

GOOD AFTERNOON!

WHAT'S HAPPENING (January 18)!

Worship and Education Schedule

Worship services are at 4:00 p.m., on Saturdays, and 8:00 and 10:30 a.m. on Sundays. Adult Bible Class begins at 9:15 with Pastor's study of I Corinthians. Sunday School classes are at 9:15 a.m.

Mark your Calendars - Pastor John is offering an Adult Instruction Class on Saturday, February 17 from 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. This is a two-part class, and the second date will be announced soon. The class is designed to teach the basics of Christian faith and the Lutheran denomination. There is no cost. The instruction book will be provided. Free refreshments!! If you are not a member of Ascension and would like to see what we believe (or even if you are a member, and would like to have a refresher of Lutheran doctrine), you're invited to attend.

Is it time to begin your study of the Bible? You are invited to join Pastor John as the Wednesday Evening Bible Class begins a study on the Book of Philippians - the Epistle of Joy. The class meets every Wednesday from 5:00 until 6:00 in the Fellowship Hall.

During 2023 we saw some positive news and some negative news as we look at the numbers of our congregation. First the positive - we saw our average weekend attendance in worship jump from 195 in 2022 to 220 last year - an increase of 25 worshippers. We saw 9 people transfer into Ascension, we confirmed 7 adults and we had 12 baptisms. But our membership continues to see a decline. In 2022 we had 533 baptized members, but we ended 2023 at 509 baptized members, a loss of 24 folks. Our communicant membership saw almost an identical decline. We began the year with 483 communicant members but ended the year at 458 adult members - a decline of 25. We saw an unusually high number of deaths - 19, we had 10 folks transfer to other congregations, and 15 folks were removed after years of inactivity or moving away from the area. We thank God for His hand in this past year and we ask for His Spirit in what He desires to accomplish in this new year.

The 2024 Flower weekly signup sheet is located on the bulletin board on the landing just down from the Narthex. Simply fill out your name, dedication for a special event, and write a check for the number of arrangements, each arrangement is \$27.00, the cost for both arrangements is \$54.00, this is the same cost as 2019. If you want to share your special event with another person that is perfect – we love to celebrate everyone's special day.

You are welcome to take your donated flowers home after the last service, or you can give them away - another good deed. The Ladies of Circle IV will take the flowers left to the homebound or hospitalized members of our church to brighten their day!

You may pay for your flowers using the envelopes located below the sign-up sheet and place it in the weekly offering plate. It is particularly important to mark your check clearly "ALTAR FLOWERS" so the offering counters do not credit it to the General

Fund, but to floral budget, the church does not have a floral budget, and all Altar Flowers are made possible by donations. Please remember to pay for your flowers by the Sunday you are dedicating them.

Thank you all for your flower donations and the beauty, which they bring to our Church.

New Directories Have Been Printed! Please pick up yours in the narthex!

If you have a Thrivent policy you may be able to assist Ascension in our care of other people. One of the benefits of being part of Thrivent is accumulating "Thrivent Choice Dollars", a benefit to your policy, that can be directed to non-profits like Ascension. If you have a policy and would like to allocate those dollars you can go to the Thrivent website at <https://www.thrivent.com/about-us/membership/thrivent-choice>. Thank you for using your benefit to help others.

Extended Day Preschool Update: This sunny weather feels so nice compared to last weekend's arctic temps...brrrr! We continue to learn and experience new concepts, letters, words, and fun in our little preschool "world" downstairs...no matter what the outside weather is like – Meg Stenman, Preschool Director

Family Game Night! Friday, January 26th, 6:00-7:30 pm. Whether you're young or young at heart, we've got a space for you. Bring your favorite game or come ready to learn a new one as we enjoy an evening of laughter and fun together. Come ready to play Bingo with everyone at the beginning of the evening. After that, feel free to play whatever sounds the most fun to you! And prizes! Also, gaga ball, human hungry hippos, cards, board games!

You're invited! Come see what CHOIR is all about! Try it out...no experience necessary. And if you want a short-term commitment to only sing through Easter, let me know! Praise the Lord through singing and music! Benefits include stress reduction, soul-enriching, increased life expectancy, community, fun, and so much more! Wednesdays at 7:00pm. For more information: stephanieroettjer@gmail.com.

Save the Dates for Vacation Bible School! This year's VBS will be on a 5-day schedule again...and the 2024 theme is "SCUBA - Diving into Friendship with God!" Dates are: Monday, June 3 through Friday, June 7. Spread the word!

