

*The Witness*  
July 2009

# Lutheran Church of the Ascension

OUR VISION: To Worship the Lord, Live by His Example, and

Reach out Through His Love

OUR MISSION: To Know and Share the Good News of Jesus Christ



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## Why We Worship the Way We Do

Have you wondered why we worship the way we do? What are the historical roots of worship and why do Lutheran congregations have a variety of patterns of worship, sometimes within the same congregation?

Plan now to be a part of a four-week adult class, either this summer in the daytime or this fall during the evening, which I will be teaching on Lutheran worship. Learn about some of the major influences on our worship patterns throughout the course of Jewish and Christian history and discover some of the other ways that our worship has been affected by the wider culture as well. The class should be helpful for people who do not have an extensive background in the Lutheran church as well as for people who have been life-long Lutherans.

In addition to talking about historical and other influences on our worship life, I will be illustrating each session with many examples of church architecture, religious art, hymns, and prayers for class members to gain some first-hand knowledge about many aspects of worship, so the class may resemble a course on art appreciation. While there will be a few handouts and suggested readings, the class will not require much preparation for each session.

The summer class sessions of "Why We Worship the Way We Do" will be on Wednesday mornings, June 17 through July 8, from 10:00 to 11:15 a.m. The same sessions will be repeated again this fall on Tuesday evenings, September 15 through October 6, from 7:00 to 8:15 p.m.

If you are interested in either series, please sign up on the large bulletin board between the fellowship hall and the church offices. I look forward to sharing much of my knowledge about the history and variety of Christian worship traditions with several people at Ascension in the coming months.

*Dennis Bushkofsky*

Interim Pastor

## Focus on Health



The website of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov), offers easy to read and up to the minute information about novel influenza A (H1N1 or swine flu).

It's thought that novel influenza A (H1N1) flu spreads in the same way that regular seasonal influenza viruses spread; mainly through the coughs and sneezes of people who are sick with the virus.

### **Take everyday actions to stay healthy.**

Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.

Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hands cleaners are also effective.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way.

Stay home if you get sick. CDC recommends that you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.

Peace and good health to you,

*Gail Price*

## Service for Healing Wednesday, June 24

A worship service with prayers for healing will be offered on Wednesday, June 24 at 2:00 p.m. at Lutheran Church of the Ascension. The service will be approximately 40 minutes in length and will include a number of readings, prayers for healing, music, as well as Holy Communion. Light refreshments will be served in the Fellowship Hall after the service.

The service is designed particularly for people who are experiencing specific health concerns and would like to have the opportunity to receive prayers for those needs. Prayers for individual healing concerns may include the laying on of hands and being anointed with oil, traditional elements in Christian healing services. The service is open to everyone, even people who do not have particular health concerns of their own but who would like to pray on behalf of others.

The time and length of this healing service may be a helpful alternative to services on Sunday mornings. The seating will be arranged in a more intimate setting than Sunday services and it will be able to accommodate people requiring the use of a wheelchair, a walker, or other portable medical equipment. Anyone needing transportation assistance in order to attend this service should request it by calling the church office ahead of time.

If there proves to be a reasonable interest in this service, it may be continued on a regular basis.

## Stephen Ministers Commissioned

On Sunday, May 17th, Ascension was blessed with the commissioning of four new Stephen Ministers. Dick Amos, Lois Giberson, Peg Sickeler and Vanessa Young having completed 50 hours of Stephen Ministry training, are now equipped as caregivers for those who are experiencing times of transition in their lives. Ascension's Stephen Ministry is excited to have these four Christ-inspired servants join its ranks. They, with the rest of the Stephen Ministers, are here to accompany you in your walk through trials. All you need to do is ask Pastor or a Stephen Minister.

