

**Ascension Lutheran Church
Council Agenda
Wednesday, July 16, 2025 - 7:00pm
Bethlehem Room**

Welcome and Call to Order -John Rarick, President

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

Motto: Invite - Grow – Serve

Introductions

Approval of Agenda – John Rarick

Devotion - Alan Baker

Treasurer's Report

New Business – Kaylee Searway

Electronic Voting Resolution

Signature Authorization Resolution

Banking Signature Resolution

Ministry Listing Review for Annual Report

Thrivent Choice – Pastor Tim

Recurring Business

- Affirm New Members, Confirmands, and Baptisms

Old Business

- No old business

Approval of Minutes -John Rarick

- June Council Meeting
- Congregational Meeting

Consent Approval of Reports to Council – John Rarick

- Pastor Tim Delkeskamp's Report
- Pastor Chamie Delkeskamp's Report
- Pastor Steve Herder's Report
- Kaylee Searway, Director of Operations
- Youth Ministry Report

Information Items

Pastor Reviews – Carrie Leonard

Church Council Retreat – 08/09/25 @ 8:30-1:00pm Rarick's House

Devotions –TBA

Closing Prayer

Adjournment

Preliminary Treasurer Report for July, 2025

The July Council meeting comes early this month. Finance staff have only just begun reviewing June data and no final results are available. However, Mike Marvin provided a preliminary note that June did not produce as much revenue as hoped for. It appears the fiscal year ended at about \$1,452K vs. a budget of \$1,515K (about 4% lower). The better news is that we ended the year almost 5% above the actual offerings of \$1,383K, as we projected at the congregational meeting.

Since the expense side has held steady, the total result to budget looks like about a \$20K surplus, after accounting for the \$25K committed to the One Ascension maintenance fund.

I am reprinting the 2025 revenue results from last month's report, with the June estimate added in. Again, it underscores the unpredictability of the monthly offerings.

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		Op.expenses	<u>Debtsvc.</u>
	Offering	Other		
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	<u>\$93,367</u>	<u>\$3,758</u>	<u>\$98,480</u>	<u>\$8,306</u>
<i>average Jan-Apr</i>	<i>\$113,695</i>	<i>\$3,610</i>	<i>\$111,009</i>	<i>\$8,306</i>
May	\$110,595			
June	\$98,000			

May's receipts are within the ballpark of the average. June, despite being a five-weekend month, fell well below that average.

The finance staff will attempt to get additional information for the Council meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Dave Harkins

ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL

RESOLUTION NO: 2025./26.1
TITLE: Electronic Voting Resolution
SUBMITTED BY: Council
DATE: July 16, 2025

RESOLVED, that Ascension Lutheran Church Council agrees that the Council, Committees and organizations can make decisions via e-mail vote for the FY 2024-2025.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

1. Former Council President Norm Nagel stated that it is important at the beginning of every council year to vote on the ability to make decisions via e-mail for any given year.
2. Legal counsel has advised that when voting by e-mail the first question is, "Do you accept voting by e-mail on this item?" This must be unanimously approved by all council members for the vote to move forward.
3. Voting on the issue itself does not require a unanimous outcome.

BUDGETARY IMPLICATION: No financial impact noted.

By: _____
William John Rarick, Jr, Congregational President

ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL

RESOLUTION NO: 2025/26.2

TITLE: SIGNATURE AUTHORIZATION RESOLUTION

SUBMITTED BY: Director of Operations

DATE: July 16, 2025

RESOLVED, that William John Rarick, Jr., Creighton Van Horn, and Steve Smuck shall have signature authorization on all banking relationships of Ascension Evangelical Lutheran Church unless removed by subsequent action of the Church Council of Ascension Evangelical Lutheran Church of Thousand Oaks, California.

RESOLVED, that William John Rarick, Jr. and Crystal Bryant have signature authorization on all legal documents on behalf of Ascension Evangelical Lutheran Church unless removed by subsequent action of the Church Council of Ascension Evangelical Lutheran Church of Thousand Oaks, California.

RESOLVED, that Kaylee Searway and Mike Marvin shall continue to be authorized to access to view all bank account balances and transactions, and to receive information by phone, email or online regarding all Ascension Lutheran Church bank accounts.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

As Council members change, it becomes necessary to change signature authority on all Ascension Lutheran Church banking relationships to maintain control and oversight with regard to checks written, funds transferred between institutions, and establishment or dissolution of any bank accounts or banking relationships.

BANKING AUTHORIZATIONS:

William John Rarick, Jr., President
Creighton Van Horn. President Elect
Steve Smuck, Treasurer

LEGAL AUTHORIZATIONS:

William John Rarick, Jr., President
Crytal Bryant, Secretary

ACCESS AUTHORIZATION:

Kaylee Searway, Director of Operations
Mike Marvin, Senior Accountant

All signature or access authorizations other than those listed above should be removed.

BUDGETARY IMPLICATION: No financial impact noted.

A motion was made, seconded and approved to accept this resolution as written.

William John Rarick, Jr., President

Date _____

Crytal Bryant, Secretary

Date _____

ASCENSION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THOUSAND OAKS COUNCIL

RESOLUTION NO: 2025/26.3
 TITLE: BANKING SIGNATURE AUTHORIZATION RESOLUTION -
Banc of California
 SUBMITTED BY: Director of Operations
 DATE: July 16, 2025

RESOLVED, that the individuals named below shall have signature authorization on only the specific Ascension Evangelical Lutheran Church of Thousand Oaks bank accounts as described below unless removed by subsequent action of the Church Council.

RESOLVED, that the individuals named below be authorized to access electronically, maintain all passwords to such electronic access, and be authorized to move funds between accounts within the same institution, as well as receive information by phone, email or online regarding only the specific Ascension Evangelical Lutheran Church of Thousand Oaks bank accounts as described below.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

As Council members change, it becomes necessary to change signature authority on certain Ascension Evangelical Lutheran Church of Thousand Oaks banking relationships to maintain control and oversight with regard to checks written, funds transferred between institutions, and establishment or dissolution of any bank accounts or banking relationships.

To be removed from account 401002162, Checking	To be added to account 401002162, Checking
Carrie Leonard, Immediate Past President	Creighton Van Horn, President Elect
Dave Harkins, Treasurer	Steve Smuck, Treasurer

To be removed from account 401007733, Payroll	To be added to account 401007733, Payroll
Carrie Leonard, Immediate Past President	Creighton Van Horn, President Elect
Dave Harkins, Treasurer	Steve Smuck, Treasurer

To be removed from account 401800735, Money Market	To be added to account 401800735, Money Market
Carrie Leonard, Immediate Past President	Creighton Van Horn, President Elect
Dave Harkins, Treasurer	Steve Smuck, Treasurer

Continuing as signers on the specific Ascension Evangelical Lutheran Church of Thousand Oaks bank accounts as described above unless noted as removed:
William John Rarick, Jr., President

Continuing on account 1002485280, AGAPE	To be added to account 1002485280, AGAPE
Timothy C Delkeskamp, Pastor	
Steve R Herder, Pastor	

Electronic Administrator Access for the following specific Ascension Evangelical Lutheran Church of Thousand Oaks bank accounts as authorized by on-line banking administrator:

Continuing with electronic access on the specific Ascension Evangelical Lutheran Church of Thousand Oaks bank accounts as described above unless noted as removed:	Add electronic access on the specific Ascension Evangelical Lutheran Church of Thousand Oaks bank accounts as described above unless noted as removed:
Kaylee Searway, Director of Operations	Steve Smuck, Treasurer
Mike Marvin, Senior Accountant	

BUDGETARY IMPLICATION: No financial impact noted.

