that I highlighted that weekend. Also, John 21:18 is a verse that we often think about in our senior adult ministries.



One of the joyful events this month for our staff and for our Community Concerns Team was the fact that one of our unhoused friends (for the last six years living in her car), who worships with us, and is at our food pantry each Friday, was able to get into Section 8 low-income housing, paying 1/3 of her monthly income (very minimal) for rent. We thank the staff at Harbor House for helping to make that happen. Our Agape Fund paid for a bed in the one-bedroom apartment on T.O. Blvd.

This past month your pastors did two Wednesday Work Blessings, one with Tim Hengst at Cal Lutheran, who is now retiring, and one with Kai Hoffmeier at Chase Bank in Newbury Park. If you'd like to learn more about these, just ask a pastor!



One ministry of our Community Concerns Team is the first aid and AED/CPR training by Di Starzak. Church staff and ushers receive this training twice a year, and we thank Di for all her work both in the training and in keeping all our equipment up to date. We thank our Foundation for the gift of an AED machine that needed replacement!



Our Community Concerns Team would like to thank each of you who chose to do your Kingdom Builders project for one the many ministries that serve our community, including Harbor House, our Friday Food Pantry, and Caring Ones! This month we also received a grant from the Gene Haas Foundation for our Agape Fund. We are grateful!

For our Global Ministries Team meeting in May we focused on learning from Pastor Carmen Retzlaff from the ELCA and Pastor Lisa Kipp from Lutheran World Relief about possible projects in South Sudan, for Gifts of Hope in the fall. Our team also planned for the upcoming International Festival after our one worship service on June 8, our Fair Trade ministries, and the month of June having our benevolence for LWR kits. With LWR's 80th anniversary this year, our goal is to assemble and ship 800 kits. Thank you, Ascension, for your partnership in this wonderful ministry! See the GMT reports at the back of this Council report.



Thinking of our Global Ministries Team, this is the appreciation certificate that we received for our support of ELCA World Hunger and Lutheran Disaster Response!



Your three pastors participated in the final Monday morning, for this school year, of our Women's Monday Morning Bible Study. Pastors Melissa and Scott Maxwell-Doherty were the speakers for this inspiring event. We thank our Bible study leaders for all their love and hard work for each of our small groups!



At our home, Julie and I hosted friends from Poland for five nights this past month. Here's a photo at our ECC where I gave Julia (grad of CLU) and her family a tour of our campus. Friend Nina Dube from Zimbabwe joined us too. Thanks to Jenni and Rich for your hospitality and welcome from our school! Julia was an ELCA International Women's scholar, with her tuition paid for by our ELCA and by CLU. Nina is one too!



On the topic of Cal Lutheran, we celebrate the news that the Rev. Dr. John Nunes has been called to be the new president, not just the interim!

We celebrated with one of our prayer leaders, Carolyn Coleman-Grady, her book signing event on May 25th! Her recent book is Facing Adversity Victoriously, Volume 2. Buy one for yourself and one for a friend. You all will be blessed.

Our Senior Adult Ministries are faithful each month with visitation, SAM's Tram, Eucharistic Ministry, Lunch Bunch, and our Christian Life Hours. Here are some of the leaders at Sage Senior Living in Newbury Park.



The last Sunday of May, Rev. Laurel Johnston, the Director of Individual Giving at Many Mansions gave a very informative update on their work, and the recent construction of the housing for those who are homeless, Thrive Grove Navigation Center, 1205 Lawrence Drive in Newbury Park.

Our Southwest California Synod Assembly was held in Burbank May 30-31 and Ascension members who were there included Pastors Melissa, Scott, and Chamie, Mary Wennes, and me. The best part for me is connecting with friends from across our synod. When we receive the summary of the actions and updates from our synod, we'll pass it on to you. The ELCA Churchwide report was presented by Marin Olson who is the leader of our Lutheran Disaster Response. Our synod's Bishop Brenda Bos, who herself lost her home in the Eaton fire, gave a powerful sermon on Mary's song in Luke chapter 1.



Synod assembly photos: Ascension's three voting members; the three young women are the Rosas sisters from St. John's in Gardena - I was their pastor 20 years ago at St. Andrew in Whittier; Pastor Scott Hamilton Adams is at CLU and part-time pastor at Holy Trinity in Inglewood, Pastor Mary Ann Harrison is at Christ the Shepherd in Altadena; and Bishop Bos leading the discussions at our assembly! Notice the backdrop artwork of John August Swanson!



June 2025

Praying this prayer each day, from Psalm 145: 10-12

"All your works shall give thanks to you, O Lord
and all your faithful shall bless you.

They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom,
and tell of your power,

to make known to all people your mighty deed,
and the glorious splendor of your kingdom.