# Reach Out Through God's Love

## Greater Chicago Food Depository Walk—Saturday June 20th, 2009

Put on those WALKING SHOES!!! What could be nicer than helping feed the hungry, walking along a path near beautiful Lake Michigan from Montrose Harbor to Foster Ave, and talking to friends while walking? Register by 9 a.m. June 20th. This year our donations will benefit the Northfield Township Pantry. If the walk doesn't fit into your schedule, please donate generously because food supplies for the pantry tend to be lower in the summer. A table will be set up during coffee hour for you to sign up or make a contribution. Please make checks payable to Greater Chicago Food Depository. The Agency number for Northfield Township Pantry is #000948. Call Irm Claiborne if you have questions (847.256.3302 or 847.894.5969).

*Irm Claiborne*

## Habitat for Humanity



I hope you had a chance to see the slide show of our Habitat efforts. We have had two work days so far this year and they were enjoyable. There are still openings for those wishing to participate. Our next date is June 20<sup>th</sup>. Come and join us. You might like it, and we have had no casualties to date.

We still need your help with reaching our financial commitment, so make out a check to Ascension with Habitat in the memo line and we will take care of the rest. Reach out through HIS love.

*Bob Reid*

# Worship Notes

We are now officially into our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. Again, we would like to thank the bell choir and adult choir for their many years of service to this church, and we encourage those of you who enjoy singing and playing music to come forward and join us. We have much to celebrate in our worship life and I would like us to continue in that spirit by finding ways we can all use our gifts. Minkyoo and I are available to talk with you if you have a desire to learn more about any of our music and worship offerings.

We would like to congratulate all those who received their first communion on May 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Celebrate service. There were 171 people at that service and it was a joyful time to say the least. The first communicants in attendance participated in everything from the singing to a spontaneously acted out dramatization of the Gospel reading for the day (the Good Shepherd). To see them so involved in the worship service was inspiring and something we will continue to encourage through our opportunities for children in worship. We want to have the kids in worship every week!

Our last concert series event, the Civic Orchestra Percussion Trio was a big success. There were over 100 people in attendance and the performers were cheered at the end with a standing ovation. Thanks to Alice Kosnik and Jill Reid for helping with the reception that followed. Also, congratulations to Kevin Kosnik and his colleagues Doug Maiwurm and Dan Davis for their excellent performance and best wishes on their continued success. Kevin will be joining us on the congas and other auxiliary percussion instruments in Celebrate! throughout the summer, so be sure to come and check it out.

This summer promises to be exciting. Some talented young performers will take part in services, we will hear new compositions, commissioned for our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and we will continue to be graced by the gifts of our resident violinist, Oliver Colbentson, through June. Thanks in advance to all who will be participating in worship this summer...your gifts help greatly to elevate our spirits during worship.

Good news to report...Bob Frost has been hired by the Free Evangelical Church in Antioch. This 3/4-time job will afford Bob the chance to expand his music ministry and share his passion for worship. Congratulations Bob...this is truly answered prayer!

Finally, I'd like to announce that we will be taking the Celebrate band and the children's choir into the recording studio this summer for an exciting project. We will be recording "Winnergy", the song co-written by Carol Mueller and myself that rallies behind wind energy as a way to conserve the earth's natural resources. We have many plans for this recording and see it as a great way to promote good stewardship of the earth as well as a way for us as a church to reach out into the broader community.

We have much to rejoice in at the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Ascension. I am continually reminded of how blessed we are to be able to do all we can to worship God and make a difference in our community and our world. Let us take this year, as we celebrate our 50 years of ministry, and dedicate it to finding ways to renew our ministry and make it more powerful! With God's holy spirit guiding us, all things are possible.

Peace,

*Mischa & Minkyoo*

# 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Jubilee Celebration

Each of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary events affords us an opportunity to invite friends and neighbors to join in experiencing our community of faith, Ascension Church. As we celebrate our ministries of the past 50 years, we rededicate ourselves to reaching out beyond the congregation through worship, education, and service. The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Jubilee Celebration includes several summer fun times---excellent opportunities to share Ascension hospitality with others.

