

GOOD AFTERNOON!
WHAT'S HAPPENING (December 18)
Merry Christmas!



This Weekend Worship Services will be Saturday, December 20 at 4:00 p.m., and Sunday, December 21 at 8:00 and 10:30 a.m. Sunday School and Adult Bible Classes will be at 9:15 am.

Christmas Eve Services on Wednesday, December 24:

3:45 p.m. Congregational Carols
4:00 p.m. Family Worship with Holy Communion
and Children's Program
6:45 p.m. Congregational Carols
7:00 p.m. Festival Worship with Holy Communion

On Thursday, December 25, Christmas Day there will be a single worship service with Holy Communion at 10:00 a.m.

The Church office will be closed on Friday, December 26.

Worship Services next weekend will be Saturday, December 27 at 4:00 p.m., and Sunday, December 28 at 10:00 a.m. Please note there will be only one service on Sunday, December 28.

Holy Baptism This Sunday at 8:00 we will celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Baptism of Valiant Storm Becker, son of Andrew Becker and Nicole Henry Becker, and grandson of Dean and Janet Becker! Blessings to their family!

New Year's Eve with Worship followed by a catered meal from Romano's!

Worship will be at 3:00 p.m. on Wednesday, December 31 followed by the meal.

Please sign up in the narthex or contact the office (303-794-4636)

office@alutheran.org by Monday, December 29, so we know how much food to order.

Can you help with serving or clean-up after the meal? Please sign up in the narthex or call the church office. Thank you!

When it's Time to Undecorate ... we will need a few hands! If you can help, we will meet on Saturday, January 3, beginning at 8:30 am. Thank you!

Mark Your Calendar: Pastor John's next Adult Instruction / Confirmation class will be on Saturday, January 10, 9:00 to 1:00 and Sunday, January 11, 1:00 to 4:00 pm.

December 7th Voters' Meeting Elections - December 7

On December 7, the members of Ascension Lutheran Church met with their semi-annual Voter's Meeting. Fifty-nine folks attended the meeting. We heard reports from various staff and chairpersons, set our budget for 2026, elected people to leadership and voted on the bell tower area refurbishment.

Pastor John reported that we have 486 baptized members, 434 of them are communicant members. This is a decline from 504 baptized and 444 communicants in 2024. In 2025 we have had 14 adult confirmations, 7 adult baptisms and 11 folks

transferred to Ascension from other LC-MS congregations. We lost 39 members who had become inactive in their membership or who had moved from the area.

Mike Price, our Treasurer, told us we have a positive financial report for this year, receiving more funds than we have spent. Our budget for 2026 sees a slight increase from \$733,000 to \$737,000. This does not include the preschool budget of \$114,000.

We elected Bob Hea as President, Mike Price as Treasurer, Chuck Mielke and Terry Utecht as Trustees, Shelia Beu in Evangelism and Lisa Wert in Education. We thanked Christa Kirschner for serving the last number of years as chair of the Education Board.

Mike Price gave a report concerning the Ascension Lutheran Church Foundation. The Foundation now manages over 1.1 million dollars, using about 5% of the corpus to fund mission projects. In 2025 they funded about \$50,000 in mission works and in 2026 their budget was set for about \$56,000 in projects.

The final major action of the Voting Assembly was to hear the recommendation of the Patio committee concerning the renovation of the area where the bell tower stood. The assembly decided to proceed with the project. The cost for the project is estimated to be about \$233,000. After using some memorial funds, some of the prior year's surplus and funds set aside in "Project Peter," it appears that we will begin a Capital Campaign of about \$100,000. Larry Nisbet agreed to serve as the chair for that committee.

Our next Voters meeting will be on April 26, 2026.

Patio Project

The South Patio Redesign project was approved by the Voters on December 7. Check out the picture boards in the Narthex and the two YouTube videos with links below. We think you will like the new shade structure, the Ascension lettering on the stone wall, and the safer new concrete. Here are the links: [Morning Video](#), [Evening Video](#). (Here's a tip, expand to full screen when starting for better viewing.)

The videos are also available on the Ascension website: www.alutheran.org

Foundation Update The Foundation board met on Thursday, December 11, and welcomed two new board members: Dennis Lord and Zack Railsback. Both have jumped in with both feet and have accepted roles as liaisons for several of our missions and ministries. At the meeting, we accepted the resignation of Athenia Michel, a longtime member whom we will miss dearly.

