

**GOOD AFTERNOON!**

## **WHAT'S HAPPENING (Christmas Edition)!**

**We will welcome new staff in January!** Stepping up to fill a portion Kathy Johnson's many responsibilities are Tricia McCulley (our new Sunday School Coordinator) and Anita Baresel (our new Wednesday Night Live Coordinator).

In our search for an Extended Day Preschool Director, we were most fortunate to find Kelly Lafferty, who will join us as EDP Director in January. We will let you know more about Kelly in future editions of What's Happening.

**We would like to welcome our in-coming Board Chairpersons and Officers and Thank those who have served these past years!** We give thanks for those who so faithfully served: Arvin Michel, President; Dennis Lord, Vice-President; Allen Brookshire, Treasurer; Tim McClaren, Secretary; Brian & Marion Wilson with Life Enrichment & Collin Brinkman with the Youth Board.

New Officers & Board Chairperson are: Tom Munson as President; Tim McClaren as Vice-President; Barbara Rutter as Secretary; Stephanie Luethy as Treasurer; Scott Luethy as Chair of the Board of Elders; & Anita Baresel as Chair of Social Ministry. Continuing in their current positions are Linda Achziger (Stewardship), Norm & Connie Fringer (Chairs of the Columbarium); & Sherry Hitztaler (Education Board); Joyce Lord (Outreach); Roger Koester & Chuck Mielke (Trustees); Carol Stamp (Ladies Guild).

We currently have 2 areas in need of leadership, Life Enrichment and Youth. If you might be interested, please contact Pastor with questions regarding the responsibilities and the joys you would be taking on!

**Christmas Eve, Christmas, December 27, & New Years Eve Worship:** On Christmas Eve, we will have 3 services, at 3 p.m., 5 p.m., and 7 p.m., all will include Holy Communion and the singing of Silent Night and candle lighting and on Christmas Day we will have one service with Holy Communion at 9:30 a.m. There will not be a service on Saturday evening, December 26. On December 27, we will have a single Worship Service with Holy Communion followed by a reception to recognize the many years of service from Kathy Johnson to Ascension. We will have a Family New Year's Eve Worship at 3 p.m. on Thursday, December 31. Due to COVID, we will be unable to have the catered meal this year.

**After nearly 17 years as the Education Director at Ascension Kathy Johnson is retiring.** Her last day will be on December 31. We are planning a farewell for Kathy on Sunday, December 27. That morning we have only one worship service (at 9:30). Following that service, we'll have a reception for her in the Fellowship Hall. Kathy has impacted many lives through Sunday School, Wednesday Night Live, Vacation Bible School, Easter Egg Hunts, Youth Ministry, Mission Trips, and many other ministries. Can you write her a note or a letter telling her of some of your memories of her serving you and our community? You can bring that note to the office or send it to the church. Thank you for participating in this appreciation.

**The Nursery is now available!**

**Calendar At-a-Glance (December 26-January 1):**

Saturday (12-26): **No Evening Worship**  
Sunday (12-27): **9:30 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion**  
**10:30 a.m. Recognition of Kathy Johnson**  
**Severe Weather Network-Ascension on-call Sunday (12/27)**  
**through Saturday (1-2)**

Monday (12-28):  
Tuesday (12-29): 9:30 a.m. Ladies Bible Study  
Wednesday (12-30): 10:00 a.m. Adult Bible Study led by Pastor Ginkel  
Thursday (12-31): **New Year's Eve**  
**3 p.m. New Year's Eve Worship with Holy Communion**  
Friday (1/1): **New Year's Day – Office Closed**

**There will be a Memorial Service For Mel Raddeman on Wednesday, January 6, at 11 a.m.**

**Wednesday Night Live will resume on January 6!**

**Pastor's Topics for Adult Classes:** There will be **NO Sunday Classes** until after construction is completed. On Wednesdays, Pastor's study on prayer will resume on January 6.

**We continue a verse-on-verse study of Revelation, meeting Wednesdays at 10 a.m. in the Narthex.** Our study is written and taught by Pastor Don Ginkel. Everyone is cordially invited to attend. Light refreshments will be served.

**News from Extended Day Preschool!** Our Extended Day Preschool continue classes in person. **The Preschool is currently accepting registration for 2021/2022** and we have openings available in both classrooms (Contact the Church Office with questions)!

**The Young Adult Group will be meeting at Ascension at 6:30 p.m. (2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday):** Our next meetings will be held on January 14 & 28! If you would like to join us, please contact Jenna ([jenna.lindeman@cune.org](mailto:jenna.lindeman@cune.org)). **We will NOT meet December 24! Merry Christmas!**

**MOPS (Mothers of Pre-Schoolers) will be meeting in-person on Tuesday, January 12, at 9:30 a.m.!** We will continue to meet every second TUESDAY of the month! Moms who have kids that range from infant to age 5 are welcome to come! Please join us! We would love to see you! **Merry Christmas!**

**A big "Thank You" for all the people who contributed with donations and for all of the volunteers that helped with the Christmas Families this year!!!** You are very much appreciated. You really came through for us in a big way!

