

**Ascension Lutheran Church
Council Agenda
Wednesday, April 15, 2026 - 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

Approval of Agenda – John Rarick

Devotion – Michael Feltner

Treasurer's Report – Steve Smuck

New Business

- **Initial budget review for 2026/2027 – Kaylee Searway and Finance Team**

Recurring Business

- Affirm New Members, Confirmants, and Baptisms

Old Business

- No new business

Approval of Minutes -John Rarick

- March 23, 2026, Joint School Board, Church Council Minutes
- March 23, 2026, Church Council Minutes

Consent Approval of Reports to Council – John Rarick

- Pastor Chamie Delkeskamp's Report
- Pastor Steve Herder's Report
- Director of Operations – Kaylee Searway
- School Board Minutes – not submitted
- Global Ministries Team Report
- Communications Report

Information Items

- **Reflections on empowering and equipping, affirming and celebrating as we lead the culture of abundance at Ascension.**
- **The next Church Council meeting will be held on May 20, 2026 at 7:00 p.m.**

Closing Prayer – Creighton Van Horn

Adjournment

Treasurer's Report for April (March Data)

Due to the “early” date for the Council Meeting this month our fully vetted financials will be provided in hardcopy at the meeting on the 15th. However, the Finance team has been able to provide preliminary results which show our expenses continue to run below our budgeted amounts and our Offerings and Revenue for March have closed our gap by roughly \$15K which means we are looking at a YTD Offering shortfall of only 2.5% (roughly half of what it has been running) and so we continue to look toward wrapping up the year in the black. More detail will be provided Wednesday night.

Respectfully submitted,
Steve Smuck
Treasurer

New Members & Baptisms Report

April 2026

Baptisms for March

Name	Date Baptized
Capri Noelle Messana	03/08/2026
Madelyn Ivy Meddaugh	03/15/2026

New Members for March

Ashley Babich
Stephanie Frias
John Hajducko
Frank Messana
Ryanne Messana
Chris Stine
Bob Stine

**Ascension Lutheran Church
Church Council and School Board Joint Meeting
Monday, March 23, 2026 – 5:30pm
Founder's Hall**

Call to Order and Welcome – Ashley Steere, School Board President

The meeting was called to order at 5:57 PM, after a meal and fellowship.

Council and School Board Members Present: Ashley Steere, Jenni McCoy, Brittany Shoulders, Brooke Costi, Jeannette McNulty, Kathy Roshani, Michael Feltner, Mike Marvin, Steve Smuck, Matt Hurdle, Rich Gregory, Carrie Leanard, John Rarick, Al Baker, Anna Woodward, Crystal Bryant, Kyle Jones, Chris Poveromo, Kaylee Searway, Pastor Tim, Pastor Chamie

Not present: Creighton Van Horn, Ethan East

Dinner and Fellowship - Pastor Tim Delkeskamp to lead devotion and prayer

Announcements – Pastor Tim

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

Motto: Invite – Grow - Serve

Approval of Agenda – Ashley Steere

It was moved (Al), then seconded (Anna) and unanimously approved to accept the agenda.

New Business:

- High Level Budget Presentation– Kaylee Searway, Director of Operations

The new Budget will begin in operations on July 1, after (assumed) approval at the Congregational meeting on June 28.

Top priorities for this new budget include: revenue, staffing and key expenses.

Revenue:

- 1. Offerings during most months is at 96% of projected income.*
- 2. ECC tuition - 5% increase and additional classes because of the new age range in students.*

3. *TK-8 tuition - increase for TK-6, hoping to end up with 205 students for next school year.*

Staffing budget:

1. *Projections are close to on budget. A proposed pay increase is included in the new budget.*

Key expenses:

1. *Insurance*
2. *Technology updates*
3. *Asset preservation and improvement*
4. *Infrastructure growth*
5. *Janitorial services*

- **Sabbatical Update – Pastor Tim**

Pastor Tim's Sabbatical will take place over three months, 4/6/26-7/6/26. His focus during this time of refreshment and renewal is "What will life look like in 10 years?" He is seeking not only personal reflection and planning, but that for the life of Ascension. He wants to confirm the strong staff and retention of the team, as well as secure and retain future volunteers for church programs and ministries.

- **Strategic Planning Update/ State of Elementary School/Middle School – Rich Gregory**

Church/School Integration

Pastor Tim gives thanks to Rich and his team for their growth in numbers and his vision for upcoming hopes for the Day School.

- *Rich presented 9 key points of strategic planning*
- *Rich expressed pride in the growing youth group at church, including many middle school students from the Day School.*
- *The Day School team is creating committees to evaluate growth, how to fundraise and how to grow spatially. The challenge is that ECC students will naturally transition to the Day School, and current space is not sufficient. Since the ECC is extremely popular within the community, there is anticipated growth in enrollment of TK/K/1st grades at the Day School.*
- *The Day School needs upgrades and should be as exciting and inviting as the ECC.*
- *There will be a 3 phase, strategic plan to approach and achieve the goals in sight.*

- *State of the School - Early Childhood Center – Jenni McCoy and Brooke Costi, Directors*

Enrollment is currently 200 students, with 33 staff members. Strategic goals for the ECC include:

- *Develop and implement faith workshops*
- *Continue to grow the nature school each year*
- *Create and offer opportunities for service*
- *Increase ECC Parent Engagement (Workshops and family events)*

Recent success and pride was presented in a 5 minute Fire Drill. Jenni also expressed great joy in the Chapel Buddies program, a collaboration with the Day School students.