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
1 Happy Birthday, Jenelle Smith! <i>John 17:20-26</i>	2 Happy Work Anniversary, Pastor Tim! (6/1/03) <i>Philippians 2:12-13</i>	3 June monthly benevolence: LWR Kits <i>James 2:14-18</i>	4 Global Ministries Team meeting 4pm <i>Psalm 117</i>	5 World Enviroment Day <i>Acts 2:1-21</i>	6 Thanking God for our Foundation Trustees <i>Psalm 104:24-35</i>	7 National Trails Day <i>Romans 8:14-17</i>
8 Day of Pentecost One Service at 10am International Festival <i>John 14:8-17</i>	9 Thanking God for our music ministries <i>Colossians 3:12-17</i>	10 God bless our school leaders, Rich Gregory & Jenni McCoy <i>Numbers 6:24-27</i>	11 Lunch Bunch 12pm <i>Romans 12:9-13</i>	12 Happy Work Anniversary, Jude Delkeskemp (6/12/23) <i>Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31</i>	13 Last day of school! <i>Psalm 8</i>	14 <i>Flag Day</i> Juneteenth Event 3-5pm Gym <i>Romans 5:1-5</i>
15 <i>Father's Day</i> Thanking God for our Fathers <i>John 16:12-15</i>	16 School Staycation Summer Camp June 16 - Aug 8 <i>Jeremiah 1:4-10</i>	17 Youth Leadership Camp June 16-20 Middle & High School <i>1 Timothy 4:12</i>	18 Pray for our partners in Peru & El Salvador <i>Isaiah 49:6</i>	19 <i>Juneteenth</i> Pray for all who are treated unjustly <i>Isaiah 65:1-9</i>	20 World Refugee Day www.globalrefugee.org <i>Psalm 22:19-28</i>	21 Pray for our guests and visitors who come to worship <i>Galatians 3:23-29</i>
22 Praying for our children, youth, & families <i>Luke 8:26-39</i>	23 Pray for the people of Ukraine <i>Psalm 121</i>	24 Quilters <i>Galatians 5:22-25</i>	25 Pray for our camp (LRCC) <i>1 Corinthians 12:4-11</i>	26 Our oldest members of our congregation & community <i>1 Kings 19:15-16, 19-21</i>	27 Thanking God for our School Board <i>Psalm 16</i>	28 Pray for our ELCA Bishop Elizabeth Eaton <i>Galatians 5:1, 13-25</i>
29 God bless our pastors & their families <i>Luke 9:51-62</i>	30 Thank God for our congregation leaders finishing their terms today <i>Philippians 1:3-11</i>					Our Prayer Chapel is open before and after worship services 22-44

Greetings from here, in sunny California! I am glad to be back on our shores after a 16 day trip to Scotland and England with my family. Thank you so much for giving me the time to go and enjoy this trip of a lifetime. We had an amazing time, and I am now ready to hit the ground running in the busy work of wrapping up the school year and moving into summer.

I'm very grateful that we finished the budget process early this year, as I have had numerous exit interviews to conduct and feedback to assimilate into helpful information for the leadership team. There is so much gratitude at the school as we celebrate Connie Angress and her wonderful career at Ascension. I offer her the warmest blessings in her new season of retirement.

We have hired a wonderful vice principal, and I am so looking forward to the work we will do together! We've posted for the school administrator position, and I will be serving on the hire committee. This is a vital role in the partnership between the church and the school; and I'm excited about the possibilities. That said, wading through more than 40 applications is time consuming, as is scheduling interviews with the great candidates that we would like to meet with. What a wonderful problem to have!

One of the projects that I am working on right now is the alcohol policy for our campus. It was a really helpful conversation at the Joint Meeting the Council had with the School Board in March. We have incorporated that feedback into the next draft, we are almost ready to share it with a couple of key employees like Diane Kusnierek, who schedules the events on our campus, and Debbie Kirsch, who hosts many of the events of our campus and is very experienced. I hope that the revised policies will be one of the first items the new council will be voting on and adopting in July.

I'm doing my best to wrap up the school year well, with the last day of TK through eight students being this Friday, June 13th. Once we complete exiting staff who will not be returning with us, I can turn my attention to the new fiscal year and academic year by implementing increases for church and school staff. Other tasks of summer include performance reviews for my team, implementing and communicating the new budget, updating employee handbooks, and preparing documents for the audit. We'll plan a full week of professional development for the teachers and staff August 11th through August 15. I will teach harassment prevention, a class I was recently offered for \$45 a person! I wrote the current training two years ago based on the resources available from The California Civil Rights Department. I'll update it and facilitate the training again this year, as we do each "odd" year. Sessions I am looking forward to preparing are Meeting Our Maintenance Crew, Calendaring Requests, and some IT training I will develop with Ashley Babich.

Working with this Church Council has been an incredible pleasure. I thank each and every one of you for your service in this last year. I look forward to the amazing Kingdom work we will do in the future, either on Council or other capacities.