**Prayer:** For God's mighty hand to bring to an end this virus; For our country, and for our newly elected officials at all levels as they seek to govern, may they be guided by His strong hands; For those who have lost jobs or been downsized; For Dave Hitztaler and his family as he enters Hospice Care at home, struggling with his lethal lung

disease, IPF - Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis; For Sandee Thieme, with Stage 4 brain cancer; in palliative care; For Kathy Johnson, as she concludes her ministry at Ascension; For Jenna Lawrenz, as she enters her final month of pregnancy, we pray for a safe delivery of the twins and good health for mother and daughters; For Ted Lemke, For Lisa, daughter of Millie Cox, with a recurrence of cancer; For Diane Backhus, following back surgery on December 15; For Barb Lone, awaiting hip-replacement revision surgery on December 30; For Deb Shiflet, for answers in the next steps as she deals with autoimmune issues that are causing her great misery; For Jim Wendelken who broke 4 ribs in a fall; For Carol Mickelson, dealing with heart issues; For Linda Nedry, following knee surgery on December 9; For Ryan O'Byrne, for continuing issues with digestion; For Kathy, sister-in-law of Marilyn Loptien, with breast cancer; For Susie Weideman, sister of Lorine Grau, with COVID; For Brian McGregor, friend of Del & Lorine Grau, with COVID; For Karen, sister of Ellen Thompson, beginning treatment for ovarian cancer; For Carol Zeller with Interstitial Lung Disease, Rheumatoid Arthritis and cardiac issues.

**Thanks & Praise:** For Dick and Doris Kuhlman, celebrating their 69<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary on December 29.

**Ascension Prayer Group:** *1 Thessalonians 5:16-18: The Passion Translation*

*Let joy be your continual feast. Make your life a prayer. And in the midst of everything be always giving thanks, for this is God's perfect plan for you in Christ Jesus.*

Come join us in the New Year to pray for Ascension Lutheran Church, Pastor Larson & staff, and our members. On January 13 at 2 p.m., we will meet as a group on Zoom to pray for 30 minutes. Using the ACTS (Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving and Supplication) format, we will pray from our hearts trusting this is God's perfect plan for us in Christ Jesus. If interested, please send me your email address so you can be included in the Zoom invite. Margo Pasha [MargoALPasha@yahoo.com](mailto:MargoALPasha@yahoo.com)

**Thank You!** – “Thank You to my Pastor, Kathy, the Ladies Guild and church members: Friends like all of you are a real treasure in my life. I really don't know how I have been so blessed so well belonging to such a wonderful church by a group of people who have been so wonderful to my life and Duane while he was here. Thanks to the Ladies Guild for the Beautiful quilt and all the rest of the goodies. The loving hands and precious time they give to do such beautiful work to give to people like us who appreciate it with all of our hearts...My Thank You seems so small compared to all you have done but comes from a grateful heart. Merry Christmas to all of you and please stay well and healthy for the season.” Phyllis Westra

**Flowers for December 27 were donated by Ron & Ann Kaneko in celebration of their 56<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary (Today!) and by the Harvey and Kabelman families in loving memory of Brandon.**

**Stewardship:**

Budgeted Amount/Year to date:	\$ 639,346 (\$12,582/week)
Received Amount/Year to date:	\$ 601,789
Payroll Protection Program Loan:	\$ 89,000

Renovation Funds (Project Peter): \$ 203,445  
Virus Fund/Received to date: \$ 42,660 (Distributed: \$ 33,000)

**Attendance (December 16, 19 & 20):**

Mid-Week: 21 Saturday: 28 Sunday: 8 a.m. 63 10:30 a.m. 67 Total: 179  
Sunday School: 27 (no adult class)

**West Wing Project Update:** “The West Wing has been packed and is either in storage or relocated. The majority of the furniture, materials, and wall decorations have been removed. These items have been placed into storage in the Conex Containers at the west end of the parking lot. All this has not occurred without much planning, work, and stress. Your Ascension Staff has strived to maintain programs such as Wednesday Night Live, Sunday School, Worship Services, and Preschool while being asked to both relocate and decide what materials are required for the next five months and what items can be placed into temporary storage.

Please pray for the Staff and construction project and encourage them during this effort to renew our facility and prepare the building for the next 50 years of service to the Lord. We are blessed with the ability to undertake this renovation, but we must support and encourage those Staff members at Ascension who have had to increase their normal workload just to provide the service that is expected each week.

We have begun the demolition phase of the project and most of the West Wing is vacated. The Fellowship Hall has been approved as the temporary location for the Preschool by the State. All our future activities in the building for about five months will be limited to the Fellowship Hall and Kitchen in the lower level and the Narthex, Nursery-Office, Sanctuary, and balcony in the upper level until the project is completed. There will be some continuing use of Pastor’s Office and the Music Director’s office. These two offices will be open and used some of the time during the project but will need to be vacated for painting, flooring, and lighting at the required time.” West Wing Committee: Bob Hea, Roger Koester, Chuck Mielke and Jim Riebling

**Capital Committee Update:** “The Capital Campaign Committee would like to thank everyone for the prayers, the Pledge commitments and the donations for the West Wing remodel project. The whole effort came together late in this year’s calendar and we can feel so blessed that so much has materialized in support of this renewal of our aging facility wing.

