

GOOD AFTERNOON!

WHAT'S HAPPENING (January 15 Edition)!

Don't Forget our Quarterly Voter's Meeting on January 24 at noon. Luncheon will be provided by our Ladies Guild, we will hear an update on the Renovation Project, a number of additional business matters, and a year-end financial report.

The 2021 Calendars are ready to be picked up! If you ordered a calendar and haven't been able to pick it up yet, you may do so on Sunday morning or by stopping by the front office at church (now in the nursery during construction.) We thank you for your support of the youth group! Have a blessed New Year!

Flowers for January 16 & 17 were donated by Scott & Stephanie Luethy, in joyous celebration of Barb Muirhead's 82nd birthday.

At the Church Council meeting on Tuesday, January 12, this good news about the finances of the church during 2020 was shared: We received \$641,000 in offerings, above budget by \$26,000; We spent \$619,000, under budget by \$52,000; We had a surplus of \$22,000 in 2020. Praise God. Thank Him, and you, for such good news.

Stewardship – For a New Year! :

Budgeted Amount/Year to date:	\$ 25,466 (\$12,733/week)
Received Amount/Year to date:	\$ 28,590
Payroll Protection Program Loan:	\$ 89,000
Renovation Funds (Project Peter):	\$ 281,280
Virus Fund/Received to date:	\$ 43,110 (Distributed: \$ 35,900)

Attendance (January 9 & 10):

Saturday: 5 p.m.	26	Sunday: 8 a.m.	50	10:30 a.m.	54	Total:	130
Sunday School:	22						

Prayer: For God's mighty hand to bring to an end this virus; For a peaceful transition of power at the inauguration of President Biden; 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, currently in Home Hospice Care, and his family, as he struggles with his lethal lung disease, IPF - Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis; For Lawrence Brown, currently in Swedish recovering from successful surgery for a serious infection on his leg; For Joyce Mangum, Jim Bame's former wife, with Stage 4 cancer; For Nadine Ginkel; Jacqueline Warren, for life issues; For Russell Proue, 43 year old great nephew of Charlotte Wilkinson, recently diagnosed with Stage 4 Esophageal cancer; For Jenna Lawrenz, in her final days of pregnancy, we pray for a safe delivery of the twins and good health for mother and daughters; For Jenna Harvey-Kabelman, granddaughter of Kathie Harvey, for life issues; For Dale Calender, for healing following a broken bone in his leg; For Carissa Andrus and her daughters as the struggle with life issues after moving to South Dakota; For Ted Lemke; For Lisa, daughter of Millie Cox, with a recurrence of cancer;

For Kathy, sister-in-law of Marilyn Loptien, awaiting surgery for breast cancer; For Carol Zeller with Interstitial Lung Disease, Rheumatoid Arthritis and cardiac issues.

Thanksgiving: For Susie Weideman, recovered from COVID and back in her regular room.

Paint-A-Thon: If you are in need of assistance to paint the exterior of your home and meet the qualifications (homeowner on a fixed income, aged 60+ or disabled, living in a 1-1.5 story home) please ask for an application from the Church Office or go to this link: <https://brothersredevelopment.org/volunteer-apply-paint-a-thon/volunteer-program-overview/become-a-volunteer/>.

Calendar At-a-Glance (January 16-January 22):

Saturday (1-16): **5 p.m. Worship with Holy Communion**
Sunday (1-17): **8 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion**
 9:15 a.m. Sunday School Hour (No Adult Class)
 10:30 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion
Monday (1-18): 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Extended Day Preschool
Tuesday (1-19): 9:30 a.m. Ladies Bible Study
 9:30 a.m. Small Group Bible Study
Wednesday (1-20): 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Extended Day Preschool
 10 a.m. Mid-week Bible Study (Pastor Ginkel)
 5 p.m. Wednesday Night Live
 5 p.m. Music Worship & Arts Program (Art - Kathie)
 5 p.m. Adult Bible Study
 5:30 p.m. Wednesday Night Live Meal
 6:00 p.m. Agape Rehearsal
Thursday (1-21):
Friday (1-22): 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Extended Day Preschool

Pastor will begin a series on Ephesians on January 17. The theme will be "The God Who..."