A motion was made, seconded and approved to accept this resolution as written.

William John Rarick, Jr., President

Date _____

Crystal Bryant, Secretary

Date _____



Ministry	Purpose	Related Spiritual Gifts
Adult Education	Coordinate, lead classes of church and community interest for Sunday mornings	Administration, Knowledge, Teaching
Blessing of The Animals	Annual event, open to community, fosters fellowship, creation care	Administration, Hospitality, Mercy
Children's Ministry		Exhortation, Faith, Leadership, Wisdom, Teaching
Sunday School	Lead Sunday School for 3 year olds to 6th graders during Sunday 9:00 AM services	Exhortation, Leadership, Teaching
Worship bags & bulletins	Fresh bags of activities & worship bulletins are ready for Pre-readers & Young Readers every week	Artistry, Hospitality
Nursery Care	Available for ages 0-4 during the 9:00 and 10:30 worship services	Service, Teaching
Milestone Ministries	Celebrating milestone moments with our children and youth	Faith, Exhortation
Vacation Bible School	A fun series of weekly lessons filled with adventure & learning each summer	Artistry, Leadership, Service, Teaching, Music
Community Concerns		Mercy, Service
Food Pantry	On campus pantry serves community, open 10 AM-noon Fridays	Mercy, Service
Hot Meals Ministry	Preparing, transporting meals to central location for community	Mercy, Service
Blood Drives	Schedule, support, promote blood drives through Vitalant	Administration, Mercy, Service
Project Response	Food drives supply our pantry and others	Administration, Evangelism, Service
Evangelism/Inreach/Outreach		Evangelism
Birthday callers	A team member is assigned a day of the week and contact members with birthdays that day	Exhortation, Hospitality
Outreach Task Force	Greeters; special training	Evangelism
Family Life Ministries	Baptism, receiving a Bible, First Communion, Confirmation, Faith Quilts	Faith
Fellowship		Hospitality
Meet and Eat Team 9:00 AM	Provide treats following the 9:00 AM service	Hospitality
Meet and Eat Team 10:30 AM	Provide treats following the 10:30 AM service	Hospitality
Garden Ministry	Help tend and keep to the Ascension Garden Participate in Garden Ministry meetings	Leadership, Service, Skilled Craft
Generosity	Stewardship, Joy of Giving	Generosity
Global Ministries Team		Knowledge, Leadership, Mercy, Service
Fair Trade Products	Supporting Fair Trade for farmers and artisans	Giving, Knowledge, Leadership, Mercy, Service
Gifts of Hope	Annual drive supports selected local and global ministries	Giving, Mercy
Bread for the World	Food advocacy	Giving, Knowledge, Mercy, Writing
LWR Kits/Quilts	Supplying basic personal/school needs and quilts for people displaced by war or disaster	Skilled Craft
Global Refuge (LIRS)	Assists immigrant families	Mercy, Service
Matthew 25:35 Outreach	Interfaith refugee team	Giving, Knowledge, Leadership, Mercy, Service
CLU Center for Global Engagement	Works with international students	Knowledge
Jubilee USA	Debt forgiveness advocacy	Knowledge, Writing



Ministry	Purpose	Related Spiritual Gifts
Green Ministry	Advocacy toward sustainability, recycling, caring for creation	Mercy, Service
Grief Share	Weekly support group for those grieving	Mercy, Pastoring, Teaching, Wisdom
Leadership		Mercy, Pastoring, Teaching, Wisdom
Council	Elected leaders meet monthly to govern the leadership of the Church	Discernment, Leadership, Wisdom
School Board	Elected leaders meet monthly to govern the leadership of the Schools	Discernment, Leadership, Wisdom
Foundation	Elected leaders meet quarterly to govern the leadership of the Foundation	Discernment, Leadership, Wisdom
Library	Participate in the organization, managing and ordering of books for the library	Administration, Service, Writing
Life Group Ministry	Small groups for fellowship, study	Administration, Discernment, Leadership
Men's Ministries	Group Bible studies that meet weekly at various days and times	Faith, Knowledge, Leadership, Wisdom
Music		Artistry, Music (Vocal), Music (Instrumental)
Chancel Choir	Sings at traditional services and on special occasions, rehearsals Thursday evenings	Artistry, Music (Vocal)
Carillons	Bell choir during 2 services a month and special occasions, rehearsals Tuesday evenings	Artistry, Music (Instrumental)
Great Music at Ascension	Arrange and host concerts of great music	Administration, Artistry, Leadership, Music
Prayer Ministry	Receive emails of prayer requests from the Ascension community to pray and meditate on	Administration, Intercession, Pastoring
Prayer Shawl Ministry	Knit or crochet shawls for members/ friends of Ascension needing comfort	Artistry, Intercession
Property Management	Guides plans to maintain and upgrade our physical campus	Discernment, Skilled Craft, Wisdom
Quilting	Work year round on quilts to be sent through Lutheran World Relief	Artistry, Skilled Craft
Senior Adult Ministry		Knowledge, Leadership, Teaching
Eucharistic Ministry	Bring Communion to those unable to travel	Mercy, Pastoring
SAM's Tram	Local transportation for members in need	Service, Skilled Craft
3M: Minor Maintenance Ministry	Home repairs for shut-ins (members only)	Service, Skilled Craft
Christian Life Hours	Brings worship services to six senior living places	Mercy, Pastoring, Music
In-Home Visitation	For home-bound seniors	Intercession, Mercy, Pastoring
Stephen Ministry	Trained volunteers provide 1-on-1 social, spiritual, emotional support	Intercession, Mercy, Pastoring
Transportation/Bus	Bring Ascension members to off campus events with our bus; requires a bus license	Service, Skilled Craft
Youth		Exhortation, Faith, Leadership, Wisdom
Sunday School	Lead Sunday School for 3 year olds to 6th graders during Sunday 9:00 AM services	Exhortation, Leadership, Teaching
Confirmation	Activities/study for middle schoolers	Exhortation, Leadership, Teaching
Senior Luther League	Activities/study for high school students	Exhortation, Leadership, Teaching
Leadership Academy	A week of learning and opportunity for young leaders	Artistry, Leadership, Service, Teaching, Music
Women's Leadership Team	Help to oversee the planning of events and teachings in the women's ministry	Administration, Faith, Leadership, Service



Ministry	Purpose	Related Spiritual Gifts
Ascension Book Club	Meet monthly in person or on zoom and discuss a current novel	Leadership, Wisdom
Women's Bible Study	Several groups for Bible Study	Faith, Knowledge, Leadership, Wisdom
Woodworking	Create faith chests for children to store treasures collected on their faith journey	Faith, Skilled Craft
Worship		Faith, Music, Wisdom
Altar Guild	Prepare the space for worship by changing paraments, and preparing communion	Artistry, Hospitality, Service
Communion Assistants	Help the pastors distribute communion to the congregation during services	Faith, Service
Ushers	Greet members and guests, pass the offering plates, be a welcoming presence	Evangelism, Hospitality, Service

New Members & Baptisms Report

July 2025

Baptisms for June

Name	Date of Birth	Date Baptized
Celia Evelyn Cain	11/18/2021	06/22/2025
Samuel Clark Combs	10/28/2024	06/24/2025

New Members for June

No New Members

Confirmands for May

Jayce Braddell
Gemma Davis
Aiden Gonzalez
Cameron Jones
Luca Swanson
Nolan Snyder
Shaya Saneinia
Paige Trytten

**Ascension Lutheran Church
Council Meeting Minutes
June 18, 2025 7:00 pm**

The Council meeting was called to order by John Rarick at 7:04 p.m.