Old Business:

- **Land Sale- Kaylee Searway**

The Land Sale group (CVH, Bob Woodward, Yonkin's team) meets weekly to review updates and progress. A revised map and Minor Mod was submitted on 3/17 to the City of Thousand Oaks. These documents will be presented to the city Planning Commission for approval. Once approved by the Planning Commission, documents will move on to the City Council for approval.

Closing Prayer - Rich Gregory

Adjournment – John Rarick

It was moved (Carrie) and seconded (Steve), then unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting.

Information Items:

June 28th at 12pm- Congregational Meeting

October 21st at 5:30pm- Joint Council/School Board Meeting

Respectfully submitted by Crystal Bryant

**Ascension Lutheran Church
Council Agenda
Monday, March 23, 2026 - 7:00 pm
Founders Hall**

Welcome and Call to Order – John Rarick, President

Called to order at 7:14 PM

Council Members Present: John Rarick, Carrie Leonard, Al Baker, Steve Smuck, Michael Feltner, Crystal Bryant

Council Members not Present: Creighton Van Horn, Ethan East, Anna Woodward

Also present: Pastor Tim, Pastor Chamie, Mike Marvin

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

Motto: Invite - Grow - Serve

Approval of Agenda – John Rarick

It was moved (Al) and seconded (Steve), then unanimously approved to accept the agenda.

Treasurer's Report – Steve Smuck

Steve is working with the Finance Team and Generosity committee to finalize a budget for presentation and approval at the Congregational Meeting.

It was moved (Carrie) -with the request to redact additional financial details shared in the initial report - then seconded (Al), and unanimously approved to accept the Treasurer's report.

New Business

- Nominating Committee report – Carrie Leonard

Carrie shared Council, Foundation, and School Board updates for potential new candidates. The slate of nominees will be presented at the April or May meeting.

Recurring Business

- Affirm New Members, Confirmations, and Baptisms

Baptism: Rosalea Valentina Hernandez 02/01/2026

Old Business

- *No old business*

Approval of Minutes -John Rarick

- *It was moved (Carrie) and seconded (Michael), then unanimously approved to accept the minutes of the February 25, 2026 Church Council Meeting.*

Consent Approval of Reports to Council – John Rarick

- Pastor Tim Delkeskamp's Report
- Pastor Chamie Delkeskamp's Report
- Pastor Steve Herder's Report
- Director of Operations – Kaylee Searway
- School Board Report
- Global Ministries Team Report
- Communications Report

It was moved (Michael) while affirming Pastor Tim's upcoming Sabbatical and offering blessings for the next three months. It was then seconded (Carrie) and unanimously approved to accept the Reports to Council.

Information Items

- **Reflections on empowering and equipping, affirming and celebrating as we lead the culture of abundance at Ascension.**
 - *Crystal celebrated Pastor Chamie and Ruth Rarick in planning the 8th grade and high school Seder Meal.*
 - *John celebrated the diversity across all demographics of our church family at Ascension.*
- **The next Church Council meeting will be on April 15, 2026 at 7:00 pm.**

Closing Prayer – Crystal Bryant

Adjournment

It was moved (Carrie) and seconded (Michael), then unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting at 8:17 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Crystal Bryant

Pastor Chamie's March 2026 Council Report

(through April 5, Easter)

I am getting ready to head out for 10 days with Tim as he begins his sabbatical, so this council report will look a bit different.

My heart is full after an absolutely incredible Easter:

- I was so proud watching the youth lead the Sunrise Service. I think God intentionally made me lost track of time. I was on top of the hill pulling out more blankets for people who were feeling cold when I heard Ella, our Youth Council President, say "This is the day the Lord has made..." She just began the worship, no need for me. I cried when she started to preach. She and James and the whole crew did a great job. Thank you, too, to Darrin Kruse for leading the music and organizing all of the musicians.
- Tim and I loved the energy of the 9:00 service. To see the congregation so full was heartwarming. We loved the whole morning of worship and found it deeply meaningful to work on the Easter sermon together.
- The butterfly release went beautifully. The children seemed to love the butterflies and I had this moment, when seeing the congregation circle for the release, that it was so special to have Jenelle say a prayer and then have everyone open their butterfly boxes following the words "he has risen" and then to just be in awe of the butterflies. I liked that instead of the frantic chase of an egg hunt and grabbing things for ourselves, we got to pause with wonder at transformation and offer it back to the world. I am not

saving egg hunts are bad. I love that our ECC does one before vacation and it is a part of homes and civic life. But Sunday made me feel that we had done the right thing bring the butterfly tradition back to Ascension.

• I hastily ate eggs and sausage in the gym kitchen in the few minutes between services, haven't had breakfast at home, and wanting to check in with our youth. I am so thankful to Spencer for his hard work and the energy in Pederson felt alive and bright.

• I think it was my most favorite Easter ever. Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!



An excerpt from my most recent CYF Corner in the newsletter:

Looking Ahead to the Future

We are still shaping our summer children, youth, and family ministry plans, but I am grateful to share that our CYF Team will continue on into the next school year.

Ms. Jenelle, our Children's Ministry Director, has done a phenomenal job building a vibrant and loving program—she truly loves the children, and they love her right back.