January 17, Ephesians 1:1-14 - "The God Who Planned All Things"

January 24, Ephesians 1:15-23 - "The God Who Opens Hearts"

January 31, Ephesians 2:1-10 - "The God Whose Name is Grace"

February 7, Ephesians 2:11-22 - "The God Who Builds His Church"

February 14, Ephesians 3:1-13 - "The God Who Makes the Two, One"

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 continue.

MOPS (Mothers of Pre-Schoolers) will be meeting in-person on Tuesday, February 9, 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!

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.

Wednesday Night Live! Menu for January 20 is Broccoli/Cheddar Soup; Ham Sandwich; Fruit Cup; and Cookies!

The Young Adult Group will be meeting at Ascension at 6:30 p.m. (2nd & 4th Thursday): Our next meeting will be held on January 28! If you would like to join us, please contact Jenna (jenna.lindeman@cune.org).

Ascension Prayer Group: *Psalm 46:10 - The Passion Translation: Surrender your anxiety! Be silent and stop your striving and you will see that I am God. I am the God above all the nations, and I will be exalted throughout the whole earth.*

Come join us to pray for Ascension Lutheran Church, Pastor Larson & staff, and our members. On *January 27 at 2 p.m.*, we will meet as a group on Zoom to pray for about an hour. 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

Extended Day Preschool News! Our new Director, Kelly Lafferty, started with the Preschool on Tuesday, January 5! Watch for information from Kelly later in this issue 'What's Happening!' Welcome, Kelly, we are glad to have you join Ascension in our Ministry to the community!

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

"Hello Ascension Lutheran Church families. My name is Kelly Lafferty and I recently accepted the Director position of the amazing Extended Day preschool program. I am also an Internationally certified Lactation Consultant with a small company in downtown Denver.

I currently live in Highlands Ranch with my loving two children, my Husband-to-be, and our extremely spunky two-year-old Jack Russel puppy. My very wise and outgoing daughter, Ashlynn (born in 2010), is 10 years old and my very independent and energetic son, Declan (born in 2015), is five; they both attend Wilder Elementary in Littleton. They are both very active and love playing sports outdoors, doing art, or getting dirty with science experiments or just in the dirt of a garden, whichever makes a larger mess for us to clean up, of course. We all feel blessed to be living in beautiful Colorado as it provides us with the ability to take quick trips to an abundance of locations for hiking, exploring, or just relaxing in front of a scenic sunset or mountain views.

I have spent the majority of my life (no need to age myself and tell you for how long) involved with child development and gained my Bachelor of Science degree from Colorado State University in Human Development and Family Studies with an

emphasis in Infants and Children. My passion truly is children, and I am fortunate to be surrounded by the laughter and gleeful sounds of children everyday in my career. Those sounds drive my energy and fill my cup. Until very recently, I was in a Director role of a very large private preschool nearby in Littleton. Even though I appreciated every moment of my employment and adored my coworkers, I lacked the ability to connect with every single child and family at the school. In the attempts to personally relate to each child and with the rigorous demands of a large capacity school, I typically worked 50+ hours a week. This began to impact my connection with my family and I was often missing out on the important moments of Ashlynn and Declan's childhood. I not only needed to create a new path for myself and my family, but I felt compelled to regain God's word into my career. I truly believe Ascension is exactly what I was searching for and I feel privileged to work alongside of Ms. Marla and Ms. Raegan.

I know I have some pretty big shoes to fill taking over Ms. Chandra's responsibilities, but I hope that I am able to maintain her well-built program and build lasting relationships with these children and all of you, as well. Thank you so much for welcoming me into this position and I would love to hear about all of you. Please do not hesitate to reach out and introduce yourself!!!