Thank you, Kaylee Searway, Director of Operations

**Ascension Lutheran School Board Agenda for 5/18/25 Mtg. at 6:30 pm
On Campus (Library)**

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** – Anna
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of Agenda & Consent Agenda
 - Financial Report (March)
 - April Meeting Minutes
 - ECC Report
 - Principal's Report
 - Admissions

Old Business:

1. Discussion on any reports pulled from the Consent Agenda
2. Subcommittee Updates
3. State of the School
4. Handbook Revisions (PALS, School Board, Parent, Teacher)

New Business:

1. Auction Update

Executive Session:

1- 2 items

Closing Prayer - Pastor Chamie

Adjournment

**Ascension Lutheran School Board Meeting Minutes
May 19, 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, Jocelyn Myers, Chris Poveromo, Kyle Jones, Jeanette McNulty, Scott Bean, Rich Gregory, Anna Woodward, Nelly Trumbo, Pastor Chamie

Guests: Kelsi Ramirez, Jennifer Farrell

Absent: Kathy Roshanai

Call to Order:

Scott called the meeting to order at 6:34pm.

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

Devotion:

Anna shared a devotion inspired from book she received at the last church council meeting titled *Jesus Calling*. God's word anchors us with unchanging truth, despite the challenges and uncertainties of today and tomorrow. We are held, known, strengthened and blessed with peace.

Approval of Agenda and Consent Agenda:

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

Approval of consent agenda items initiated by Chris. Anna seconded. Motion passes.

Old Business:

Subcommittee Updates

- Discount Standardization Subcommittee: question arose on whether the sibling discount applies whether siblings are on separate campuses (ECC and day school), which it does not at this point. It is part of the future phases mapped out by the committee. Rich questioned whether the admissions documents have the updated information on discounts. Adding this language to the admissions document would be the Admissions Director's responsibility, so Rich will touch base with Connie. Additionally, it might be wise to add language which speaks to the work the school board is doing on the future discount standardizations.
- Teacher Compensation Subcommittee: Chris is waiting for more benefits information as the subcommittee is looking into changing the school's benefit contribution strategy.
- 5 Pillars Subcommittees: Rich and Jenni both have teachers who have expressed interest in participating. Jennifer Farrell has volunteered for the Lifelong Learner Subcommittee. Ashley would like the bulk of these subcommittee discussions to happen in the Fall, so they don't interfere with board member's or teacher's summers.

State of the Schools

- Rich reported this time of year is incredibly busy at the school. Also a time of transition. Staff and school are doing their very best to honor Connie's service to the school in light of her upcoming retirement.
- Moana Junior was a great success and Kelsey Packman was instrumental in this.
- Rich met with the new family who came to campus after their home was lost in the Palisades fire. Parents have marketing backgrounds and are starting to work with Rich on an "Oaks Differentiation Plan".
- First Vice Principal interviews for the elementary/middle school commence on Friday. There is one internal candidate and several external candidates who have applied. Interview committee includes Rich, Pastor Chamie, Jennifer Farrell, and Ashley Steere.
- Jenni reported that things are busy as always at the ECC. Parent and Me program may expand next year at the ECC, with a mini marketing campaign and expansion to 2 classes (versus 1).

Handbook Revisions

- Jocelyn has reached out to current and future PALS leadership for update suggestions.
- It was suggested to add the Parent Handbook to both websites for access.

New Business:

Auction Update

- Despite a goal to net \$80K from this year's auction, the final accounting shows a net profit of \$70K. Rich believes this has a lot to do with the poor sound in the room (half of the room could not hear), and some other circumstantial factors.
- Consensus is that spending less and controlling costs for the annual auction is a better strategy, so that more can come back to the school. Potential venues for next year include Spanish Hills Country Club or Westlake Inn.

Closing Prayer:

Pastor Chamie closed the meeting with prayer.

Adjournment:

Nelly motioned to adjourn the meeting and reconvene for executive session. Jocelyn seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 7:36pm.

Next School Board meeting is scheduled for June 9th. Jocelyn will lead devotion.

Respectfully submitted by Jocelyn Myers



Wednesday, June 4, 2025

4-5:30 PM, the 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.

GIFTS OF HOPE PLANNING 3:00-3:50 pm IN BETHLEHEM ROOM PRIOR TO GMT MEETING

AGENDA

WELCOME Louise Evenson

OPENING PRAYER Pastor Steve Herder

Topic: BUDGET/FINANCIAL REVIEW, Planning for 2025-26

1. 4:00-4:10 pm **WELCOME AND OPENING PRAYER**
2. 4:10-5:00 PM **Budgetary review/decisions. Looking ahead to 2025-26.**
3. 5:00-5:30 GMT - **REFLECTIONS, PLANNING and REPORTS**
 - 1) Review of Support for Immigrant Families event on May 18th at Holy Trinity.
 - 2) June 8th Pentecost Fair
 - 3) **REPORTS:**
 - Fair Trade
 - Lutheran World Relief-Update: Kits planning

Next Meeting: September 10, 2025

Meeting Notes

WELCOME

Louise Evenson extended greetings to all present: Andy Binsley, Beverly Selle, Bonny Chick, Carol Bartell, Carol Bjelland, Christina Sanchez, Dave Harkins, Ethel Jordan, Jen Avalos, Jill Binsley, Kimberly Overton, Louise Evenson, Marcia Koenig, Mary Wennes, Paul Evenson, Pastor Steve Herder, and Pastor Chamie Delkeskamp.