Mr. Gottmer, who began as our interim high school director, is no longer interim as he has said yes to being our part-time high school youth director during the school year while he also continues to teach at Ascension School. He has built strong relationships with our youth and will also be serving full-time in youth ministry for six weeks this summer.

Our youth ministry interns, James Halvorson and Kaya Anderson, will continue supporting confirmation and middle school ministry next year. Kaya will spend the summer serving as a counselor at Clearwater Forest Bible Camp in Minnesota; we look forward to welcoming her back in August when she resumes her studies at California Lutheran University (where she is on the ministry track as she explores becoming a pastor). We are grateful that James will be with us throughout the summer. They have been blessed additions to our CYF staff, truly amazing young adults!

It is a joy to serve alongside this incredible team. They are making a meaningful difference in the lives of our children and youth and in the life of our church.

Another piece I wrote for the church newsletter:

A Special Night for Our Youth

Church member Ruth Rarick felt the Spirit tug at her heart. She has elementary grandchildren that attend the church, but no teenagers. Yet she felt compelled to organize a Seder meal for our 8th–12th graders. She wanted them to have a deeper understanding of our faith's Jewish roots, and of Jesus and the Last Supper. A retired teacher, she thoughtfully prepared a meaningful script and interwove clips from The Chosen's portrayal of the Last Supper, helping bring the story to life in a powerful and memorable way.

A Seder is a traditional Jewish meal that marks the beginning of Passover. It is a deeply symbolic and story-rich gathering that retells God's deliverance of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. Through prayers, scripture, and shared foods, participants remember, reflect, and give thanks, engaging not just their minds, but their senses and their hearts. Our youth experienced these symbols firsthand. They tasted the bitterness of slavery in herbs, the sweetness of freedom in charoset, the saltiness of tears in salt water, and the simple provision of unleavened bread. Each element told a piece of the story: God's faithfulness, human struggle, and the hope of redemption.

Mr. Gottmer (our high school youth director) and I (Pastor Chamie) joined Ruth in leading portions of the evening, speaking the traditional scriptures and blessings that have been shared across generations. Held on the evening of Palm Sunday, the timing was intentional, offering a meaningful bridge into Holy Week. It is our hope that this

experience will deepen the youth's understanding of Maundy Thursday and enrich every future encounter they have with Holy Communion.

We are deeply grateful to Ruth for the tremendous care, preparation, and love she poured into this experience—from the teaching to the cooking to the sacred details that made the evening so meaningful. We also give thanks for the team of volunteers who made the night possible: Tim & Carlah Schneider, Tom & Leah Lindros, Crystal Bryant, Kari Keit, and Lucie Lisi.

It was a holy and memorable evening, one that connected past to present, story to table, and faith to lived experience. Or as the Seder tradition beautifully says, “Next year in Jerusalem.” May the story continue to shape us all.



The last month has been incredibly busy:

- All of the Lent, Holy Week, and Easter worship details - and all the special things of the season... so many worship liturgies and sermons to prepare...
- Saying goodbye to Jenni McCoy and hello to Brooke Costi
- Budget meeting and next fiscal year discussions
- Strategic planning and the school board retreat

- Preparing for P.T.'s sabbatical
- Pastoral care... from welcoming new babies to journeying alongside moms and families battling cancer
- Extra hours at the school for grandparents' day and for supporting the tomato sale - which was also a part of church life - ONE ASCENSION - it was another fantastic year of this beloved tradition and many thanks to those like Tiffany Napierala who have been supportive since the beginning as well as new people coming on board like Laurie Meyers who spent hours and hours tending tomatoes and beautifying the garden area by pulling weeds

I took dozens and dozens of photos - or had others taking them this month - and there is so much to capture, but it is time for me to take a deep breath and let go and rest for ten days. So I will close with this... a photo of our son Jude with our nephew Santi (who is in confirmation) and another photo of our daughter Hannah with Jude's girlfriend Cate... all of them were a part of making Easter beautiful... they all served in their own way. And I close with these photos because it gives me great gratitude that as a family we get to love the larger church family together. There is nothing I treasure more than my children and husband and I am so grateful that Ascension is our extended family.

Grace & Peace,

Pastor Chamie



**Church Council Report – Pastor Steve Herder –
For the April 2026 Meeting**

**“One Day in the Life of Your Half-time Associate
Pastor” – March 20, 2026**

This month's report will be unusual. Instead of a report on the month of March, I'll share about ministries only for one day, the first day of spring. In most ways, it wasn't an unusual day, other than a little extra time with our school (Like today, I typically work from about 7:30 to 4:30 Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays.) Since the day had such a good variety of ministries, I thought it'd be fun to share with you why I'm blessed to be one of your associate pastors. (And no, pastors don't only work on Sundays!)

Happy First Day of Spring!

Ask God to direct our attention to those things in nature and humanity that stir our hope, wonder and joy, reminding us of our awesome Creator from whom all things flow. Pray that we will radiate hope, compassion and the good news of Jesus Christ through our faith, values, words and actions.

ELCA Prayer Ventures for March 20



Julie and I are both early-to-bed and early-to-rise kind of people. Before I come into work I have priority time for Bible study, now reading the “Connecting Scripture” New Testament, the Psalms (Jesus' prayer book and ours), and for intercessory prayer, with many people, places, and ministries. I also read from a new favorite commentary on Colossians (800+ pages!) by Dr. Clinton Arnold. He is a brilliant writer and scholar.