Council Members In Attendance: Alan Baker, Rachael Bowen, Bonny Chick, Ethan East, Dave Harkins, John Rarick, Jeannette Ruggiero

Others: Pastor Tim, Kaylee Searway

Absent: Carrie Leonard, 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 – John

A motion was made (Alan), seconded (Bonny) to approve the agenda as presented.

Devotions - Bonny

In the Bible, God calls us to reach out to the stranger, to welcome them into our community. There is religious community but what God calls us to is real community with one another. Just as the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, lives in community, we are to be in relationship with all our neighbors to accomplish God's purpose in our lives and the lives of those around us. How would a community that is committed to every member flourishing behave?

Honoring Council Leadership – Pastor Tim

Retiring Council members Rachael, Bonny, Dave, and Jeanette were thanked for serving on the Church Council.

Treasurer's Report – Dave

Giving in May was 3% over budget for the month but there is still a year-to-date shortfall of \$40,000, which is 3% of the total budgeted amount. Overall giving is 5% above last year which ties to the "ask" put forth to the congregation for this fiscal year. These results do not merit changing the budget amounts that will be presented to the congregation at the June Congregational meeting.

Dave asked that the incoming Council consider moving the monthly meeting to the 4th Wednesday of the month. This would provide the time needed for the finance team to prepare the prior month's financial reports, allowing Council the opportunity to review them in a timely manner.

The Finance Committee meets quarterly, yet it has been difficult to maintain a quorum at each meeting. Per the bylaws, committee members should include representatives from the School Board, the Foundation, and the Joy of Giving team. This committee reviews all One Ascension financial matters. Personnel should be reconstituted for the upcoming year.

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

New Business

1. Congregational Meeting Final Preparation – Kaylee

The meeting packet will go out Friday, 6/20 and will include:

- The agenda
- Minutes from the Special Congregational meeting on August 25, 2024
- Minutes from the Annual Meeting on September 22, 2024
- Budgets for the Church, ECC, School, and Foundation
- Biographies for the slate of new Council, Foundation, and School Board members

Dave noted that, as part of his presentation on the Cash Review, he will comment on the Reserve Study and its relationship to the One Ascension Maintenance line item.

Recurring Business

Affirm New Members, Confirmands and Baptisms

New members Maximilian Fuhrmann, Elaine Hirshan, Paul & Kathy Gulsrud, and Bill & Judy Vanderbok were affirmed.

Old Business

1. Land Sale – Pastor Tim

Per his discussion with the consultant engaged by the buyer, Robert Younkin, Pastor Tim reported that the City reviewed Mr. Younkin's application and declared it incomplete. The necessary changes appear to be minor. Mr. Younkin will re-submit the application. The sale of the land cannot go through until the City approves the final plans.

2. Nominating Committee – Pastor Tim

The slate is complete and the new Council, Foundation, and School Board members will be presented at the Congregational meeting.

Approval of Minutes

May Council meeting

Alan noted that a Foundation report had been submitted for the May Council meeting but it was not listed in the Consent Approval of Reports to Council. Ethan will make that correction and submit the revised minutes.

A motion was made (Jeannette), seconded (Dave), and passed unanimously to approve the May Council minutes as amended.

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. Communications report
8. Be the Blessing report
9. Youth Ministry report

A motion was made (Bonny) and seconded (Alan) to approve the Reports to Council.

Discussion:

Bonny asked to pull the Global Ministries Team report.

Dave asked to pull the Be the Blessing report.

Global Ministries Team report

This report includes a list of the committee members along with their contact information. Kaylee will make sure this page is not included in the web version of the report.

A motion was made (Jeannette), seconded (Bonny), and passed unanimously to approve the Global Ministries Team report as amended.

Be the Blessing report

The Be the Blessing ministry was created by the Church Council. There is a \$12,000 balance and, without additional funding, this ministry will eventually come to a close. Dave urged the Council to consider whether to continue this initiative. Incoming requests have declined but that's likely due to the Kingdom Builder's emphasis. Pastor Tim would like to keep the momentum going and will bring this up with the new Council at the July meeting. It's possible that additional funding could come from outside sources.

A motion was made (Alan), seconded (Jeannette), and passed unanimously to approve the Be the Blessing report as submitted.

Information Items

Next Council meeting will be Wednesday, July 16th at 7:00 pm.in the Bethlehem Room.

Devotions – Alan Baker

Closing Prayer – John Rarick

Adjournment

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:17 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Rachael Bowen

**Ascension Lutheran Church
Congregational Meeting Minutes
June 29, 2025 at 12:00 p.m.**

Call to Order and Welcome

The meeting was called to order by Carrie Leonard, Council President, at 12:01 pm.

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*

Opening Prayer

Anita Cohen, Incoming Foundation President, opened the meeting in prayer.

Presentation and Approval of Agenda – Carrie

A motion was made (Paul Gravrock), seconded (Ivan Larsen), and passed unanimously to approve the agenda as presented.

Approval of Minutes – Carrie

- August 25, 2025 – Special Meeting to Call Associate Pastor

A motion was made (Ed Klodt), seconded (Dean Chandler), and passed unanimously to approve the minutes from the August 2025 Special Meeting to Call the Associate Pastor.

- September 22, 2024 – Annual Meeting

A motion was made (John Rarick), seconded Dean Chandler, and passed unanimously to approve the minutes from the September 2024 Annual meeting.

Presentation of One Ascension Budget – Dave Harkins, Council Treasurer

Church Budget

The 2025 – 2026 fiscal year budget projects a year-end deficit of -\$1,517.

- Offerings - The budget amount for offerings is 3.5% above last year's budget amount. Last year, members were encouraged to increase their giving by 5%. This was attained as fiscal 24/25 (through May) saw a 4.8% increase in actual giving as compared to fiscal 23/24.
- Other Revenues – The budget amount is based on actual rather than budgeted history. This amount represents interest income on cash on hand as well as rents for events on the Ascension campus.
- Salaries & Benefits – The budget amount is approximately \$71,000 higher than last year's budget amount. A school position has been moved from the school budget to the church budget. 80% of that salary will be reimbursed by the school and the reimbursement amount is accounted for in Allocated Staff Expenses. Also, one part-time church position has become full-time.
- Administrative Expenses – There is an increase of 9% from last year's budget amount due to technical needs, specifically a new server.
- Property Maintenance – The budget amount includes \$25,000 that will be contributed to the One Ascension Maintenance Fund at the end of fiscal year 25/26 if the year ends with a surplus.

- Utilities & Insurance – No significant change to the budget amount as these costs are expected to remain stable.

Congregational Total Offering

A summary of congregational total offering for this fiscal year shows that Ascension members are generous givers. Total giving to date is \$1,966,863 from offerings and designated gifts. Of that, 33% was given out as benevolences which is an increase from 28% for the previous fiscal year.

Cash and Debt Review

The church's cash and debt position was presented.

- The cash balance includes ECC funds that were transferred from the School account to the Church's interest-bearing account. This action was taken after a recommendation was made at last year's Congregational meeting.
- The amount shown for the AGAPE fund does not reflect a recent \$50,000 grant.
- The Church, School, and ECC have been contributing equally each year to the One Ascension Maintenance Fund. In an effort to be good stewards of the physical assets on campus, the Church Council and School Board last year commissioned a reserve study. A vendor was engaged to review the condition of the on-campus assets and estimate their maintenance costs. The preliminary report from the vendor suggests that the current fund balance is well below the recommended estimate. The report is based on a model for HOAs which doesn't necessarily fit the One Ascension situation. Also, some of the costs included in the report are already part of the annual budget.
- Ascension Church and School received an Employee Retention Tax Credit from the federal government for employee retention during Covid. Ascension applied for the credit covering five fiscal quarters and the amount received is for one quarter. It remains to be seen if credits will be received for any of the other quarters.
- Unrestricted Cash is up by \$24,000 from last year.