OPENING PRAYER – Pastor Steve Herder

RECOGNITION – Pastor Steve thanked Louise for serving as chair of the GMT for the past 2 years and presented her with a plant. Beverly Selle has been nominated to serve as the next GMT chair. Louise thanked Pastor Steve for his 18 years of ongoing support for the GMT.

TOPIC: BUDGET/FINANCIAL REVIEW; PLANNING FOR 2025-26

BUDGET/FINANCIAL REVIEW

- A. Louise distributed and discussed a 1-page summary of the sources of benevolence funds at Ascension Lutheran Church. Examples of current recipients of the funds, including GMT projects, were listed.
- B. A current financial spreadsheet (July 1, 2024-May 29-2025) showing current balances in the Global Ministries accounts was distributed. Ideas for using the remaining funds for the current fiscal year were explored by the group. The following decisions were made:

Account	Remaining balance	Action
Global Ministries Team	\$343	\$200 for Bibles to send with Zambia H4H trip; Pentecost Int Fair expenses. Balance divided between Fair Trade & LWR kits
Global Ministries – Trip	\$7,644.73	Before disbursement for Zambia H4H trip of \$2200
Global Ministries - Fair Trade	\$280.78	In & out account for FT purchases/shipping costs
Global Ministries – Matthew 25:35	\$2,580.99	\$600 to Conejo Interfaith Refugee Team to purchase (2)scooters & (2)helmets to provide work transportation for 2 Afghan men. Balance after scooter purchase to be used for gift cards for refugee families.
LWR kits	\$3,667.72	In & out account to purchase kit supplies and related expenses
Jubilee USA network	\$503.46	Send contribution of \$500

PLANNING FOR 2025-26

- A. Louise proposed the following ideas for consideration for next year's GMT:
1. Encourage a Lenten response in the form of a hands-on project for the congregation for one of the concerns addressed by the GMT.
 2. Grow advocacy in the GMT.
 - a. Pastor Steve noted that Regina Banks hosts an excellent ELCA Advocacy podcast entitled "Here I Pod": <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/here-i-pod-from-elca-advocacy/id1803433436>
 - b. Mary Wennes suggested signing up for ELCA action alerts. <https://www.elca.org/our-work/publicly-engaged-church/advocacy>
 - c. Louise shared that she recently attended a service at the Ukrainian Christian Church in Agoura where children were praying for the children of Ukraine. Advocacy is needed in support of the peace agreement that includes the release of 20,000 Ukrainian children who are being held in Russia.

REFLECTIONS AND REPORTS

- A. Paul Evenson reported on the *Informed and Engaged Support for Local Immigrant Families* event at Holy Trinity on May 18th. The event was sponsored by 5 Lutheran churches, including Ascension. The panel included speakers from Friends of Fieldworkers and Buen Vecino, as well as an immigration lawyer. The speakers provided tangible ways for us as allies to support local immigrant families. Paul Evenson, Carol Bjelland, Carol Bartell and Pr Steve served on the planning committee. Over 75 people attended. A free will offering was taken which was designated for hygiene kits for field workers.
- B. The upcoming Pentecost fair on June 8 was highlighted. Fair Trade Lane and the GMT will be represented at a booth. The Center for Global Engagement will provide the flags of many nations and will also have a booth.
- C. **Fair Trade-** Carol Bjelland
A full report was distributed via email prior to the meeting. Fair Trade will be conducting a class on June 17th as part of the Youth Leadership Camp. On July 13, Fair Trade will meet with the youth at their regular Sunday night meeting, play the game "Who wants to be a Fair Trade farmer?", and treat the youth to a pizza dinner and ice cream. Fair Trade Lane is closed in July.
- D. **Lutheran World Relief-Update & Kits Project**– Louise Evenson
A full report was distributed via email prior to the meeting. June benevolence (special offering) is designated for materials for LWR kits, and \$2000 in Thrivent Action Team grants have been received for this project. At the Youth Leadership Camp on June 18th, the GMT has been invited to share the work of the GMT at Ascension. Attendees will also learn about one of our projects, LWR Kits, and will assemble bunches of pens and pencils for school kits that will be assembled in the fall by Ascension school.
- E. Upcoming calendar items were distributed via email prior to the meeting. Calendar items that were specifically noted include the Conejo Valley Juneteenth Celebration (6/14), congregational meeting (6/29), Habitat for Humanity build in Zambia (July 1-6), God's Work Our Hands (9/7), and Blessing of the Pets (10/25).
- F. **There will be no GMT meetings in July and August.**

OTHER: Upcoming GMT meetings:

September 10: Global Ministries Meeting

JUNE

- June 4** Tour of THRIVE GROVE, 1205 Lawrence Drive, Newbury Park, 2 PM
- June 4** Gifts of Hope planning meeting, 3:00-3:50 PM
- June 4** GMT Meeting: TOPIC: Planning and Budgeting for GMT 2025-26, 4:00-5:30 PM
- June 8** PENTECOST SUNDAY AND FAIR 10 AM Worship. Fair following.
- June 11** Fair Trade Lane open 12:45-1:15 PM
- June 11** Center for Global Engagement welcomes representatives from Uganda 10:30-12:30.
CANCELLED
- June 12-15** G7 Jubilee People's Forum, Calgary, Canada.
- June 12** Fair Trade Lane open 2:30-4:00 PM
- June 14** Conejo Valley Juneteenth Celebration, 3-5PM, Ascension, Pederson Hall
- June 16-20** ALC Youth Leadership Camp
- June 17** AMAZING STORY OF INTERFAITH & SURVIVAL, 7 PM, Islamic Center of Conejo Valley
- June 22** Fair Trade Lane open 8:30-9:00 & 10:00-10:30 AM
- June 29** Congregational Meeting

JULY

- July 1-6** Habitat for Humanity build in Zambia

SEPTEMBER

- September 7** GOD'S WORK OUR HANDS

OCTOBER

- October 25** BLESSING OF THE PETS

UPCOMING GMT MEETING DATES, 2025

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

- June 4** Global Ministries Team Meeting TOPIC: Planning and Budgeting, 2025-26

THERE WILL BE NO GMT MEETINGS IN JULY AND AUGUST.

- September 10** Global Ministries Team Meeting



FAIR TRADE MINISTRY

DATE: May 30, 2025 For June 2025

SUBMITTED BY: Carol Bjelland

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

165 Fair Trade welcome cards w/a chocolate mini attached were prepared for the Outreach Ministry team to give to visitors June 1st & after.

Fair Trade will have a table at the June 8th International Fair. 3 kinds of Fair Trade iced tea will be served. A special map board is being made – it will show all of the nations & states that are sources for products sold on Fair Trade Lane.

Fair Trade will conduct a class (June 17th) for the June Youth Leadership Camp. There will be a short presentation (background) & then tasting/sampling along with learning the stories of the products in the tasting. A *Be The Blessing Grant* requested/approved to provide funding to help cover costs of samples & special treat (Ben & Jerry's ice cream).

Fair Trade has been invited to the July 13th Sr LL meeting in the Dugout – we'll play the Fair Trade game.

Prices for products sold on Fair Trade Lane will be adjusted in July 2025.

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 update the Fair Trade webpage with new photos, text & Images – Summer 2025.

Volunteers invited to help with ideas for an October/Fair Trade Month special event.

3. LOOKING AHEAD (Important calendar dates)

Fair Trade Lane Open Dates/Times June 2025:

Wednesday, June 11, 2025 (12:45-1:15 PM)

Thursday, June 12, 2025 (2:30-4 PM)

Sunday, June 22, 2025 (8:30-9AM & 10-10:30 AM)

We are not planning to open Fair Trade Lane in July. Orders can be submitted by email or contact Carol. Fair Trade Lane schedule August- December TBD.

4. OTHER INFORMATION

Jill, Andy & Carol had a great time at the Fair Trade LA World Fair Trade Day dinner on May 10th. The dinner was held at Flavors from Afar in Hollywood – a social enterprise restaurant started by a refugee that is a culinary hub of global flavors & cultural exchange through meals prepared by refugees & asylum seekers. The May 10th dinner featured Fair Trade ingredients expertly crafted into beautiful & tasty dishes (all plant-based) by a talented chef from Sudan.

We provided each of the May 18th Confirmands with a little packet of Fair Trade chocolate along with a Welcome Card.

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



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

DATE May 30, 2025 SUBMITTED BY Louise Evenson

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

June benevolence (special offering) is designated for funds to purchase materials for Lutheran World Relief kits. A video highlighting LWR's 80th year in humanitarian response will be shown at worship services on May 31-June 1. LWR offering envelopes are in the pew racks for the month of June. An LWR poster and pew envelopes will be in the narthex for the month of June. Each TWAA and worship service slide deck in the month of June will have a special invitation to give to the LWR Kits materials project. On June 22, the children's message during worship will be about LWR Kits.

Eight Thrivent Action Team grants (\$2,000) have been received for purchase of materials.

Once we have the offering total, we will be able to estimate how many kits we will assemble in 2025. We would like to send 800 or more kits to LWR in honor of their 80th anniversary.

For the Pentecost fair on June 8th, there will be an LWR table with sample LWR Kits, a poster of where kits were delivered internationally in 2024, and offering envelopes.

We have been asked to present about LWR's humanitarian response and LWR Kits at Ascension's Leadership Camp, June 16-20.

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

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

SAVE and STORE copy paper/bankers boxes for packing/shipping kits.

3. LOOKING AHEAD (Important calendar dates)

Next planning meeting is June 9th, 9-10 AM, Pr Chamie's office. Anyone is welcome to join us!

4. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT

Louise Evenson Lpevenson@gmail.com, Vicki Weeks 3weeksboys@gmail.com or Pastor Chamie Delkeskamp at pastorchamie@alcto.org

Amazing Story of Interfaith Unity & Survival

Join Us for a Remarkable Story of Courage and Compassion
Tuesday, June 17

Shoshana Brower will share the extraordinary and little-known story of how, during the Holocaust, Muslim and Christian Albanians risked their lives to save over 2,000 of their Jewish neighbors.

This moving presentation highlights a profound example of interfaith solidarity and moral courage during one of history's darkest times.

Hosted by The Islamic Center of Conejo Valley
2700 Borchard Road, Newbury Park, CA 91320

<https://vcic.info/albanian-story>



One of the first pictures to reach the outside world from Albania

Admission to the forum is free and all are welcome, so please feel free to pass this information along to friends and family who may be interested.

VCIC, is a nonprofit composed of people from a variety of religious traditions, seeking to reduce barriers to communication and foster local dialog and understanding among individuals and families of various belief traditions.





ASCENSION LUTHERAN

Global Ministries Team

CONTACT INFORMATION 2024-2025

Name	Birthday	Address	Phone/Email	Ministry Coordinator
Carol Bartell	05/29	2307 Bonfield Ct Camarillo, CA 93012	805-433-3774 bartell@callutheran.edu	Adult Education Welcome Kits Support for Immigrant Families
Christina Sanchez	07/16	650 Ivywood Lane, Unit F, Simi Valley, CA 93065	415-225-4575 sanchez@callutheran.edu	Center for Global Engagement at CLU; Ray of Life
Andy Binsley	10/21	4100 La Venta Dr, Westlake Village, 91361	805-402-4149 Andy.binsley@verizon.net	Fair Trade Ray of Life
Anita Cohen	9/13	573 Meadowrun St, Thousand Oaks, 91360	805-625-2126 AnitaCohen15@gmail.com	LWR Quilts
Barb Spear	12/1	34121 Village 34, Camarillo, 93012	805-794-5359 barbruba@gmail.com	
Beverly Selle	3/14	2186 Jovana Ct Camarillo, CA 93012	979-319-2470 Bjselle447@yahoo.com	Gifts of Hope Ray of Life Blessing of the Pets
Bonny Chick	12/9	775 Parmenter Ave, Thousand Oaks, 91362	310-560-7396 bonny@chickworldtravel.com	Church Council Blessing of the Pets

Carol Bjelland	07/17	1262 Monte Sereno Dr, Thousand Oaks, Ca 91360	805-657-3731 carolb@netscape.com	Gifts of Hope Fair Trade Support for Immigrant Families Friends of Fieldworkers
Dave Harkins	11/8	1008 Hollyhock Ct Thousand Oaks, Ca 91362	805-630-5562 daveharkins@msn.com	Gifts of Hope accounting
Deb Papageorge	9/2	2540 Northshore Lane, Westlake Village 91361	310-699-5716 debrapapageorge@gmail.com	
Edith Ott	11/14	4517 Yorkfield Ct Westlake Village, Ca 91361	818-889-3609 edithott4517@gmail.com	Great Music at Ascension Ray of Life
Jan Timmons	05/3	3499 Grande Vista Dr, Thousand Oaks, Ca 91320	805-630-1943 timmons2023@gmail.com	
Jill Binsley	4/11	4100 La Venta Dr, Westlake Village, 91361	805-5584481 jrbinsley@yahoo.com	Fair Trade
Kimberly Overton	09/3	21 Greenmeadow Dr Newbury Park, Ca 91320	818-606-3125 kocostumes@gmail.com	Fair Trade
Louise Evenson	11/19	2845 Heavenly Ridge Street Thousand Oaks, CA 91362	925-518-5795 (C) Lpevenson@gmail.com	GMT chair; LWR Kits; Ray of Life; Welcome Kits
Marcia Koenig	02/2	29000 Tackaberry Ct. Agoura Hills, CA 91301	818-648-4495 mamkoenig@gmail.com	
Mary Wennes	11/14	3395 Mountain Breeze Way, L231 Thousand Oaks, Ca 91360	805-368-6264 marywennes@gmail.com	Matt 25:35 Gifts of Hope Ray of Life
Mia Luna	4/6	3269 White Birch Circle, Thousand Oaks, 91360	805-866-8820 Miarochaluna35@gmail.com	
Paul Evenson	7/27	2845 Heavenly Ridge St, Thousand Oaks 91362	925-324-4476 evenson@callutheran.edu	LWR Kits Ray of Life Support for Immigrant Families