Early Easter Equals Early Faith-Book stories. Let's begin to pray now as we get started on the 2024 edition, our 12th edition of this beloved booklet. **You and Your story matter...to God, to you and to us.** We begin to develop this by asking each of you to join us in praying that God will bring to mind how much a part of your life HE really is. We collect these stories and publish them to read between Easter and the Ascension. Please listen carefully to the Lord's leading, as you write a 400-550-word story that tells of a time or situation that God used to bless or heal you, answered prayers, give you hope. Sign up begins now by emailing me at Heyjude264@aol.com, or signing up on the list on the narthex bulletin board. We will need all of you to help fill the pages. Please email that you will write a story NOW, then plan to send your FAITH Story to me by February 21 or sooner. I will be glad to interview you and help you write if you like. Call me to discuss it at 303-972-0873. With God's help and yours, this

booklet can bless us and glorify God. ***Your story for His Glory!*** Thank you for your prayers and stories, Jude Donovan

Supplies Needed for Severe Weather Shelter Network:

The freezing temperatures of the past week have kept the shelter network very busy. Jessica, our regional manager, had a full house of 40 guests for each night. All three regions of the network have shortages in their supplies. Here are some of the items they need:

- Coffee (3-5 lb can)
- Creamer (large container)
- Bowls (16 or 20 oz)
- Hot chocolate mix(individual packets)
- Sugar (5 lb bag)
- Hot and cold disposable cups (10 or 12 oz, no lids) Hot cups are needed most.
- Black yard trash bags
- Hand warmers
- Gloves

Donations may be left in the box by the downstairs entry. We will deliver them to the shelter. Thank you in advance.

– Ann Kaneko kanekoa43@gmail.com and Lori Rolling rollingbarn@gmail.com

Do You Have Baskets? From Lori Rolling: “We need some baskets of medium to large size for a charity event at the Littleton Elks to raise money for The Right Step program. It is a horseback riding program that works with youth and adults. The folks that they help have many different abilities from Downs syndrome to PTSD and lots of things in between.

Baskets will be accepted on the stage in the lower level (Fellowship Hall). They will be filled and auctioned off. The baskets cannot be returned.”

Set sail on a spiritual adventure with our four-day Lutheran Singles Cruise, departing from Galveston on August 1st. This journey is designed for connection and fellowship, offering daily devotions, Bible studies, and opportunities to meet like-minded singles. Embrace this chance to deepen your faith, make new friends, and enjoy the beauty of the sea. Don't miss out on this unique blend of spiritual growth and social fun – book your spot today! Learn more at www.wolfmueller.co/cruise

The St. Olaf Choir from Northfield, Minnesota will perform on Sunday, January 28 at 2:00 pm at Montview Boulevard Presbyterian Church, 1980 Dahlia Street, in Denver! (*Did you know that Martin Luther King, Jr. gave a speech there in 1964?*)

For tickets, please go to <https://wp.stolaf.edu/>

A first is coming to Ascension Lutheran Church - the GriefShare 13-Week Support Group Program, starting In February and ending in April. The program focuses on relevant grief topics (Examples: Regrets, Secondary Losses, Anger, etc.) associated with the death of a loved one.

The weekly 30-minute videos feature nationally respected grief experts and real-life stories of people. The videos are followed by small group discussions about what was viewed. Past participants have commented on the immense value of the follow-up discussions. Grief work is so important to healing and happens when surrounded by others who understand. Experts tell us that it is normal to spend 2-5 years actively working to heal after the loss of a loved one. Confidentiality is very much part of this program. GriefShare is Christian-based but is intended for all grievers - those of faith and those without.

Please consider this program, not just for yourself, but for friends, neighbors, or family members that you think may benefit from encouragement, comfort, and help in grieving; making changes; and finding hope for the future, as well as strengthening spiritual relationships.

The 13-Week Sessions GriefShare begins at Ascension Lutheran Church:

Tuesdays - February 6, through April 30, 2024

6:30-8:30 PM

Notebook/Registration Fee - \$20

Child Care Available (upon request)

Registration: griefshare.org/findagroup

Or Contact Sherry Hitzler at 303-913-0846 or hitz2@comcast.net

SHARING JESUS Bible Study! Written and taught by Pastor Ginkel, the group meets on Wednesdays at 10:00 am in Room 106. Please join us. Pastor Don's booklet, SHARING JESUS, is available on request.

The Saturday afternoon Bible study led by Curt and Karen Engle: You are invited to join us for the 3:00 Saturday Bible study! We hope to see you there! Email Curt at Kengle0920@gmail.com

Bringing order and simplicity is a goal of all estate planning. Sometimes it feels like there is competition for the gifts present in your estate. Family demands inheritance. Charities constantly ask. But what do you know about what God has written on your heart to do? Your Ascension Gift Planning Counselor can help you discuss, pray, and express those plans clearly Contact Jason Jones at Jason.Jones@lfnd.org or call him directly at (970) 988-0305.