Here's a summary of the first day of spring for me:

1. Emails, always receiving and sending, about 20+ work ones today. We appreciate Linda Morrow's emails for our prayer group. She does a couple of them each week.
2. With the twelve church staff each weekday, there are always check-in conversations with each other, often with Carolyn and Diane in the front office, and with many others, and sometimes with school staff and families on campus. Walking around campus, it's always a delight to see what projects Jeff, Cam, and Jude, our maintenance team, are doing for our whole campus.
3. At 8:30 I practiced a song with Ms. Bonilla's Kindergarten class for the late morning chapel.
4. Ann Welp is one of our seniors who comes in most Fridays to help stock our food pantry. Since she is a champion ping pong player at the Goebel Center, she and I did get ten minutes of playing table tennis in the youth room! We each won a game!
5. Most Fridays at 9am I meet with Norm Guetschoff and catch up on the ministries that he leads for our Senior Adult Ministries: Christian Life Hours, Stephen Ministry, and GriefShare. We've only been doing this for about 19 years! Norm feels your appreciation for his ministries among us. Today I gave him a birthday card for his March birthday.
6. For our School's Grandparents' Day, I led three songs mid-morning, and at the end of the morning for chapel in the packed sanctuary, led the song “Read Your Bible, Pray

Every Day” with the two Kindergarten classes. Pastors Tim and Chamie led this service (on their day off!), along with Principal Rich.

7. Today, like most Fridays, I led a time of singing outside with everyone at our Early Childhood Center. After, I let the children play the guitar and as I did that I was thinking, “I’ve been playing this same guitar for the last 51 years!” As with our School, our ECC is an amazing ministry. Next week we say goodbye to our ECC director Jenni McCoy and we welcome Brooke Costi. We are blessed with Christ-centered and hard-working leaders and teachers. We will miss you, Jenni. Thanks for your superb leadership and collegiality.
8. Each Friday I enjoy seeing Food Pantry volunteers, today Lisa Burns and Susan Smits, and our Community Concerns leader Chris Daleiden, and our neighbors who come to receive. Sometimes we help our neighbors-in-need with Caring Ones or the Agape Fund, as we did today. “Caring Ones” are all loose dollar-bills in the offering plates, and all those gifts are passed on to help people who are unhoused, unemployed, or under-employed.
9. Carol Bjelland was in the office, and we are always working on some Fair Trade Ministries. Today it was about FT gifts that we’ll be giving to the confirmands in May.
10. Dr. Carol Bartell emailed me the “ministry description” for her leadership of coordinating our Sunday classes. She is finishing in May, and she are seeking a new leader. Let her know if you are interested, feeling called to help.
11. I confirmed with Regina Banks her leadership of our class on Sunday. She leads our Lutheran Office of Public Policy in Sacramento. Each month I have a zoom meeting with her, mentoring her as she also is going through seminary.
12. From 12:30 to 1:30 I visited one of our seniors, Darlyne Williams in Moorpark, and her daughter Nancy, and brought Holy Communion.
13. At 2:00 I had a good meeting with Debbie Kahn in my office, talking about her ministry at the Conejo Free Clinic, which is our special benevolence for the month of April, and brainstormed about her possible future ministry involvements. You remember her husband Alan died in December, and I led his service in January.
14. I called Ann and Greg Lane, checking in on them, and talking about their good friend, and our friend, Phil Bartlett, who died today. He had been a member here with his wife Bonnie, but in recent years he was with his pastor son, Scott, at King of Glory in Newbury Park. Phil’s memorial service there will be April 4 at 2pm, and I’ll help lead it. Thank you for your prayers for Phil. In love we remember Phil, Bonnie and her mother, Venice Shaw, who lived to be 106 and died in 2016.
15. Dolores Ledbetter called to talk about a former neighbor who has been coming to church. We love having new people in worship! And “old” too!!



16. Pastor Scott Maxwell-Doherty is leading the synod assembly planning team May 29-30 in Pasadena. He asked me to lead the team to plan the workshops. Today I did a little bit of work on this good project, communicating with some of the 17 leaders lined up so far.
17. Before heading home, I stopped by Los Robles Hospital to visit one of our members who is dealing with severe pain. Both Wednesday and today I saw the same volunteer at the front desk, one of our Ascension members, Pat Howard, and I thanked her for her ministry of hospitality.

Relationships. It's all about relationships. With God, our Holy Trinity. Today it was with the 30 people that I mentioned in this report. Relationships. Love God. Love your neighbor as you love yourself.

And as we enthusiastically sing with the children, "Read your Bible, pray every day."

Below are two of the photos that I took today in the Prayer Chapel. Thanks to Sarah Morton for this set up of the stations of the cross, as we walk these Lenten days, Holy Week, and then Easter days with our risen Savior Jesus!

"He [Jesus] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers – all things have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross." Colossians 1:15-20

We pray for peace in our world, in our country, our communities, and in our lives. Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God." Mt. 5:9



April 2026

From 1 Peter 1:3

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!
By his great mercy he has given us a new birth
into a living hope through the resurrection of
Jesus Christ from the dead.”