ECC/School Budget

The day school projects a surplus of \$5,240 for fiscal year 25/26. The ECC budget forecasts a surplus of \$2,682. There is a significant increase in the estimated Tuition and Fees for the day school due to the addition of a second kindergarten class. The additional class is possible due to the successful transition of ECC students to the day school.

Foundation Budget

A \$79,907 gain was realized for fiscal year 24/25. Given the uncertain nature of the financial markets at this time, \$0 has been budgeted for revenue from dividends, interest, and realized/unrealized gains/losses on investments for the coming year.

A motion was made (Pete Swavely), seconded (Dean Chandler), and passed unanimously to approve budgets for the church, ECC/School, and Foundation as presented.

Recognition of Leaders – Pastor Tim

Those who have completed their terms on the Council, School Board, and Foundation were thanked for their service to One Ascension.

Council Immediate Past President	Jeannette Ruggiero
Council Treasurer	Dave Harkins
Council Secretary	Rachael Bowen
Council Member	Bonny Chick
School Board Secretary	Jocelyn Myers
Foundation Member	Paul Evenson

Foundation Member
Foundation Member
Foundation Member
GMT Chairperson

Sandra Howe
Steve Smuck
Kris Swavely
Louise Evenson

Election of Candidates – Carrie

The candidates for the open positions on the Church Council, the School Board, and the Foundation are listed in the packet provided to the congregation prior to this meeting. There were no questions regarding the slate of candidates or additional nominations from those in attendance at this meeting.

A motion was made (Pete Swavely), seconded (Dave Harkins), and passed unanimously to suspend voting by written ballot in favor of voice vote.

A motion was made (Pete Swavely), seconded (John Rarick), and passed unanimously via voice vote to approve and elect the slate of candidates as presented.

Old Business – Lot Sale Update

Pastor Tim had cautiously optimistic news to share regarding the lot sale. The land to be sold is made up of multiple parcels. In order to complete the sale, it was necessary to show the city of T.O. how the parcels will be used by the buyer, Robert Younkin. Mr. Younkin has submitted the final package to the city and estimates the approval could come through by 7/31/25. This would be followed by a 60-day review by the County which could result in a final approval by October 2025.

During this period of waiting over the past few years, Thrivent has continued to extend our interest-only loan. The current extension goes through 2/01/26. Mr. Younkin has been covering the cost of the interest payments.

New Business

None at this time.

Vision for Ministry 2025/2026 – Pastor Tim

Pastor Tim's vision for Ascension's future is framed by this question: How do we position ourselves to be strong, faithful, and thriving in 10 years? It starts with defining our identity. We have been living "Get the Blessing / Be the Blessing" for the past few years. Meeting in community and worshipping together we receive God's blessing and then, in turn, go out into the world to share God's blessing with others. This is not a linear process but rather a regenerative cycle of being blessed and blessing others through God.

In preparation for the Annual meeting in September, the Executive team (Pastor Tim, Pastor Chamie, Director of Operations – Kaylee Searway, ECC Director – Jenni McCoy, School Principal – Rich Gregory) will meet this summer to develop strategies and objectives over the next five years. The Church Council retreat will focus on developing new leaders; leaders who encourage and equip others as well as affirm and celebrate.

Closing Prayer – Ashley Steere, Incoming School Board President

Adjournment

A motion was made (Ivan Larsen), seconded (Dean Chandler), and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:57 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Rachael Bowen



Pastor Tim's Ministry Report- July 2025

Grace and peace my sisters and brothers in Christ,

June was a wonderful month for the ministry. For example, the schools did a great job of bringing closure to the 2024/25 school year. Some special highlights of this were the wonderful 8th grade graduation ceremony, the saying goodbye and thank you to Connie Angress after 29 years of faithful employment and the celebration of our “graduating” 4year olds at the ECC. At the 8th grade graduation, we got to celebrate the accomplishments of a great group of 9 young people. Personally, it made me feel wonderful to know that these young people really learned about and grew in their faith during their time at Ascension. The process of Celebrating Connie involved multiple events and was incredibly well-planned by our school board, PALS and principal Rich Gregory. And of course, the ECC was a wonderful celebration- made more wonderful by knowing that a good number of those children are going to be attending our elementary school.

As a way of getting ready for our congregational meeting, I spent a significant amount of time preparing my vision presentation. I am very excited about this one this year. Last month, I mentioned the objectives that I was focusing on. At, some point during the process, I realized that I had to step back and look at the bigger picture. As I prayed, I sensed that God was saying to me that I needed to look longer term. The term that I am looking at is 10 years. And the questions I am asking myself are: How do we want to position ourselves to be strong and growing 10 years from now when we move into our next phase of leadership? What are the strengths that we have? The weaknesses that we need to address? The threats that we face and the opportunities to seize so that in 10 years, when, God willing, I am still here and looking at retirement, this church is thriving and poised to move into the future?

In the aftermath of Covid, we named an identity that we have. And here is that name: It is Get the blessing, Be the blessing.

We started with Get the Blessing. It was a way to encourage people to get back into the rhythm of being the church after the profound disruption of Covid. People had gotten out of the habit of gathering. I remember reading one comment on Facebook during online worship- “church in bed with coffee in my pajamas... I could get used to this,” That made me panic a little.

So, “Get the Blessing” was all about bringing people back together, in worship, in fellowship, in study, in service. It was a way to remind people that when 2 or 3 or more gather in his name- Jesus shows up and something happens. It is a blessing that so many people had to be reminded of.

And then, when it happens, since He shows up, and since blessing never comes without the impulse to share it, since church is called to be the “safe place to hear a dangerous word,” we get challenged to go out and be the blessing.

“Be the Blessing” is all about the church scattered out into the world. Think of the Parable of the Sower found in Mathew, Mark and Luke- sowing the seed in the hopes that He finds fertile soil. This

is the purpose behind our “Be the blessing” campaign. It is the driving force behind, “the Kingdom Builders.” Go out there and see what God will do with your effort. See how he will multiply them. It really is amazing to hear the stories of people who go out after praying and planning and making the Kingdom Builders projects happen. Maybe you have your own story.

And finally, we realize that this is not a linear thing. Instead, it is a dynamic process. When you are out there and you are “being a blessing,” you get excited the way the disciples did when Jesus sent them out- 2x2. They came back to the Lord, excitedly telling their story and saying to him and to the rest of the community “this stuff works.”

But then we notice, we are back in community, telling our story, praising God, challenging others and ourselves to go out. It is a dynamic process that has no end.

This is who Ascension is. This is a picture of the process of “creating opportunities for all people to become devoted followers of Christ.” This is the church, not a building, but a called-out people, being transformed, day by day, experience by experience. This is a dynamic community called One Ascension.

So how are you and the rest of Ascension’s leaders called to participate in this process? You are called to encourage and equip our community when they go out, and affirm and celebrate them when they come back in. Please see the slide below for how this process works.

So, this summer I have set up a retreat with my executive staff team (Kaylee or DOO, Chamie, Rich Gregory and Jenni McCoy). You can pray for us! We are meeting July 23rd to begin to talk strategy and objectives. And then our church council will have a retreat prior to our next Congregational meeting. I want to begin to think about- through the lens of this dynamic process- how we can move forward and think about what these 10 years are going to look like as we grow in our generosity, as we develop new leaders and figure out how to equip and encourage, affirm and celebrate them. I hope to have some clearer strategies and objectives for what this looks like in September at our Annual Meeting.