Here's to an amazing 2021 and a great second half of the school year!!!” Warm regards, Kelly Lafferty, IBCLC

Are you in need of kid's items? Andrea Winckler (720-317-9168) has toys and gear for either boys or girls ages 0-2. Call her if you are interested!

Many Thanks!

Many thanks to those who took down the Christmas Decorations!

"Dear Friends, thank you from the bottom of our hearts for the shower you all threw for us and our twin girls. We received so many wonderful gifts! What a blessing! We are so honored and blessed to be a part of the Ascension family! We couldn't ask for a better church family!" Sincerely, The Lawrenzes

"My thank you to the Ladies Guild for the beautiful quilt and all the goodies in my Christmas package. Also, a thank you to my wonderful church family for the many birthday cards. I am so truly blessed." Hugs, Millie Fitzpatrick

"A HUGE THANK YOU!!—I'd like to thank the staff and congregation for the wonderful reception at the end of December, as well as for the many cards, gifts, and notes I received. I was truly touched by the sentiments, and they are greatly appreciated and cherished. Serving as the Education Director at Ascension has been such a privilege and honor, and I thank you for the opportunity to work with each of you. I look forward to seeing what God has in store for each of us, and I pray for many blessings in 2021!" Kathy Johnson

"Just wanted to say thanks for all the prayers and good wishes from my Ascension family. My back surgery went well, and I'm looking forward to a smooth recovery. God is good - always!" Dianne Backhus

ALC Foundation Update: "The Foundation has received news from the Scheiwe family in Hong Kong, who report on the light of the Gospel throughout this year of protests and pandemics. They experienced a graduation, COVID, weeks of isolation, and joy in learning piano and drama. We also heard from John Wolf, in Africa, who could not return to the US this year but stays active with his family in building housing for the seminaries in Kenya. He was able to attend a meeting with church leaders from central Africa in Togo in February, was shut down through September and is now active again helping educate and feed God's people. Mission Experience reports that the school is now welcoming the community children with 20 new enrollees from the neighborhood of Bonswa! They are bursting at the seams and almost in the black financially.

Finally, we want to give thanks for Jerry Gerdes, who so faithfully served the Foundation for many years and has moved on from the board, Lisa Riebling, who has kept our books and made sure we were reporting our finances properly, and Arvin Michel, husband of board member Athenia, who helped us get our organizational bylaws in current and correct condition."

West Wing Project Update: "Blessed New Year to all.

The demolition portion of the project was interrupted with issues relating to the original tile flooring laid in the early '60's. The tile and associated glue contain low amounts of asbestos. The Building Committee made the decision to hire a licensed contractor to remove the original tile and glue in the West Wing to eliminate any health concerns and avoid problems during upcoming work. This "abatement" work is now completed. Regular construction has resumed. The Committee is very thankful for your understanding and prayers as we attempt to update God's house while minimizing the impact on Church programs. Praise the Lord! In your service: Ascension West Wing Committee." West Wing Committee: Bob Hea, Roger Koester, Chuck Mielke and Jim Riebling

Capital Committee Update: "What a year 2020 was with many challenges and disruptions but one thing remains the same, we should not lose our focus on the many Blessings received.

One of the big blessings of many here at Ascension Lutheran Church was the amazing support for remodeling the West Wing. Through the Board of Trustees diligent work, the support of the Congregation and the positive support of the church membership in July of 2020 the Capital Campaign Committee was launched and asked to raise \$600,000 over three years, which could demonstrate to a potential lender the ability to support a significant loan. Through the initial Pledge campaign it was demonstrated that the project would be favorably supported and the Congregation would commit to raising \$200,000 in each of three years 2020, 2021, and 2022.

The Congregation responded so positively, even after being challenged by a worldwide virus, social, economic and personal disruptions to everyone's life. The initial amount pledged for 2020 was \$142,913, which was \$57,087 short of the desired goal of \$200,000 for the 2020 fiscal year. However, because of much prayer and excitement

for the project and in the sharing of blessings through the Pledges and individual generous support for the West Wing project there was \$269,079 dollars turned into Project Peter by January 1, 2021, which was \$127,066 over what was pledged for 2020 and exceeded the \$200,000 hoped for goal for the year.