Stacy Smith Bosco	4/18	15 Story Hill Rd Chester, CT 06412	818-621-3542 ssmith@alcto.org	Communications, TWAA
Steve Herder	08/16	393 Maidstone Lane, Newbury Park, Ca 91320	805-907-2922 pastorsteve@alcto.org	advisor to GMT
Tamara Nowlin	12/1		805-444-2797 t.nowlin@icloud.com	Gifts of Hope Fair Trade
Ethel Jordan	9/25	3584 Radcliffe Rd. Thousand Oaks, CA 91360	714-403-3425 Eajordan7@sbcglobal.net	Secretary for GMT
Susan Gramme	12/13		310-428-6410 susan@gramme.com	
Jenni Klemp	12/6	19592 Bowers Dr, Topanga, CA 90290	310-849-5651 jenniklemp@gmail.com	
Jen Avalos	12/24		805-495-0406 javalos@alcto.org	Youth Director, ALC
Bruce Thomas	9/29	12494 Beech Grove Ct. Moorpark, CA 93021	805-529-9215 Brucet2721@aol.com	El Salvador
Julie Herder	3/29	393 Maidstone Lane, Newbury Park, CA 91320	805-612-3827 jyherder@gmail.com	Habitat for Humanity, Zambia
Vicki Weeks	1/26	169 Tracy Ct, Newbury Park, Ca 91320	805-559-3626 3weeksboys@gmail.com	LWR Kits

Louise Evenson – 925-518-5795 (cell), Email: Lpevenson@gmail.com

2025 CONEJO VALLEY JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION

Saturday June 14, 3-5 pm, free

**Ascension Lutheran Church
1600 E Hillcrest Dr,
Thousand Oaks, CA 91362
(in the gymnasium)**

HOSTED BY:

**Danna Kiel
Bobby Hall**



FEATURING:

**Sade Champagne, ChuiMalik, Chaise
Rasheed, Kalahari, DJ Henningham**



sadechampagnemusic@gmail.com

The Pentecost worship service and International Fair were so memorable, it seems fitting to make a Pentecost page in the church website, and infuse the site with pictures from the day as well, so I am doing that. As summer rolls in, it is a good time to make a lot of updates across websites. I also have a folder full of great new photos to use from our wonderful Jenni Klemp, Children's Ministry Interim Director-turned-volunteer.

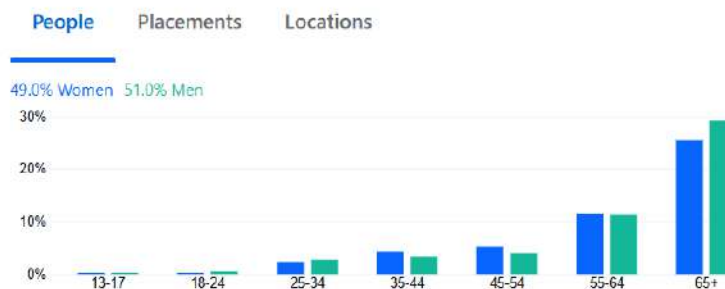
My husband Dominick, who does builder-level work on ALCTO.org (and ThisWeekAtAscension.org and ascensionfoundation.org) and I are looking forward to meeting with Pastor Chamie regarding showcasing new content for the Children-Youth-Family section of the site.

We're excited to be coming out to Thousand Oaks soon. See you in church!

For promotion of the Pentecost service and fair, we had mildly boosted content and an "event" on Facebook (cumulative 2,603 views) and Instagram (2,079) and a color ¼ page print ad in the Acorn and Thousand Oaks Acorn. This is in addition to free posts, in-worship mentions, and spotlighting in TWAA and Chatter. Below, demographic data (Facebook on left) and ad.

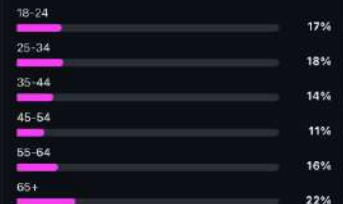
Audience

This ad reached **398 Accounts Center accounts** in your audience.



Who saw your ad

Age range



Gender



With gratitude,

Stacy Smith Bosco

Communications

ONE

(818) 929-5109
REALTOR, E-Pro, SRE
Senior Real Estate Specialist

Cell: (818) 929-5109 Office: (805) 267-4902
Email: kathy@katyho.com Web-site: www.katyho.com

Come for the Worship Service, Stay for the Fair!

In Acts 2, we learn about Pentecost, when Jesus' Spirit fell upon his followers and everyone understood each other, despite speaking different languages. Thousands of years later we celebrate this day each year, for it is the birthday of the church. This Sunday, we are having a special Pentecost service at 10 AM, with all our musical groups.

Following the service: our Pentecost International Fair!

Come join us and share the food, fun, connection, joy in community together.

ASCENSION LUTHERAN
1000 E. Walnut Street, Thousand Oaks, CA 91320
www.ALCTO.org

PENTECOST INTERNATIONAL FAIR

SUNDAY, JUNE 8
FAIR STARTS AT 11:15 AM
FOLLOWING WORSHIP AT 10 AM

a celebration of the various countries from which our Ascension community originates. There will be 12 booths with sweet & savory international foods to sample and a taco bar!

Be the Blessing Report for June 2025

The Be the Blessing team continues to be occupied with the Generosity Team in the Kingdom Builders project and has not met separately in the last three months. Occasional grant requests have been handled electronically. Please see the excellent TWAA article submitted by Ed Klodt and attached to this report.