The move ahead was overwhelmingly given through the results of a membership survey and finally by a positive vote through the voters meeting giving the Church Council direction to empower the Board of Trustees to move forward with enthusiasm. Professionals were brought in to study the dynamics of the facility and to pull together a comprehensive plan. Architects and engineers were identified, and the west wing design and costs were drafted. The LCEF was contacted and they said they would support the project if the Church membership could show that they would financially support the work. The Capital Campaign Committee was formed, and the return of support was such that LCEF said they would be happy to underwrite the effort and the

formal papers were signed. The project is now engaged and moving forward with vigor.

Pledges were made for 2020, 2021, 2022 and money has regularly been coming in. Your Committee would like to encourage everyone in the last weeks of this year to get the 2020 Pledge in. Even if you were not able to make a pledge any amount of money donated is significant in helping to complete the project; pennies, nickels, dimes add up and any amount will help to complete the project. The more we can pay up front the less we will have to borrow for the work. It is also never too late to enter a Pledge if your circumstances permit. Please continue to pray for the successful completion of this significant project, which supports our many ministries.” Your Capital Campaign Committee: Jim Adams, Art Gordon, Bob Hea, Kim McCormick, Chuck Mielke, Dawn Munson, and Kathleen Wucherpfenning

**An Update from Littleton Family Services:** Currently, there are no scheduled events due to the resurgence of COVID.

**Virus Relief Fund Update**—The Virus Relief Fund was set up at the beginning of the Colorado stay-at-home phase to assist members and the community who may need financial assistance during this pandemic. It has been a huge help to a number of families and individuals.

To date, the committee has contacted 31 individuals or families to see if they need assistance, and we have given assistance to 28 of those. (The others indicated they are doing OK at this time.) This financial assistance thus far totals \$ 33,000. Our goal is to have the fund last until a few months after businesses can return to near capacity of operation, so we are trying to make distributions accordingly.

**If you would like to contribute to the fund, we encourage you to send a check made payable to “Ascension Lutheran Church” and mark it, “Virus Relief Fund.”**

Ascension is thankful that we can help our members and community during this time, and the recipients are so grateful. If you have any questions about the fund, or if you know of someone who needs assistance, feel free to contact Pastor or Kathy Johnson.

**Severe Weather Shelter Network continues at Ascension!** “We need YOU - with our guests sheltering in motels this year we still need to provide our guests a meal. Here is how you can help, Registration Assistant (10 a.m.-2 p.m.), Food Packaging (5:45 p.m.- 8 p.m.) and Food Delivery (6:45 p.m.-8 p.m.). Dinner and Breakfast bags will be prepared at Ascension then delivered to our guests. Masks/gloves will be required while working with food and our COVID-19 NEGATIVE guests. If you can help please click here -> SWSN 2020-2021 SURVEY or drop a note in my box in the Narthex. If you want more flexibility for volunteering please contact me, we have options. I am happy to answer any questions you may have, please give me a call or send an email.” Brianna Fort, bribly@gmail.com, 623-680-9510.

**ALC Foundation Update:** The Foundation has been active with news from many missions. Despite the pandemic, our missions in the community and around the world

are busy! We received news from Mission Experience in Haiti and from our mission in Slovakia and have posted their letters on the bulletin board in the narthex.

Lutheran High School is conducting in-person learning for those who wish for that experience, and remote learning for those who prefer to be at home. We have provided \$3,000 towards expansion of the high school and LHS's newsletter is on the board as well. Please take time to read their news when you are at the church.

**Denver Society of Creation:** Upcoming speakers are Dr. Ed Holroyd (January 2021) and Dr. Barbara Helmkamp (February 2021).

**December is a month of giving.** Your estate plan is a way for you to plan gifts, too. All gifts, given by faith, are acts of **love**, expressing our life in Jesus Christ. Why would your estate contain both gifts to family and gifts for ministry? It is because you **love** people and want them to know the true life of Jesus. Your Ascension Gift Planning Counselor can help. Contact Jason Jones at Jason.Jones@lfnd.org or call him directly at 970-988-0305.

**KFUO Radio, a media ministry extension of LCMS congregations, shares Christ for you anytime, anywhere on [KFUO.org](http://KFUO.org)** via worship services, Bible and theology studies, practical talk programs, and sacred music. You can find programs on demand at [kfu.org](http://kfu.org) and wherever you get your podcasts! Find us on social: **@KFUOradio** on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

**This week on [KFUO.org](http://KFUO.org)**, we begin our special Twelve Days of Christmas programming full of sacred music, scripture, prayers, and special talk segments. Listen to this special programming for the Christmas season from December 24 to January 6!

**As always, if you are aware of someone who does not receive or check email regularly,** please let them know that this email will be posted on the website in the same place that Happenings have always been posted.

**Luke 2:11** – *For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.*

Blessing to you and yours and may you have a Merry Christmas! (Kathie Harvey)