We want to thank the congregation and everyone for their generous support through the Pledges made for 2020, 2021, and 2022 to fund the West Wing Remodel project and for the consistent amount of money coming into the Project Peter account each week. It is a lot of fun to see the work beginning and progress being made, but it is extremely important to maintain our focus on keeping our Prayers going for a successful completion of the construction process in support of Ascension's various ministries and to keep making contributions to positively complete the work on time and on budget and most of all to give Thanks for all of our Blessings. Thanks to everyone for a great beginning in helping to revitalizing the West Wing facility."

"The heart of the giver makes the gift dear and precious," Martin Luther

Your Capital Campaign Committee, Jim Adams, Art Gordon, Bob Hea, Kim McCormick, Chuck Mielke, Dawn Munson, Kathleen Wucherpfenning, Larry Nisbet, chairman.

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 \$ 35,900. 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 are just halfway through the season and have provided meals for 4 nights this season. We are still open to all volunteer help for food donation, food packaging, and food delivering, especially as we move into our coldest and snowiest months.

Also, I have two reminders for everyone: 1) This season is my final season as the Church Coordinator at Ascension for SWSN and the church will need a replacement coordinator. If you have any interest in this position, please let me know as I would love to talk to you further about it. This position can be filled by one person or it can be co-

coordinated by 2 people; 2) Due to the construction we are VERY limited on space for food/supplies and must share space with other ministries. Ann and I ask that food/beverage donations not be dropped off at the church until we indicate that we are activated to serve. As always if you have any questions or interest in taking over as Church Coordinator, please let me know. Bri Fort, bribly@gmail.com, 6236-680-9510”

Denver Society of Creation: Upcoming speakers are Dr. Barbara Helmkamp (February 2021) and Mr. Dan Kreft (March 2021). Please check out our website www.denversocietyofcreation.org for additional details!

One grandchild out of your ten has a special health condition. Is it right to apply more gifts to their situation out of your estate gift plan to address those needs going forward, long after the Lord has called you home? Of course, it is! If you struggle with this, you are still being bound by estate gifts as entitlement instead of grace. Your Ascension Gift Planning Counselor can help. Contact Jason Jones at Jason.Jones@lfnd.org or call him directly at 970-988-0305.

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This week on KFUO.org, excite your imagination and comfort your soul on Cross Defense with Rev. Tyrel Bramwell (1/18 at 2 p.m. CT), hear practical application of our Lutheran Confessions on Concord Matters (1/19 at 2 p.m. CT), and worship with us in chapel services weekdays at 10 a.m. CT. Find these programs on demand at kfuo.org or your favorite podcasting app.

Pastor Mike from Mission Experience has made a number of 2021 calendars available for sale. Mission Experience is the orphanage for children in Haiti. This year due to the Virus, the fall fundraiser was not able to be held-these calendars are part of how they raise funds. The calendars are only \$10. You will find them and where to send the check on a table in the Narthex.

Ezekiel 11:19-21 - ***“I will give them an undivided heart and put a new spirit in them; I will remove from them their heart of stone and give them a heart of flesh. Then they will follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. They will be my people, and I will be their God. But as for those whose hearts are devoted to their vile images and detestable idols, I will bring down on their own heads what they have done, declares the Sovereign Lord.”***

An “undivided heart”. A heart that longs for God, a heart that focuses on God...not on “vile images and detestable idols.” Where is your heart? Is it divided? Does it seek things that take your focus away from God and His laws? Does it fear?

In this time of division and turmoil...keep your focus on Him. Your heart will be at ease and not fearful. We don’t know the how’s and the when’s and the why’s of this world, but He has full control of them, and He knows. Blessings! (Kathie Harvey)