Are you making resolutions for the New Year? Have you selected a Word for 2024? Consider making both PRAYER!

Grant us grace, O God,
to begin this year in Your faith
and to continue it in Your favor,
that being guided in all our doings
and guarded all our days,
we may spend ourselves in Your service
and finally, by Your grace,

attain to the glory of eternal life;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

~ written by W E Orchard, 1877-1955

If you'd like to join the Ascension Prayer Group, we meet on Zoom every 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month at 2:30 pm. Contact MargoALPasha@yahoo.com

Prayers: For Sandy Smith, Scott Luethy's mother, who is hospitalized with a respiratory infection; For Patricia Rolf, who is having issues with her back; For John Oldefest, who had knee replacement surgery on January 17; For Christine Rabbe, Alan and Dianne Backhus' sister-in-law; For Dean Gordon, Art Gordon's brother; For Maddie Stouder, Bruce and Phyllis McConnell's granddaughter; For Hillary McVeigh, Janet Becker's father; For Linda Parker, Nancy Lugton's good friend, for healing and encouragement; For Bob Shiflet, who will have back surgery on January 25; For Sue Eastridge, who will have knee replacement surgery on January 25; For Robert Flickinger; For Judy, Janet Heisz' sister; For Marilyn Wert; For Lila Loots' brother, Gordon, who is nearing the end of his life; For Kathy Chamberlain, who will be having back surgery; For Jeanine MacCluskey, who has entered hospice; For Carol Zeller; For Ama Orr; For Barry Kratzer; For Lawrence Brown; For peace in Israel and Gaza, in Ukraine, and throughout the world; For our country; For God to send His Holy Spirit on all believers for strengthening of faith and witness.

Prayers of Thanksgiving: For Mary Hert, whose heart rhythm has returned to normal after her heart procedure; For Mary's son Chris, whose radiation treatments finished Monday, and his recent MRI showed no cancer cells anywhere. Praise God!

Flowers on the Altar are given by Rose Kahler, in loving memory of her husband, Vernon, on what would have been his 53rd birthday.

<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Service Time</u>	<u>Attendees</u>	
Saturday, 1/13	4:00 pm	24	
Sunday, 1/14	8:00 am	42	
	10:30 am	41	Total: 107

Online Views (as of January 16) for January 7: 200 views.

Stewardship:

2024	January 13-14	Year-to-Date (YTD)
Budgeted Revenue	\$12,600.00	\$25,200.00
Received Amount	\$3,393.00	\$15,886.00

Calendar (Saturday, January 20 – Sunday, January 28):

Sat. (1-20)	9:00 am	Heritage Fine Arts Monthly Saturday Workshop
	4:00 pm	Traditional Worship with Holy Communion
Sunday (1-21)	8:00 am	Traditional Worship with Holy Communion
	9:15 am	Adult Bible Study / Sunday School

	10:30 am	Traditional Worship with Holy Communion
Mon. (1-22)	9:30 am – 2:30 pm	Extended Day Preschool
Tues. (1-23)	9:30 am	Ladies' Bible Study
	9:30 am – 2:30 pm	Extended Day Preschool
	7:00 pm	Elders' Meeting
Weds. (1-24)	9:30 am – 2:30 pm	Extended Day Preschool
	10:00 am	Bible Study with Pastor Ginkel
	5:00 pm	Bible Study with Pastor John
	6:00 pm	Confirmation
	6:00 pm	Gloria Dei Ringers
	7:00 pm	Ascension Chorale
Thurs. (1-25)	9:30 am – 2:30 pm	Extended Day Preschool
Fri. (1-26)	9:30 am – 2:30 pm	Extended Day Preschool
	12:30 pm	Quilters Group
	6:00 pm	Family Game Night
Sat. (1-27)	4:00 pm	Traditional Worship with Holy Communion
Sun. (1-28)	8:00 am	Traditional Worship with Holy Communion
	9:15 am	Adult Bible Study / Sunday School
	10:30 am	Contemporary Worship with Holy Communion
	12:00 pm	KICKS – Kids in Christ's Kingdom 3 rd -5 th Graders

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CHRIST FOR YOU this week on KFUE.org: Hear Mental Health Monday and the 3rd episode in the LCMS History Series on The Coffee Hour (weekdays at 9:00 a.m. CT), study 2 Corinthians 6-9 on Sharper Iron (weekdays at 8:00 a.m. CT), and study all of Colossians and the beginning of Lamentations on Thy Strong Word (weekdays at 11:00 a.m. CT). Find your favorite programs on demand at kfuo.org or the KFUE Radio app!