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
On Easter Sunday, our Easter breakfast will be 8:00 - 11:00 am			1 <i>Passover Begins</i> Pray for our Jewish neighbors this Passover <i>Exodus 12:24-28</i>	2 <i>Maundy Thursday</i> Worship at 8:45 am & 7:00 pm <i>John 15:2</i>	3 <i>Good Friday</i> Worship @ 11:15 am & 7:00 pm <i>Matthew 26:36</i>	4 <i>Holy Saturday</i> Worship @ 6 pm <i>John 12:24</i>
5 <i>Easter</i> Worship @ 7 am outside 9 & 11 am sanctuary 10:30 am Butterflies <i>Matthew 28:1-10</i>	6 Blessings to our school families on Easter week break <i>Proverbs 3:5-6</i>	7 April monthly benevolence; Conjeo Free Clinic <i>Galatians 2:10</i>	8 Blessings to Pastor Tim as he begins his sabattical this week <i>Philippians 2:12-13</i>	9 How will you witness to Jesus today? <i>Acts 2:14a, 22-32</i>	10 Our Food Pantry open each Friday 10 am to Noon <i>Psalms 16</i>	11 Prayers for other houses of faith in our community <i>1 Peter 1:3-9</i>
12 How do you receive the peace of Jesus? <i>John 20:19-31</i>	13 Prayers for peace and justice in the Middle East <i>Psalms 133</i>	14 Prayers of thanks for our Community Concerns Team led by Chris Daleiden <i>Proverbs 31:8-9</i>	15 <i>Tax Day</i> Pray for our government to be wise and just with our taxes <i>Matthew 17:24-27</i>	16 Pray for our Council, School Board & Foundation <i>Acts 2:14a, 36-41</i>	17 Pray for our children and youth ministries <i>Psalms 116:1-4, 12-19</i>	18 Happy Birthday Stacy Smith Bosco! <i>1 Peter 1:17-23</i>
19 4 pm - Great Music at Ascension classical guitar concert <i>Luke 24:13-35</i>	20 SAMs Tram drivers. Transportation Ministry, led by Bob Tokin <i>1 Corinthians 10:31</i>	21 Pray for California Lutheran University and President John Nunes <i>Proverbs 16:3</i>	22 Earth Day! Administrative Professionals' Day <i>Psalms 104</i>	23 Pray for all Bible study groups <i>Acts 2:42-47</i>	24 Prayers for our oldest members of our congregation and community <i>Psalms 23</i>	25 Prayers for our School's Legacy Gala tonight <i>1 Peter 2:19-25</i>
26 What does life abundant mean for you? <i>John 10:1-10</i>	27 Happy Birthday Jude Delkeskamp! <i>Jude 1:20-21</i>	28 Pray for ELCA Presiding Bishop Yehiel Carry <i>Acts 1:8</i>	29 Pray for our Church & School Staff <i>Isaiah 40:30-31</i>	30 Who do you need to forgive today? <i>Acts 7:55-60</i>	www.alcto.org	alecc.org alschool.org ascensionfoundation.org elca.org 16 - 27

Church Council Report
Kaylee Searway

March 15, 2026
Director of Operations

Happy Easter! He is Risen!

Attendance

Attendance for the 6 weeks preceding Easter averaged 433, up slightly from the 422 I reported in March. We had 531 worshippers on Palm Sunday weekend! On Easter we know that 831 people came at 9:00 am. The Sunrise and 11:00 seemed well attended, but we are working to get the actual accounts from the altar guild or from photographs. The butterfly release and pancake breakfast were full of joy and well attended. The youth did an amazing job with the Sunrise service and breakfast for so many people in the community.

Maintenance

We were grateful for the investment made in our Reserve Study this month as we had to replace an HVAC system in Classrooms A and B. The previous system was 29 years old and served us well. I was grateful for quick consensus from the One Asset Preservation Team to go forward and make this necessary repair.

Another project we are ramping up to start is the exterior restrooms outside the church nursery. Our first task when the project was approved was to re-engage the contractors from the proposals two years ago and have them update their proposals. We were quite relieved at where the updated proposals came in, an increase from \$83,000 to \$94,000 for the primary components. We've signed contracts, and we're planning to begin once school is out for the summer. We will plan carefully with Camp Discovery to disrupt their summer plans as little as possible.

Jeff, Rich, and I are working with many contractors to gather proposals to convert some school offices and school breakroom into an additional first grade classroom. The plan includes a maintenance shed for our maintenance team, as the current maintenance space would be converted into a welcome center for the TK-8. It's been really exciting to dream about what our campus could look like in the middle and far distance time frames. Jeff and I hope to have proposals for summer 2026 work by the end of Spring break.

It's a quiet, but busy campus as the schools are on Spring Break. We're working on a leak repair in the ECC, and on our network upgrade across the campus. Our original plan was to be prepared for the server migrations by Spring break, but we aren't quite ready for that switch. The spring break upgrades mainly consist of upgrading switches and wireless access points. Brittani Childers and I have taken advantage of the empty ECC to inventory their ipads and prepare a replacement schedule that will inform our 2026-2027 budget.

We have a few other goals of projects we'd like to complete during spring break, we'll have to remain flexible and see what the week brings.

Finance

Mike and Camryn are working to close March by Friday, April 10th. They have carefully planned half day and full day blocks to work on close around meetings, payroll and other commitments like budget preparation. We feel good about the ministry planning meeting we had with the pastors before Easter, and the salary planning we have completed with all three entities. We've forecasted tuition for the ECC and TK-8, filled in ECC payroll plans, and made great progress on the TK-8 top line expenses; we'll be ready to get into the smaller expenses at both ECC and TK-8 when they return from spring break.