## Sunday, May 17

Just when we thought spring would never come, on May 17 it bloomed at Ascension as beautifully, as joyfully, as deliciously as we have ever known it. That sunny Sunday morning we kicked off a year-long celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our congregation with Ascension Day worship, both traditional and contemporary, and a delicious brunch between services. Four newly-trained Stephen Ministers were commissioned for service in the congregation. "Retired" choir members returned to sing and ring. People came from far and near to begin the Jubilee.

Fellowship Hall was filled with tables set for spring, covered with tablecloths topped with centerpieces of yellow flowers in bright green buckets. The brunch menu incorporated seasonal spring foods: asparagus frittata, poached salmon, sausage, ham, potatoes O'Brien, fresh fruit, bagels and cream cheese; and for dessert, huge strawberries, chocolate fondue and angel food cake.

Chris Rude welcomed everyone and read a passage from Leviticus about consecrating the 50<sup>th</sup> year as a jubilee. He explained the Wall of Remembrance on both sides of the door to the sanctuary as a place to display photos and memories of Ascension over the last 50 years. Chris also recognized Linda Clinton, Helen Costello and Debbie Schwab for organizing the brunch, and Janice Yohanan for providing the centerpieces. Then he announced the special events that are planned to celebrate our 50<sup>th</sup> year as a congregation.

Mischa Zupko thanked the senior choir and the bell choir for their years of faithful service (some as long as 36 years) and he praised their spirit of willingness to try new music. The choir led everyone in singing the Doxology before we enjoyed brunch.

As the celebration continues, it will become richer as you add your contributions to the Wall of Remembrance. Please place your memory—a photo, a passage of scripture, a story, a drawing, a personal recollection—in the basket located under the wall hanging. Ellen Kollmann will mount it for others to see, and together we will tell the stories of Lutheran Church of the Ascension of the past 50 years.

*Carol Mueller*

## Enjoy Ravinia with Garrison Keillor and *A Prairie Home Companion* Saturday, June 20, 4:45 p.m. Live Radio Broadcast

Join the Ascension family and bring friends to Ravinia to experience the unequalled humor of famed storyteller Garrison Keillor. Tap your toe to some great music, get the week's update from Lake Wobegon Lutheran Church, laugh out loud! Claim a lawn ticket at church (\$10) or purchase lawn or pavilion tickets online at [www.Ravinia.org](http://www.Ravinia.org). Then pack a picnic or pick up and carry out at Ravinia. Gates open at 3:00 p.m. Meet the group on the lawn as early as possible to ensure space for your lawn chair. Prefer to share a ride? Contact Gail Price in the church office.

## *South Pacific* presented by Glenview Theater Guild Glenbrook South High School

June 26, 27, at 8:00 p.m., 28 at 2:00 p.m.

July 3 at 8:00 p.m. July 5 at 2:00 p.m.

July 10, 11 at 8:00 p.m., July 11 at 2:00 p.m.

Advance tickets can be obtained from Linda Clinton at \$12.00

## Wendella Boats Tour Michigan Avenue at the Wrigley Building Sunday, July 19, 3:00 p.m. cruise

Wendella Boats have been sailing on Lake Michigan and the Chicago River since 1935, offering a spectacular panorama of the city skyline, a close-up experience of the boat's movement through the Chicago River Lock, and fun for people of all ages. Ascension members Bob and Lila Borgstrom have offered 50 complimentary tour tickets in celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Sign up at church and indicate whether you prefer to travel together from church or arrive on your own. Contact Helen Costello for more information.

## Summer Picnic at the Swedish Gym Club, Pistakee Bay Sunday, August 16

For some summer fun, pull out your calendars and schedule an afternoon of good food, good fun, and relaxation at the lake on Sunday, August 16th. We will gather at the Swedish Gym Club on Pistakee Bay in Johnsburg, IL at 1:00 p.m. for an afternoon picnic. You'll have an opportunity for swimming, fishing from the piers, and playing outdoor sports on the big lawn. If you prefer, you can simply sit in a lawn chair, visit, and enjoy the beautiful view of Pistakee Lake. Helen Costello will have more information in the July issue of *The Witness*.