I am truly excited about this. And I hope you are too!

Pastor Tim



Pastor Chamie's June 2025 Council Report

Children, Youth, & Family

Children

Jenelle Smith officially began as our Children's Ministry Director on June 1. It has been an absolute delight working with her in her first month. I gave her the book *Children's Ministry 101* which we will be discussing together. We collaborated on summer Sunday school and the upcoming family night VBS. Jenelle took all the curriculum and hit the ground running. Thus far, the response to summer Sunday school at the 10:30 service has been very positive. In fact, we have had new families who have never attended Sunday school. The summer curriculum is called "Happy Campers" and the children have enjoyed "fishing" (plastic fish from a kiddie pool), playing in a tent, and talking about sleeping bags. Each week there is a camp item that ties into a Bible verse and faith lesson.



Youth

Faith Quilts. Jen Avalos, Pastor Tim, and I were happy to bless 8 high school graduating seniors on "Faith Quilt Sunday" which was June 1. I am so thankful for all of our wonderful quilters! Faith quilts is one of my favorite Ascension milestones, one I will work to continue to keep strong.



Youth Leadership Camp Wow!! There is so much to say about Youth Leadership Camp. To sum it up, it was an incredible week of seeing 32 youth grow in faith, community, and leadership. Each day included leadership lessons from the Youth Leadership book that all youth received; lessons were taught by Heather Hartson, Stephanie Yates, RJ Ray, and myself. Each day included lessons on how to serve your church through things like worship, facilities care, children's ministry, etc. Church staff who shared included Jenelle (teaching the students how to lead family night VBS), Jeff Hengst and Jude Delkeskamp about facilities, Kaylee Searway about operations, and Pastor Paul about worship - and Pastor Tim kicked things off with the opening devotion on Day 1. Each day also included lessons on how to serve the community. I am so thankful for our ministry partners who taught about their area of service and had a service project or activity for students. Those who shared included Denise Cortez from Harbor House, the Fair Trade Team that Carol Bjelland set up including Andy and Jill Binsley, Bevely Selle, and Kim Overton, Christ Daleidan talking about Community Concerns and our food pantry, the GMT Team including Louise Evenson and Don and Vicki Weeks, and Lilah and the team from CLU teaching about creation care. The youth studied scripture, prayed, learned about leadership, laughed, played games, and had a great time. I particularly enjoyed the very hot day when the adults ambushed the youth on the playground with water balloons and super soakers. I am thankful for all of the youth counselors, including Jen Avalos, Hannah Delkeskamp, Spencer Gottmer, Camille Harrington, RY Ray, Aidan Delkeskamp, Eliza Calle, and Jeff Hengst. It is also important to note that this was a "One Ascension" camp with church and school youth and participation of church and school staff, including Principal Rich Gregory leading devotions and worship songs one morning. Many, many thanks to the Be the Blessing Team for the generous grant to make this a fantastic week for our youth. I appreciate all of the "prayer warriors" who were praying for these youth. I continue to pray for the seeds that were planted and what God will do through these amazing young people. One of those young people, John, volunteered to lead devotions on the last day of youth leadership camp. He did such a phenomenal job that I couldn't keep in the tears. The Spirit is alive in these young people! It was a lot of long hours putting this camp together and I will honestly say that it was all a complete joy for me to do!



Table groups sharing their Lego creations as we discussed building a youth ministry program.



Picnic at the park. We had Taco Bell and Hannah talked about "TACOS" prayers - thanksgiving, adoration, confession, others, self.



I love the smiles between the generations as the GMT Team came to talk about LWR and packing school kits.



We are all soaking wet in this picture - circling in prayer to close the day after the adults ambushed the youth with water balloons and super soakers.

Interfacing with the Schools

June was VERY busy as the day school wrapped up the school year!!!



Gemma & Austin giving the chapel message.

- I worked with the 8th graders in planning their last chapel of the school year which they led. Pastor Tim and I sat in the pews! They all did a phenomenal job. I was impressed with the great chapel message given by Gemma Davis and Austin Wallace. Gemma and Austin are both students of the school, but also very active at church and recent Confirmands.

- In 2020, we had our last 8th grade graduation until this year. From 2010 to 2020, I was in charge of 8th grade graduation when I worked on the school side as the 8th grade homeroom teacher. This year I was just the historian and advisor as we once again had an 8th grade graduating class - which is so exciting!!! Both Pastor Tim and I led prayers at the 8th grade graduation and I coordinated their "faith boxes." I think it is worthy to note that half of the 8th grade class was also in confirmation and that every single one of them mentioned confirmation in their graduation address.

- I led the last chapel of the school year on the last day of school. At the last chapel, we celebrated Connie Angress and presented her with her very own faith quilt.

Worship

In June, Pastor Tim & I worked on preparing the summer sermon series and getting ready to launch it on June 15th. This included collaborating with all the various worship leaders. We are excited for this summer series.

For me, the worship highlight of June was our combined worship service for Pentecost Sunday followed by the Pentecost Fair. That is another WOW and there aren't enough words to describe how the Spirit was at work that day. Again, all the hours of planning worship and working with the worship team as well as working with Michael Adinew on the Pentecost Fair were all joy. Michael knocked it out of the ball park with the fair and every single family and group that hosted a booth at the fair did an absolutely phenomenal job. This was an intergenerational event and we worked hard to make it so, including passports for the children and youth walking around as waiters with food to sample. The feedback that we have received is a resounding YES, let's do the Pentecost Fair next year! I think so many really walked away feeling the Holy Spirit!



Children's Time on Pentecost Sunday



Other

As I mentioned in my last council report, I attended the Lutheran Synod Assembly at the end of May. In June, I had to attend the equivalent in the Methodist Church.

It was such a blessing to officiate at the wedding of Debra Kusinerik and Kevin Kupfer. I have known Deb for many years and of course, her mom Diane in the office. Deb worked with me in the nature lab a few years ago as part of her OT schooling and she was such a delight to be around. She and Kevin both participated in the Blue Zones Bible Study that I did earlier this year. We do many weddings as pastors and you don't always really know the couple. In this case, it was just so special knowing these amazing people and I think Deb and Kevin are the sweetest!



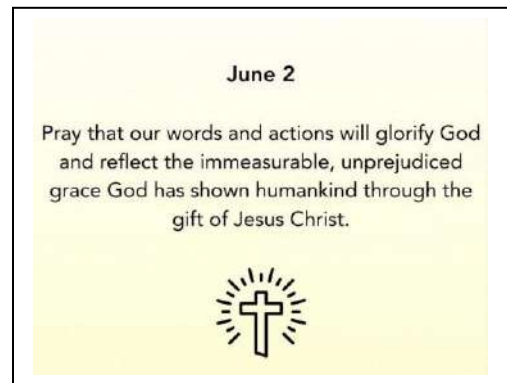
From Memorial Day through June 25, I didn't take a day off. I realize that is not a sustainable pace. On June 25, I led a Bible study on "Rest & Renewal" at our monthly Word & Wine for women. Then I lived what I taught and was on vacation - resting and renewing! - from June 26 through July 4. It was so peace-filled and refreshing to visit old friends and family back "home" in Minnesota and South Dakota. I got to kayak for 7 days straight and hike through lush woods - very dreamy for me!