SHRM Credential on Workplace Investigations

I greatly enjoyed the live class presentation on workplace investigations. I had great discussions with peers over the five days of the class and learned a great deal from the materials as well as from the insights of the experienced investigator leading the class. I've already applied some of what I have learned about implicit bias and detailed note taking into some everyday human resources tasks.

I completed the remaining e-learning course required and completed the final course exam with a score of 100%. I am grateful I had some quiet time at Serra Retreat Center to review my notes and take the exam. That level of concentration can be difficult on campus with a full team. Finishing the coursework and knowing that I don't have a test looming over me takes a load of stress away.

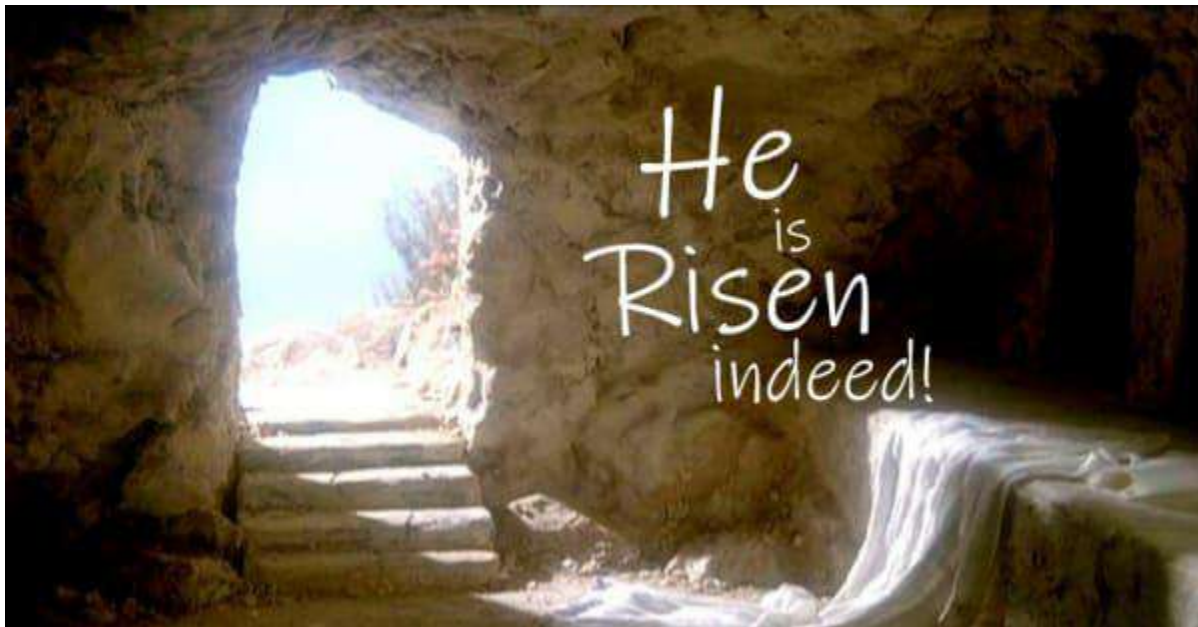
Retreat Days

As I said above, studying and completing the exam for SHRM made my time at Serra Retreat Center worth the investment in taking time away from my team and the work ongoing work we do onsite. I have mentioned that Pastor Chamie and I are looking forward to experimenting with team meetings and how they might look from different Working Genius perspectives. I reviewed some Working Genius materials to further those thoughts and think through some possibilities. I didn't expect a podcast from the Table Group on Leading with Enablement to change my perspective on the budget process, but that is what happened! As some budget decisions I needed to make were sitting on the "back burner" of my brain I was able to reframe how I thought of them and look at my choices from a different perspective.

Thank you,

Kaylee Searway

Director of Operations



Hello Ascension Fair Traders!

Today is going to be one of those great “SoCal” days – a bit of a cool & overcast morning moving into a bright sunny day under brilliant blue skies! We’ve taken a liking to starting cool, overcast mornings with a London Fog – Earl Grey Tea with a touch of a vanilla syrup & steamed, frothed milk. Under sunny skies, a tall glass of Hibiscus Tea on ice is very nice! And, using Fair Trade tea makes these brews deliciously special! Lots to share with you today ... Let’s fill our cup or glass & get to the business of sharing great Fair Trade news!

March on Fair Trade Lane

Four Fair Trade Lane dates this month – two already celebrated & two yet to come! We thank Andy for opening Fair Trade Lane on March 11th for those attending Lunch Bunch & we thank Lisa, Jill, & Andy for joining us March 19th for Fair Trade Thursday afternoon – always a fun time! We thank the many tasters who participated in our very scientific testing of some new chocolate - ballots cast will guide our decisions...stay tuned for details...it’s a surprise you won’t want to miss!