## Spiritual Growth

This has been a great year for adult education at Ascension. Due to the Sunday schedule change, there has been an over 100% increase in attendance at Adult Forum! The weekday Bible study and men's evening Bible study have continued to provide additional learning opportunities. To help in planning future relevant and well-scheduled educational opportunities, many "Ascensionites" recently completed an adult spiritual growth survey. The following sections summarize the survey results and give you a heads-up on some new educational offerings.



Sunday morning continues to be an optimal time for adult education and people often make time to attend Adult Forum when they find the topics relevant to their daily lives. The following five topics were most often suggested by survey responders:

- Islam and the Koran
- Early Church History
- Jesus and Paul
- ELCA Social Statements and Statements of Faith
- Judaism Then and Now

In response, the following Adult forum sessions have already been planned and others will be soon scheduled. We are very blessed to have access to wonderful professors from Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago as well as teachers from other nearby Christian universities.

- In October, Professor Krentz of LSTC, one of the most popular speakers at Adult Forum, will return to give a three-week study on the history of the early church.
- There will be several short Bible study series based on the above topics.
- Speakers on Judaism and Islam to be scheduled.

## Mid-week Adult Spiritual Growth

We remain committed to provide both daytime and evening adult education opportunities so that most people's schedules can be accommodated. In response to the survey, we will also have a balance of pastor and lay-led studies. The following are a few upcoming opportunities based on topics mentioned by survey respondents.

Pastor Bushkovsky, who has a strong background in Lutheran worship, will teach a class on "Why Lutherans Worship as They Do" on four Wednesday mornings, June 17-July 8. If you have children in day camp or summer school or if your work schedule is lighter during the summer, this is the perfect class for you!

The Lutheran Worship class will be repeated on Tuesday evenings in the Fall so that all may attend this meaningful class.

Later in the year, short-term studies on topics in Luther's Small Catechism will be offered. These mini-adult confirmation classes will provide wonderful foundation material for people not raised in the Lutheran church as well as relevant reminders for life-long Lutherans.

## Fall Retreat

Finally, mark your calendars for Saturday, October 24, 2009, 8:30-noon. Men and women are invited to a special morning for personal growth. Male and female speakers will explore the topic of "Gratitude" followed by fellowship and worship opportunities in the beautiful setting of Techny Towers. Watch for additional information.

Plan now to make adult spiritual growth a priority in the year ahead. In our over-scheduled, busy lives we all need to take the time to reflect, to grow in faith and be equipped to face our challenges!

# YOUTH MINISTRY

A BIG CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL GRADUATING HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS AND CONFIRMED 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADERS! Well done to all of you seniors, and we look forward to hearing more about your upcoming endeavors and adventures! It has been great having you 8<sup>th</sup> graders in the confirmation program, and we cannot wait to have you as regular participants in Ascension's high school youth group!!

I also want to be sure to say a big THANK YOU to all the adult volunteers who have made this past year of youth group activities and confirmation class possible, especially: Jeanne Barnas and Andy Price for volunteering with LYFE on Sunday evenings, as well as the Iorio family, Eileen Bornscheuer, the Reilly family and the Newman family for serving as LYFE House hosts; Dave Barnas, Shirley Kreutzfeldt, Ron Mallicoat, Nina McCune and Kathy Weinstein for all your help with the Tuesday night confirmation program throughout the year. Thank you all for your commitment to and participation in this 2008-2009 year of youth ministry programming!

Although our weekly gatherings for The Breakfast Club, LYFE and Confirmation will be on 'summer break' during the next few months, there will still be several youth group activities and events taking place throughout June, July and August 2009! Here are a few during the month of June to go ahead and put on your calendar:

> **Thursday, June 11<sup>th</sup> - 1:05 p.m., Colorado Rockies vs. Milwaukee Brewers Baseball Game**

Meet at church @ 11:00 a.m. to head up to Milwaukee for an afternoon of baseball! We'll return to the church by about 5:00 p.m. Cost is \$20. RSVP TO VANESSA NO LATER THAN WEDS., JUNE 3<sup>RD</sup> TO RESERVE A SPACE!