Grace & Peace,

Pastor Chamie

Church Council Report – July 6, 2025 – Pastor Steve Herder

The month of June for Ascension had some very significant ministries that I'll share the stories through these photos. In the midst of the difficult days in our country and world, here at Ascension we continue to follow in the footsteps of our loving and merciful Savior Jesus, sharing his light and compassion for all people, and God's creation.



June 1 – the joy of the giving of faith quilts to our high school graduates. June 8 – the One Ascension Pentecost Festival Service with each of our music ministries, followed by the amazing International Fair!



We hope that you all are following our "365 in '25" prayers each day, with Bible readings. If you'd like to be in our email prayer group, let Linda Morrow know. We thank Susanne Hopkins for her devotions each Monday morning that we include on social media. Susanne is pictured with me in the photo above.

The month of June for Senior Adult Ministries included our ongoing visitation ministries, Eucharistic Ministries (home Communion visits), Christian Life Hours at senior living places in town, SAMs Tram, GriefShare, 3M (minor maintenance ministries), and Lunch Bunch! We are grieving the deaths of dear friends Jan Specks and Norma Schillerstrom. We celebrated with the Lundrings and the Koenigs (and many other couples) their milestone wedding anniversaries. I'll include a photo of my home visit with Cal Beard, 97, showing me his Luther's Small Catechism book edited by Rev, Dr, J.M. Reu (famous Wartburg Sem prof many years ago).



One of the new ministries that was born out of our prayer ministries this past year, along with the daily prayers with Scripture, and the Wednesday Work Blessing, was our Hospital Visitation Ministry. This past month we held our first training for that with a great group of caring Ascension leaders, willing to fulfill Jesus' words in Matthew 25, "I was sick, and you visited me."



If you or a loved one are in the hospital, your pastors and these caring friends in Christ would like to visit you, pray with you, encourage you, and support your family. We will keep the visit short, unless you'd like to visit more. Call the church office or your pastors anytime to let us know how we can support you and pray for you.

Our Community Concerns Team, besides the weekly food pantry ministry, the monthly Hot Meal Ministry, also included a visit to the new homes for people who are homeless. It's on Lawrence Drive in Newbury Park. See the first photo below.

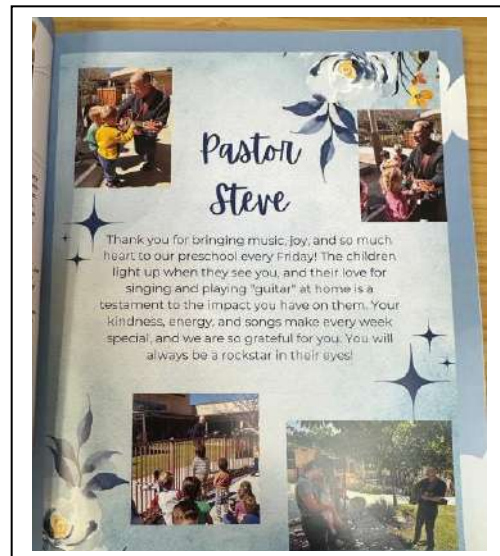
Our Global Ministries Team met in June to discuss the new year's budget, plan for Fair Trade events, prepare for the LWR kits project, and continue discussion on this fall's Gifts of Hope. We thank Louise Evenson for leading our GMT so well and now we welcome Bev Selle who as of July 1st is leading this team. The photo shows Bev on the left, and then Paul and Louise Evenson, when I gave them a tour of the Dead Sea Scrolls at the Reagan Library. They are standing in front of one of the blocks on loan from the Western Wall at the temple mount area in Jerusalem.



Thinking of our global ministries, this past month we received a certificate of appreciation from Global Refuge (Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service)! The other photo is a report from our ELCA on how our mission support offerings are used.



One day this past month, Jenni McCoy, our ECC director, invited me to come up to their office. What a surprise when they showed me our school's yearbook. Our ECC dedicated their part of it to me for my Friday songs with the children! Thank you, children and staff! I love singing the fun songs of faith with you each Friday.



Finally, a brief report on our Habitat for Humanity Build in Zambia the end of June and early July. (See the fuller report written by Stacy for our newsletter, and the many posts with photos and videos on social media.) Twelve of us traveled from LAX, through Qatar to Lusaka, Zambia to participate in a Thrivent International Build. As you have already heard, it was a fabulous experience of service and ministry in Jesus' name. The Habitat Zambia staff were full of faith and patient teachers as they taught us how to build this small three-room home for Mary and her three orphaned grandchildren. If you ever have a chance to do a build like this (either local or global), do it! Ask the Squires, the Smucks, or the Herders if you'd like to learn more. Thank you for your prayers for our safe travel, fun friendships, inspiring visits to many ministries in Zambia and Zimbabwe, and for a successful construction of a new home for a vulnerable family. Photos are of the first day of construction and the last day....



“I am looking Forward to finally living in a house that is stable and reliable”

Mary Chongo is a loving 64-year-old grandmother who has dedicated her life to taking care of her three orphaned grandchildren; Charles Mwisa, Bright Mulenga and Jane Mulenga. With a heart full of hope, she has continued to work hard to ensure two of her grandchildren stay in school despite her constant leg pain.

Mary's small family lives in Makululu informal settlement, in a fragile two-room mud house that was offered to her rent-free, where she acts as a caretaker. The roof of the house that they live in is patched with rusted iron sheets that leak heavily during the rainy season. The house has no proper ventilation due to its very tiny windows. It is located dangerously close to a main power transformer which poses serious safety concerns in case of an electrical accident.

In addition to that, the family does not have a sanitation facility within their premises and rely on kind neighbors for access to sanitation. Water is drawn from a communal tap located within 100 meters from their home.



Mary Chongo's current house

Mary Chongo

“Our toilet broke down during the rain season due to its fragile structure that's why we live in constant fear that the house may do the same because its also very weak” Mary said.

Despite all this, Mary and her grandchildren continue to live in the house due to their limited income. She says she mainly relies on manual work and selling freezits to earn some income because the Government's Social Cash transfer which used to give her \$15 monthly has halted and she is still trying to make follow-ups. She says she has been struggling to constantly feed her family without it.

With support from the Department of Social Welfare in Kabwe district, Mary's family has been referred to Habitat for Humanity Zambia and after a thorough vetting process, they have been selected to receive a new, decent home.

“I thank God because he has sent you to me at the right time because the owner of the land where I stay has given a notice for me to find somewhere else to stay because he wants to commerce building. He has only given me up the end of this year” Mary narrated.

You might be new to the Council and wondering what a Director of Operations does. My areas of focus are typically church administration, campus wide maintenance, campus wide human resources, and campus wide finance. My “side quests” include consulting on insurance, legal, and policy matters. My council reports will often comment on church attendance, maintenance needs and progress, church admin projects, human resource projects I am working on related to either culture or compliance, and general finance overview. I’ll leave the detailed financial reporting to the Treasurer, and occasionally report on other items like our campus alcohol policy, or insurance policy renewals.

Maintenance

Jeff, Cam, and Jude are having a really productive summer with projects like adding handrails to the choir loft, upgrading the parking lot lights to more attractive and much more efficient lighting, getting a railing installed by the new kindergarten classroom, moving the middle school lockers, installing shade sails, and replacing hardware on the narthex doors. They have worked hard to stay on schedule with the classroom work needed on the TK-8 rooms, and have two weeks of refreshing planned for the ECC when they are closed.

We have had several meetings with our current janitorial company about the cleaning being completed on campus each evening or each week, depending on the area. We are expecting some improvements, particularly in the sanctuary and church offices, which are expected to be cleaned twice each week with deeper cleaning items happening at least monthly.