Given the current status of the stock market, where we invest most of our funds, we are able to provide a total of \$58,000 in 2026, spread across six world missions, five local missions, our youth mission, our book and material reimbursement program (college students look for the application for the refund in the Foundation box in the narthex or ask at the office), Lutheran High School and Concordia Adopt A Student, with 3% devoted to accounting and the filing of our tax return.

We are thankful for all your generous donations and look forward to a successful 2026.

EDP Update What an extra special week this has been. Teaching our preschoolers about the birth of baby Jesus is such an honor. This week swished by with lots of fun activities and we tied it up with our Christmas Program. The children knew their songs (somehow, it always comes together!) and the parents sang Away In The Manger with us. Afterwards, we celebrated Jesus' birthday with a craft and cookies and chocolate milk. We hope your Christmas is wonderful, beautiful, meaningful, and blessed. ❤️

See you next year! 🎉

HAAT Force HAAT Force has inventoried their supplies and has need of these items:

- Laundry detergent pods
- Mouthwash (small bottles)
- Razors
- Waterproof Gloves
- Suitcases (gently used is fine!)
- Men's sweat pants (various sizes)
- Small packs - tissues, shower gels, and shampoos,
- Mini dish soap bottles (for hotels with a kitchenette)
- Scrub pads (for hotels with a kitchenette)
- Powdered creamer - for voucher days
- Hot chocolate packets - for voucher days

Place donations in the HAAT Force box. I will deliver them to HAAT Force. Thanks in advance for your generosity! Questions? Contact Ann Kaneko, 720.289.6782 (cell), kanekoa43@gmail.com.

Flowers, Flowers! The 2026 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 2025. If we order roses, we will need to charge a bit more since the cost of roses has gone up, so the cost will be \$60.00 for both arrangements. 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 opt to give them another good deed. Pastor will take the flowers left to the homebound and 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.

Get ready! Starting in January, the youth will be **taking orders** for their famous breakfast burritos fundraiser! Pick up is scheduled for Super Bowl Sunday, Feb. 8th. The word on the street is that if you buy a burrito, the Denver Broncos will be in the Super Bowl! Funds will be going towards their servant event at LVR, summer of 2026. Thank you for supporting the youth!

Good News! Pastor Nathaniel Brown and his wife Laura, who were staying in Denver for several weeks, have been able to return to Minnesota. Talitha was born and subsequently baptized on November 25th. The cardiologists at Children's Hospital noticed right away that her heart was much healthier than they suspected prior to her birth. She was born with a milder (yet significant) heart defect that was addressed via surgery on December 2. and recovered well enough for the family to return home long before the multi-month stay that they expected.

- [Here's a link to their Caring Bridge website](#). You need a free account to view updates.

Update from Pastor Brown on 12/15: Talitha had her clinic appointment today. She had an x-ray and an EKG. The x-ray showed a bit of fluid in the lungs, but much less than the last x-ray. EKG found nothing wrong. And the doctors took off the surgical dressing and the two sutures holding the dressing on. She is cleared for travel, so tomorrow morning, we are planning on making the trip north. Not sure how long it will take, but we are just about to be on the way home. Praise be to Christ!

Wednesday Evening Bible Study with Pastor John is taking a hiatus for Advent and Christmas. We will meet again on Wednesday, January 7, 2026.

Bible Study with Pastor Ginkel: Merry Christmas! The group is now studying 1st and 2nd Corinthians, focusing on a chapter a week. They will meet again on Wednesday, January 7 at 10:00 am in Room 106.

Saturday Afternoon Bible Study Join us this Saturday afternoon, at 3:00 pm, for our Lifelight Bible study on the book of Acts, with a focus on evangelism. Anyone is welcome to join! Email Curt at Kengle0920@gmail.com

Young Adult Bible Study The Young Adult Bible Study will meet again on Friday, January 16, at Jenna and Michael Lawrenz' house. The group is doing a Bible study by Louie Giglio. For more information, please call or email Jenna at 303-913-3512 or jenna.lindeman@cune.org

We can face competing priorities when we think about planning our estates someday. As we wrap up this year long consideration, we must ponder whether we see our estate plan as an expression of our Christian faith or just giving up on life. As we complete this year, we keep in mind that in Christ, we will never finish but simply transfer into the glorious life the Lord has prepared for us. We never let death have the final word, for Jesus has conquered it. Your Ascension Gift Planning Counselor can assist you in putting your life-celebrating plan together. Contact Jason Jones at Jason.Jones@lfnd.org or call him directly at (970) 988-0305.