Fair Trade Lane is open this weekend before & after worship on Saturday & Sunday. In addition to delicious things to eat & drink, there will be Fair Trade wearables & shareables (all very gift-able) to inspire & to make an impact. There will be a few sturdy, cotton tote bags inspiring us to “*hold on to hope that together we can end trafficking*”. There will be garden gifts that remind us to be “*rooted in love*” (Thank You Carolyn for our March Chapel Message slide - a family who heard our Chapel message visited us on Fair Trade Lane the next day!). Or maybe you want to make an impact with a new pair of socks? Fair Trade Lane will have some Fair Trade socks from Conscious Step -- socks that give water or protect butterflies or plant trees. If a Spring picnic is on your calendar (if not already, now might be a good time to plan one!), Fair Trade Lane is fully stocked with nuts, olive oil, chocolate, cheese and other treats & special things that make a difference & are delicious – all at the same time!

EE Dried Mango comes to mind as we enjoy warm, sunny days... organic dried mango sweetened only by the sun & coming to us from the hardworking hands of aunties, moms & grandmas in Burkina Faso. One good thing is great. Two is even better. We’ll be sharing samples of chocolate-dipped dried mango on Fair Trade Lane & during coffee time on the patio this weekend!

Celebrating Fair Trade Women

March is Women's History Month. We love learning about "game-changer" women who have made an impact in Fair Trade. There are so very many & we regret we can't here & now give a "shout out" to all of them. But we'll share a bit about some now to inspire you. We start with Edna Ruth Byler who in 1946, guided by her faith's call to serve, pioneered bringing artisan handcrafts from around the world to the US. Her legacy includes Ten Thousand Villages, a wonderful, global Fair Trade partner, and her famous words: "I'm just a woman trying to help other women." With the help of Laurel at the Ten Thousand Villages store in Pasadena, we found and brought to Fair Trade Lane some terracotta garden handcrafts made by women artisans with CORR-The Jute Works in Bangladesh. CORR (Christian Organization for Relief and Rehabilitation) launched in 1973 after the War of Independence with a mission to support war widows, war victims & marginalized women in rural areas, providing opportunities to refine skills, earn a respectful income, & gain a renewed sense of dignity through meaningful work. There are now over 6000 women artisans in the group. And, thanks to our friend Becca at Fair Trade Lane, we connected with Michelle Chavez, current FTLA Board Chair & Co-Founder of The Tote Project. Michelle & Co-Founder Fay Grant started The Tote Project believing there is hope for the millions at risk & victimized by human trafficking worldwide - they mentor, create & support economic and wellness programs for trafficking victims, and give 10% or more of the profits from the sale of their awesome Fair Trade organic cotton tote bags to continue growing these programs. We are very happy to have some of these special Tote Project bags on Fair Trade Lane this month.

Mark Your Calendars!

For all of your planners out there, get your calendars out ... we love filling the days & months with opportunities to connect in faith & fun & Fair Trade. We are delighted to be invited to join with other ministries & groups in fellowship, fun & promoting justice for people & our planet through Fair Trade. Lots of opportunities to participate & opportunities to volunteer. Don't be shy – join us!

April 12th - Andy will be leading an Adult Ed class on chocolate: "Chocolate, Justice and Faith: A Sweet Exploration".

April 16th, 18th & 19th – Fair Trade Lane will be open three times in April.

May 8th – BonFire & Fair Trade S'Mores with Ascension's Youth. We'll "talk" a little chocolate too – getting the scoop from our young friends about the results of the chocolate testing we asked them to do for us and what the "Fair" with Fair Trade chocolate means.

May 24th – Ascension’s Pentecost International Fair. As this is the 2nd year of this awesome event, we thought we needed to “up our game” a bit. We’ll be serving Fair Trade iced tea again but this year we’ll also serve chocolate chip cookies & chocolate-dipped dried mango all made with ingredients from Fair Trade Lane.

May 28-29th – We’ve been invited to share a Fair Trade presentation at the SWCA Synod Assembly.

June 12th – We’ll be conducting a workshop at the Equal Exchange Annual Summit in Massachusetts.

August 8th –Bonfire & Fair Trade S’Mores in conjunction with an event hosted by Ascension’s Child, Youth, Family Ministry. National S’Mores Day is August 10th – we think it right that the celebration starts August 8th.

That’s a wrap for today, friends. Well, almost... We’ve shared a bit today about some Fair Trade “game changers”. In case it didn’t occur to you, *you* are a Fair Trade “game changer!” We are all Fair Trade “game changers” in so many different & wonderful ways!

Let’s Be The Change We Wish to See!



MARCH

on fair
trade lane



the t te project



Welcome Rooted In Spring Fair Trade





FAIR TRADE LANE

WILL BE OPEN

Saturday, March 28th

5:45 - 6 PM & 7-7:15 PM

Sunday, March 29th

8:30 - 9 AM, 10 - 10:30 AM & 11:30 - 11:45 AM

EVERYONE'S INVITED!