Annual Report

Carolyn will be the point person for compiling the annual report this year. Ministry leaders are slated to get their first communication from her asking for reports on July 17th. They will have approximately one month to submit reports by a deadline of August 18th. That will allow Carolyn time to make sure the necessary reports have been submitted, format the package, and send it to the Council to review around September 8th or September 10th. After you, the Council, gives your final comments at your September 17th meeting the report will be finalized, printed, and posted by Friday, September 19th in advance of the Annual Meeting on September 28th.

One of the first feats of a comprehensive annual report is soliciting reports from all of the key ministry leaders. I have included a somewhat updated Ministry List in the packet: I tried to update with a few of the new Children’s Ministry and Youth Ministry events like Family Nights and Leadership Camp...the descriptions I wrote are quite generic and only intended as placeholders – I take no offense at someone writing better descriptors. I also don’t admit to having added everything that should be added: I ask this group to please read over it and make suggestions for new ministries that should be added? One of my great fears would be to have forgotten to ask someone for an annual report submission about their ministry and have them feel slighted by it not being included, so I need your help!

I would also like to have some dialogue at the Council meeting about how Be the Blessing and Kingdom Builders should be represented on the ministry list and in the 2024-2025 Annual Report. It was quite a significant part of our ministry and in the life of the congregation in the last year. Will someone make a comprehensive list of all the ways we blessed the community and the world with Kingdom Builders? Will some of, or all of, the ministries want their own reports in the packet?

Performance Reviews

I appreciate the process that the presidents recently completed with each of the pastors to complete an annual review. It's also helpful to how we interact with the Methodists in regard to Pastor Chamie's leadership here at Ascension. We've designed a review process that we believe will translate to the reporting we need to do each October to maintain her associate status with us as Lutherans.

As for the lay team, I abbreviated my process this year and I am pleased with the results. I simplified the form I use and the "pre-work" I normally do to assess and write comments for each employee before I meet with them. The previous process was a bit onerous, and frankly, not much fun on my part. This year I printed each of my direct report's job descriptions. We reviewed them together and talked about whether an update was needed. That prompted them to be able to tell me what they are proud of in the last year, what they want to work on, and how I can help them as their supervisor. The conversations have been deep and meaningful without being unnecessarily burdensome to prepare for. I have an amazing team right now, and I'm so excited to help them achieve their goals in this next year of ministry together.

Culture

I'm excited about the leadership retreat Pastor Tim is planning for later in July. I think some meaningful and constructive conversation will come from the gathering that will help us be better leaders for our teams.

Carrie Leonard very graciously volunteered to meet with me and my finance team to teach us more about Working Genius, and to discuss some of the specifics of our team dynamic. It was a positive and eye-opening conversation for us. I would say that we are a fairly healthy team with high productivity, but we gained some insights about what energizes and shuts down each of us, as well as some blind spots we may be prone to as a group. I think it will make us a better team moving forward and gives us a common language to use with each other as it already has for the executive team. I'm looking forward to having similar sessions with my admin team and my maintenance team. I'd like to wait until after our leadership retreat to meet with my admin team as it too may inform how we want to intentionally lead moving forward. For my maintenance team I simply need to wait until fall because summer is just too busy of a time to add anything new! We'll be able to focus on our team growth more fully once we get the campus ready and school back in session for a new academic year.

Professional Development Week

We are sketching out what our week of training, bonding, and preparing classrooms will look like during August 11th through 15th. That is when our teachers are back on campus full time and we worship together, get to know each other, and complete required training sessions like harassment prevention training and CPR. I'm looking forward to planning a Getting to Know your Maintenance Team session this year to discuss work request process and how to communicate campus needs. In case you should need to know, you can always email a non-urgent maintenance concern to us at maintenance@alcto.org.

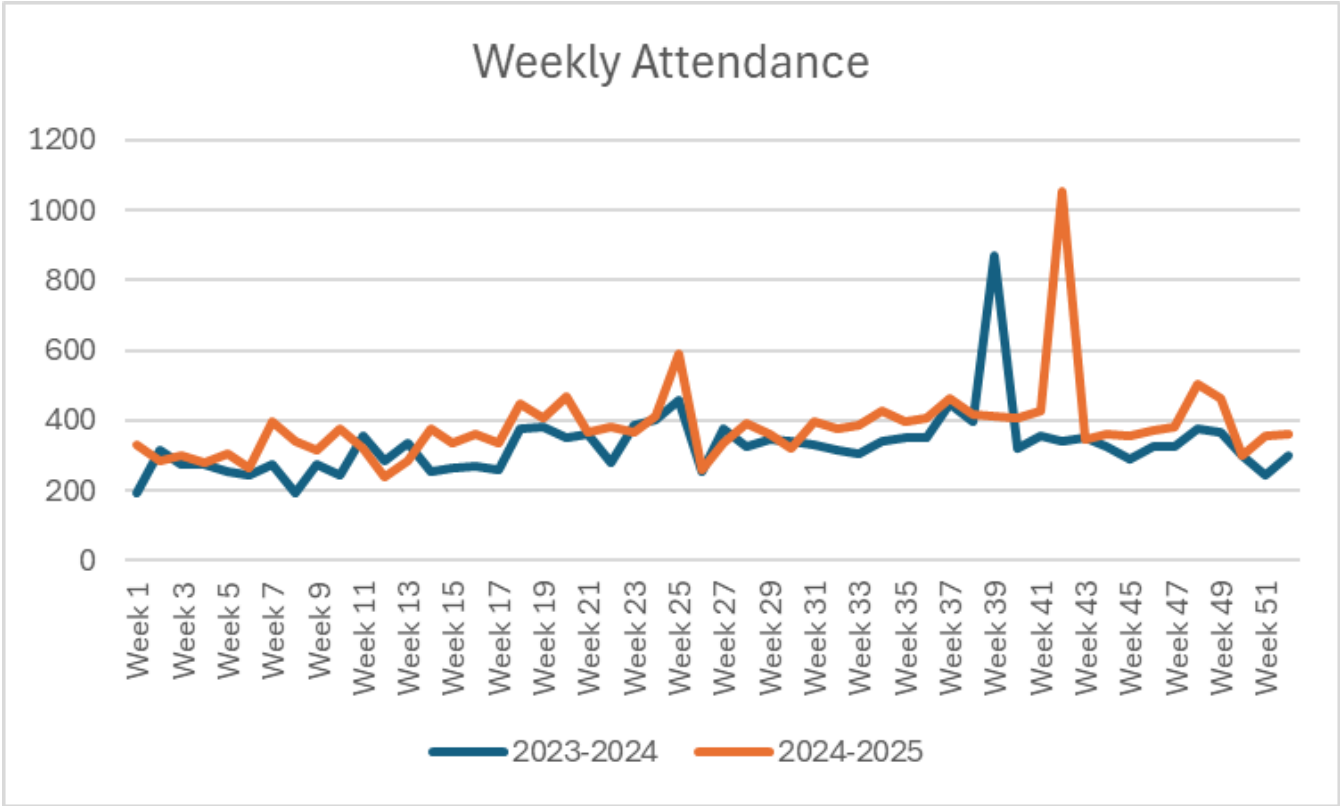
Finance

The only shorter finance cycle than the month starting on a Tuesday is when the month starts on a Wednesday...I'm not typically one to make excuses, but throw in a 4th of July holiday and a few vacation days for key employees, and results are difficult to come up by July 9th when reports are due! Camryn's working hard on credit card statements and other close items while updating salaries for about 80 of our 105 employees on campus before we run the July 18 payroll. (The other 25ish employees get updated a few weeks later with the academic calendar year.) Mike is wrapping up May and June close items while feeling the pressure to have the new fiscal year uploaded and running. I'm pulling reports for our annual worker comp audit, which is a little more complicated by our upgrade to a new payroll company in February/March. The new system is amazing; I am just new to pulling reports for it, and also blending reports from the two companies for complete totals over

the fiscal year. I feel like I’m complaining a lot; all of these challenges are actually a bit fun; my only complaint is not enough hours in the day! We’ll get there, and I thank you for your patience in waiting for the reports you need to make sound financial decisions for the organization. We don’t take that responsibility lightly, and we’re anxious to be both accurate and timely.