Note that the Kingdom Builders projects are hoped to be substantially completed by July 1, with subsequent wrap-up and communication to the congregation.

As respects future activities beyond Kingdom Builders, there continues to be a need by the Church Council to decide on replenishing (or discontinuing) the Be the Blessing ministry for next year. This will determine next steps for the Be the Blessing team.

Respectfully submitted for the committee,

Dave Harkins

What's Going on With

Be the Blessing and Kingdom Builders?

Amazing things happen when the Holy Spirit knocks and church members open the door.

So far, Ascension's *Be the Blessing* endeavor has provided small grants to almost 30 groups, ministries and individuals. It has provided funding for them to start new ministries or grow existing ones, serving individuals (and even animals!) in our congregation, in the community and around the world. Recent grants from *Be the Blessing* funded a new leadership camp for Ascension youth, the rebirth of our monthly Lunch Bunch, funding for disadvantaged teenagers to participate in confirmation activities, and kits that share Christ's love with foster children who are relocating to new homes. Thousands of people have benefited from these new and expanded ministries.

Then in March Ascension took *Be the Blessing* a big step further in our *Kingdom Builders* program. We empowered our members – you! – to whatever ministry the Holy Spirit was calling them to. Those who received envelopes with 100 Kingdom Dollars were asked to invest those funds in helping others, using the funds as seed money for fundraising or for starting up a ministry.

So far almost 35 different *Kingdom Builders* projects, ministries or fundraisers have been completed. Other KB \$100 recipients have told us they're praying about or close to deciding what their project will be. We're hoping to complete all KB projects by July 1.

KB Dollars have funded a diverse number of heartfelt and Spirit-led projects like Ascension's recent Pickleball-athon benefitting Harbor House and our youth programs and Ascension's recent community bike ride to benefit World Bicycle Relief. Ascension's Food Pantry has been a recipient of dozens of bags of food because of Kingdom Dollars. Maybe you've noticed magnets on signposts and other places around town that say "Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you. 1 Peter 5:7." That was funded by three Kingdom Dollars recipients each pooling their \$100 to produce the magnets.

And the Kingdom Dollars stories keep coming in.

Here's a direct link to a video that provides an overview of *Kingdom Builders*:

<https://youtu.be/INcK4xhltns>

We've also created a special section of the alcto.org website to share information and stories about the different ministries that *Kingdom Builders* has started. Check it out at www.alcto.org/kb.

If you're a KB \$100 recipient, don't forget to take photos and videos of your ministry or project so we can share it with the rest of One Ascension. Here's a link to a video with tips about how to create your own *Kingdom Builders* videotape: <https://youtu.be/6sAnEkJsNqE>. Everyone loves a story. We'd like to hear yours. Email it to us at kingdom@alcto.org.

New ministries, innovative fundraisers, help for disadvantaged individuals, funding to bring people back to church. All made possible by Kingdom Builders dollars.

And, in the meantime, *Be the Blessing* continues to fund new ministries and endeavors on a larger scale through our grant program. Click on the *Be the Blessing* link on Ascension's home page. Or click here for more information or to make a grant request: <https://alcto.org/blessing/>

Church Council Report

Youth Director: Jennifer Avalos

Date: June 11,2025

Middle School Update for the Summer:

We will be having a 4-week series for 6th–8th grade from the *True North* book by Diane Beck, who is well known in the Ascension community. We will be tying the book with special topics that establish scripture each week. We will have time for prayer, reading and discussion, crafts that have scriptural meaning, and fun activities as we dive into the series over the next 4 weeks, starting on June 22nd.

Senior Luther League Bible Study Update:

We are still on our *Chosen* book series. It has been a blessing diving into that with the youth, seeing them reflect and discuss as a group, and continue to encourage each other. Welcoming our new freshmen to Senior Luther League has been such a blessing. Seeing our program grow, what an honor it is to welcome them!

Youth Events Update:

June 16th–20th: Leadership Camp (7th–12th Grade)

I'm excited to be a part of this amazing camp. This is an exciting time as the youth program is growing. I can't wait for the exciting things that God will do in this camp and in the youth program as a whole.

Bowling 6th–8th Grade – June 23rd

We will be having a fun bowling day with our middle school students. A time for them to grow with each other, make new friends, and build meaningful connections while having a good time.

Pool Party 6th–12th Grade – June 27th

We will be having a combined pool party with our middle school and high school students. Food will be provided for the youth to enjoy as they relax and swim on this summer day. It's a great time for them to grow together, hang out, and build community.

June Senior Luther League Coffee Shop Gatherings

We will be having two coffee shop gatherings: June 19th, which will be in our local Coffee Bean, and June 26th at 507 Coffee Shop. This time is to continue building those connections with the youth and a time for them to build those connections as a group. They can come, bring their homework, catch up, or just take time to hang out—building in one's faith and coming together in community outside of just Bible study.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Avalos

Youth Director