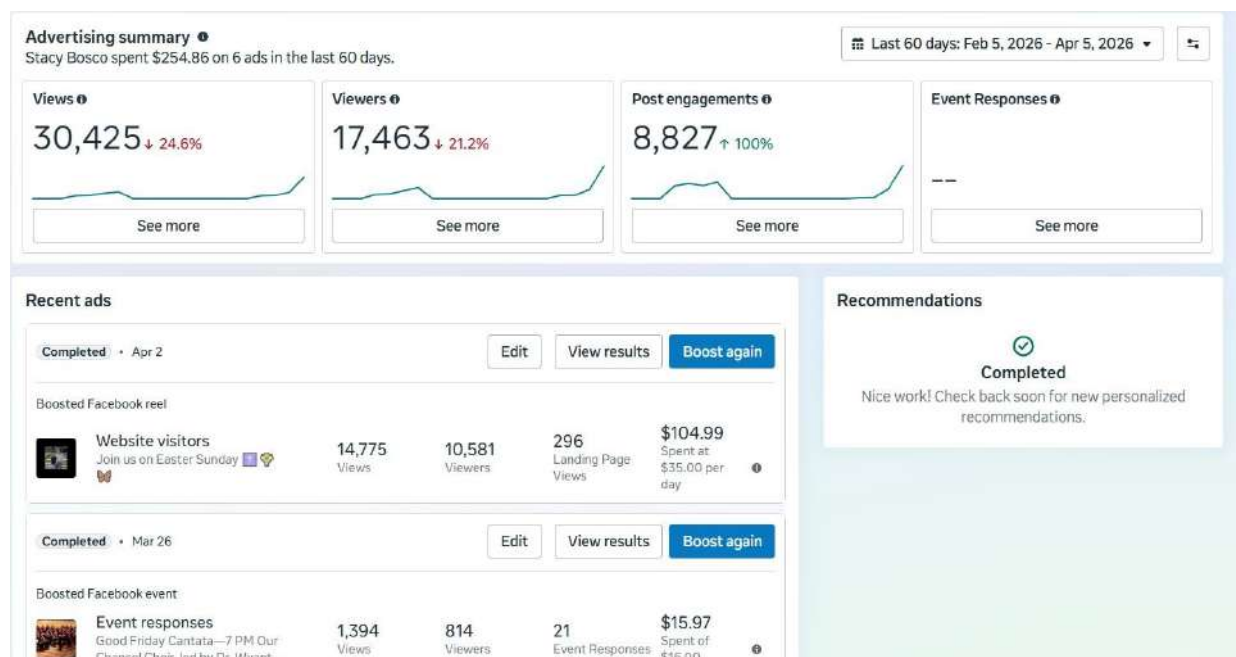
The double doors to Founders Hall will be open

COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE FOR APRIL, 2026

In Marketing 101, they'll tell you that if you have a product that people want, all you have to do is make sure they know how to get it in order to succeed. That's where we are at Ascension this Easter season, with inspired planning, with talented pastors and worship leaders, and with events ranging from the depth and intensity of our cantata to the joyous fun of the butterfly release. Each element was a "draw."

Maximizing this wonderful surge will be the objective going forward. For now, here are some numbers.

Once again the most impressive come from Facebook and Instagram reels featuring the pastors.



The Facebook and Instagram reel noted above got 14,775 views (boosted) from 10,581 viewers on a fast turn-around time from April 2-April 5, plus an additional 505 views that were not on a paid boost. There were 296 click-throughs to our landing page @ \$.35 per click. (March 10-April 6 our Facebook views were 74.8 K.)

We also sprinkled in a string of smaller content boosts, including Events made for each Holy Week service.

Our hyper local Google ads in the period had 63.7K impressions, with 886 click-throughs @ \$.78 per click. This is a longer run than we've had in the past.

Comm. – 2



We also had 1,320 profile views on 571 searches of our Google business profile.

This year, we had one quarter-page color ad in The Acorn and Thousand Oaks Acorn with readership of 129,734, at a cost of \$1,172.00 (The cost has gone up. Last year the same size cost \$1,127.00.)

TOACORN.COM

APRIL 3, 2026

THOUSAND OAKS ACORN 15



Courtesy CVUSD

SLAM DUNK—Players at Conejo Valley Unified School District unified basketball games, like the joint Conejo Oaks Academy -Cal Lutheran University game above, have the option to use regular hoops or special hoops that accommodate people of various movement abilities.

Come celebrate the God who makes beautiful things out of dust - and conquers death!

Join Us for Easter at Ascension Lutheran Church

Sunrise Service
7 AM

Traditional Service with Choir
9 AM

Contemporary Service with Praise Band
11 AM

Butterfly Release
10:30

Holy Communion at all Easter Services

We will celebrate new life in Jesus Christ with a butterfly release on the playground at 10:30 AM.

Easter Breakfast fundraiser by our youth 8-11

Good Friday Cantata
April 3, 7 PM
The Way of the Cross

Holy Saturday Service 6 PM

www.ALCTO.org

Ascension Lutheran Church 1600 E. Hillcrest Dr., Thousand Oaks



3.

Our Google Analytics for the ALCTO.org website tells us that (surprise!) views spiked March 29 (Palm Sunday), April 3 (Good Friday), April 4 and April 5. The Seasonal Worship page was in first place among most-viewed pages with 1,252 views. This is good news, because this is the page I used as a landing page connected to the QR code in the Newspaper ad, the website front page slider, and other promotional spots.

Livestream, Calendar, Index, Solid Food Podcast, Past Livestream services links, Worship styles and worship, and Meet the Pastors round out the top 10 pages during the March 11-April 7 period.

The analytics also tell me that 10 people checked out the new Usher/Safety Teams Schedule, which isn't even fully launched yet. Terry Shepersky provided information and instructions as to what he wanted. I used Claude to code this multi-tab page structure and...so far so good.

<https://alcto.org/usher-teams-schedule-2026/>

Thanking you for your time and devotion to Ascension,

Stacy

Stacy Smith Bosco, Communications Coordinator