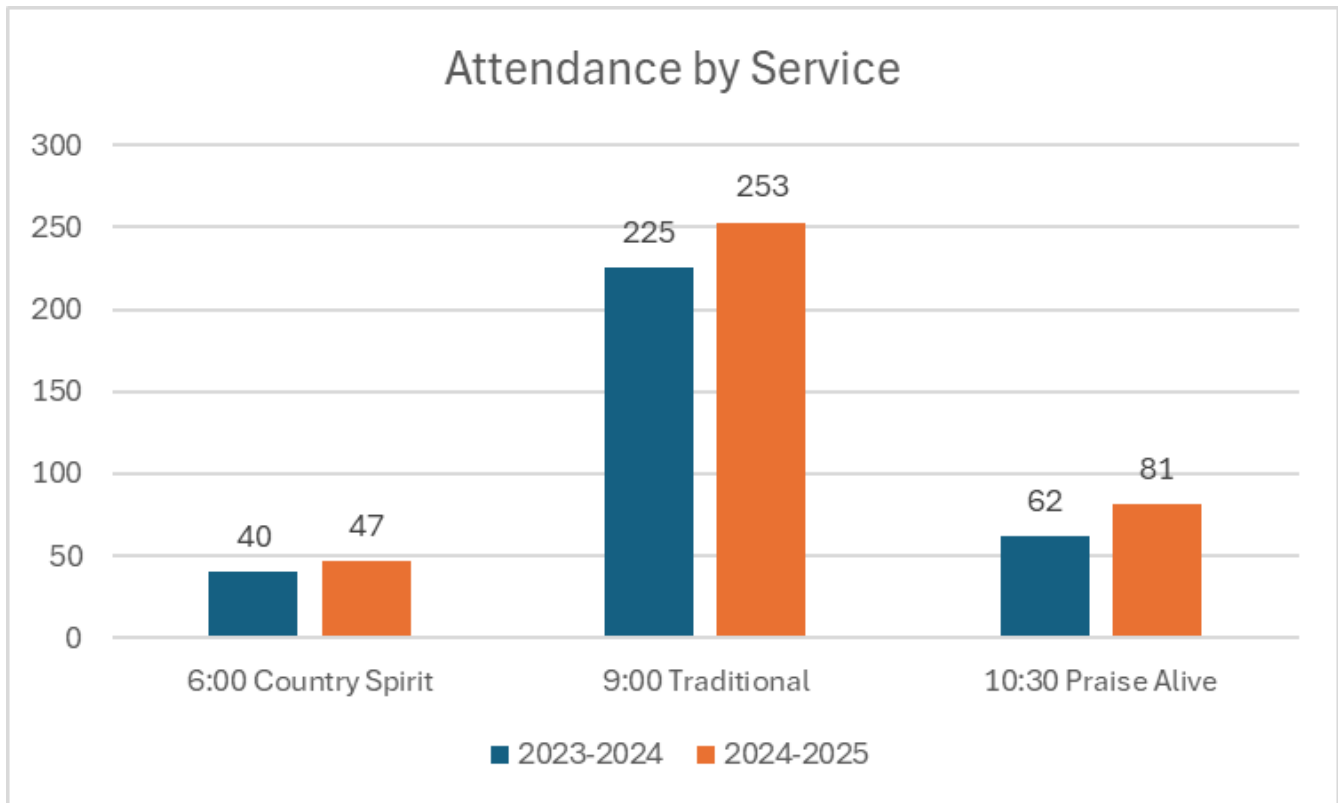
Attendance

The completion of the fiscal year offers a unique timeframe to reflect on how attendance is changing with each fiscal year. I’m happy to report that average weekly attendance increased from 2023-2024 to 2024-2025. Our average weekly attendance increased from 329 per weekend to 383 per weekend. There are so many factors that affect attendance, but I wanted to provide a brief graph for you here; mostly as a piece of inspiration about a metric that is moving in the right direction.



It’s always interesting to note where the Easter peaks are: We finally crossed back over that pre-covid threshold of 1000 people for Easter with 1055 worshippers at 5 services in 2025. In 2024 we had 872 worshippers at 5 services. Great growth in a service with many visitors and guests!

I am also happy to report that average attendance is growing with each of our services:



(For any math minded folks: yes, the numbers of the second graph don't quite add up to the fiscal year totals I reported above: there were 1-2 combined services each year that change the overall numbers)

Thank you,

Kaylee Searway

Director of Operations



Church Council Report

Youth Director: Jennifer Avalos

Date: July 8, 2025

Middle School Update for the Summer:

We are in our last week of our 4-week series for 6th–8th grade from the *True North* book by Diane Beck, who is well known in our community. We have been tying the book with special topics that establish scripture each week. We have a time of prayer, icebreakers, reading and discussions, crafts that have a spiritual meaning.

Senior Luther League Bible Study Update:

We have wrapped up our *Chosen* series for the months of May and June. On July 6th, we started our *Roundabout* 4-week series from the Orange Conference that we are trying out. At the end of the month, we will receive feedback to see how the curriculum connects with our high schoolers. This week's topic is “Change Is Life,” which ties with Ecclesiastes 3:1–8: “For everything there is a season.” The high schoolers get to be part of a devotional plan that goes with the *Roundabout* 4-week series, which is daily, so each high schooler can be a part of what goes with the curriculum on Sundays. This is to better help our youth through their growth journeys as a group and as individuals.

Youth Events Update

Family Night Series – VBS Youth Volunteering (5 weeks starting July 9th):

Our middle schoolers and high schoolers will be leading 3 different stations for our younger children. They will be receiving all the materials needed for them to lead. It is going to be an exciting few weeks seeing them lead and being able to support them as they grow and lead Family Night VBS on Wednesday nights.

SkyZone – Incoming 6th–8th Grade (July 14th):

We will be having a fun day at SkyZone with our incoming 6th–8th grade students. This fun event will allow them to connect with one another in community, have a great time, and build meaningful memories along the way.

Hiking – Incoming 9th–12th Grade (July 15th):

Our high schoolers will have an evening hike. Pastor Chamie will be leading the hike. It will be a time where our youth can take a moment in God’s creation as a group and build those connections out in nature—seeing God’s creation and continuing to grow together with a fun outdoor experience.

July 20th–25th – Luther Glen Summer Camp (9th–12th Grade):

We will be heading to summer camp at Luther Glen. There will be a time of worship, activities, outdoor adventures, and time to grow deeper in one’s faith as individuals and as a group. It’s going to be an exciting time, and Disneyland Day will be part of camp, so the youth will have time to enjoy fun rides during one of our camp days.

July Senior Luther League Coffee Shop Gatherings:

We will be having two Senior Luther League coffee shop gatherings in July: the first on July 10th at our local Starbucks, and the second on July 17th at Five 07 Coffee Shop. These gatherings are meant to continue building connections with the youth and provide a relaxed space for them to come together as a group. A time for them to bring homework, catch up with

one another, or simply hang out. It's a great opportunity to build community and grow in faith outside of our usual Bible study setting.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Avalos

Youth Director