Flowers on the Altar for this weekend are given to the glory of God by Jackie Viren and Adam Wilson.

Happy Anniversary! To Glenn and Louanne Isernhagen, who will celebrate their 60th Wedding Anniversary today, Thursday, December 18!

Prayers: For Karen Engle and her family. Karen's mother, Mary Fergesen, died this morning, December 18; For Eugen Ihly, with severe back problems; For C.J. Earhart, in treatment for cancer; For Judy Bress, having surgery on Wednesday afternoon, December 17, after fracturing her hip in a fall; For Lois Schmitt, scheduled for a heart procedure (ablation) on Monday, December 22. For Kim McCormick's daughter and Dan's stepdaughter, Jules Civilla, (granddaughter of Andy & Mavis Slifka and Nathan & Marlene Eickmann). Jules has a cyst on her brain, pray for successful testing and treatment. For Marietta Brady, longtime friend of Joyce Gallagher, who has entered hospice. For Shirley Nichols, mourning the death of her mother-in-law, also named Shirley Nichols; For Alan Backhus' brother, Don Rabe, in San Antonio; For Alan and Dianne Backhus' friend, Diane, with breast cancer; For Jan, friend of Michiko Dunker; For John Klepetka; For Tonya Cronberg; For Jody Tunheim's sister, Kelly, who has breast cancer; For Gayla and Larry Buethe's grandson, Landon; For Janet Parrott, in hospice care; For Faith Lawson, with cancer; For Jordan Loptien, in treatment for leukemia. For Charlie James Niederbrach; For Michael Lawrenz's grandmother; For all travelers during this holiday season; For the people of Haiti, and for the children living there; For peace in the Middle East and Ukraine; For wisdom and discernment for world leaders; For God to send His Holy Spirit on all believers for strengthening of faith and witness.

Prayers of Thanksgiving: For baby Talitha Brown and her parents, Rev. Nathaniel and Laura Brown, thanks be to God that Talitha's health has progressed so she and her family can finally go home to Minnesota for Christmas!

Thanks be to God for the safe arrival of Jude Donovan's new granddaughter, Tessa Paige, born to Josh and Lyndsey Weyker on December 16th. Let us rejoice and be glad!

<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Service Time</u>	<u>Attendees</u>	
Saturday, 12/13	4:00 pm	71	
Sunday, 12/14	9:30 am	200	
			Total: 271
Wednesday Advent Worship, 12/17		83	

Online Views (as of December 16) for December 7: 154 views.

<u>Stewardship</u>	<u>December 13-14</u>	<u>Year-to-Date (YTD)</u>
Budgeted Revenue	\$14,000.00	\$692,000.00
Received Amount	\$13,223.00	\$700,811.00

Calendar (Saturday, December 20 - Sunday, December 28):

Sat. (12-20)	10:00 am	Children's Christmas Program Rehearsal
	11:00 am	Happy Birthday Jesus Party
	3:00 pm	Saturday Bible Study
	4:00 pm	Traditional Worship with Communion
Sun. (12-21)		FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT
	8:00 am	Traditional Worship with Holy Communion
	9:15 am	Adult Bible Study / Sunday School
	10:30 am	Traditional Worship with Holy Communion
Tues. (12-23)	9:30 am	Ladies Bible Study
Weds.(12-24)		CHRISTMAS EVE
	3:45 pm	Congregational Carols
	4:00 pm	Family Worship Service with Holy Communion and Children's Program
	6:45 pm	Congregational Carols
	7:00 pm	Festival Worship Service with Holy Communion
Thurs.(12-25)		CHRISTMAS DAY
	10:00 am	Christmas Morning Worship with Holy Communion
Fri.(12-26)		CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED
Sat. (12-27)	3:00 pm	Saturday Bible Study
	4:00 pm	Traditional Worship with Communion
Sun. (12-28)	10:00 am	Traditional Worship with Holy Communion