> **Tuesday, June 16<sup>th</sup> - 4:00 to 7:00 p.m., volunteering @ Good News Community Kitchen!**

> **Saturday, June 20<sup>th</sup> - 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., volunteering with Habitat for Humanity! (ages 16+)**

> **Wednesday, June 24<sup>th</sup> - 8:00 to 10:00 p.m., 'LYFE Sunset Cinema' @ Ascension**

LYFE youth group will be having an outdoor movie series this summer on the front lawn at church! Bring a blanket or lawn chair and join us at 8:00 p.m. to watch 'The Goonies' on the big screen while snacking on popcorn, soda and cotton candy alongside Ascension friends!

> **Saturday, June 27<sup>th</sup> - 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Promisedland Paintball**

If you haven't turned in your permission slip and \$25 deposit for this outing yet, contact the Gibson's or Vanessa ASAP to reserve your spot and get more info!

All of these activities during the month of June are open to youth in grades 6 through 12 unless otherwise noted. Offsite activities will require signed permission slips, so please keep your eyes and ears open for more details as we approach each event. Friends are definitely invited and welcome to join in the fun this summer!

Peace,

*Vanessa*



The end of Sunday School for 2008-2009 has been a time of reflection for us. Beth and I are sad to see it end, but we take many happy memories from the year. We will miss having you all in class over the summer, but we're excited to begin planning for next year! We'd like to wish "good luck" to all of our fifth graders who will be continuing their Christian education and preparation in the Confirmation classes. Thank you for being such good role models to the younger children this past year.

Now it's VBS reminder time: please be sure to mark your calendars for the week of June 15th through June 19 from 6 p.m. until 8 p.m. and prepare yourselves to be ROCKED at Crocodile Dock!. We are very excited to be hosting this joint effort with St David's and Holy Trinity, and we know that it will be an exciting and memorable week for all involved! A special "thank you": goes out to our volunteer Team Leaders from Ascension. Ruth Newman (Arts and Crafts), Jan and Moe Hincapie (Games and Recreation), Diane and Rich Iorio (Drama) and Mischa Zupko (Music). Beth and I are so proud to have so many of our members stepping forward to take these leadership roles, we're looking forward to a great week!

When we have caught our breath after VBS, we will begin the early planning stages for Rally Day and the beginning of Sunday School next September. Please keep an eye on the bulletin and your email boxes for exact dates and times for these planning meetings (we are anticipating sometime in early to mid- July). We invite everyone to bring your ideas and hope that you will plan on joining us.

Enjoy your summer! See you all in church and fellowship!

*God's Love,*

*Greg & Beth*

## **Call Committee**

The synod office has provided us with six candidates and there is the possibility of three additional candidates in the next few weeks. The three additional are people who have inquired or been suggested by us but have not fully decided they want to become part of our call process. Of the original six, we have conducted five interviews and excused three candidates from our process. Currently we are focusing on watching the candidates preach and observing how they relate to their current congregations. Our sincere thanks for your prayers and support.

*Call Committee 2009*

# 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Jubilee Celebration

## Wall of Remembrance

The banners flanking the entrance to the nave are waiting for your Ascension memories. Check out the cards in the Friendship Book to jog your memories, record your memories on the cards, and place the cards in the baskets located below the banners. If you have questions, please see Debby Schwab.

## Guest Preachers Join Ascension's 50th Anniversary Celebrations

While a number of former pastors of Ascension will be joining us during the anniversary banquet on November 14 and for a festival worship service on November 15, a few of them have also agreed to be guest preachers for upcoming services. These will be special times for people to hear a former pastor preach and to re-connect in a variety of ways. Former pastors will be guest preachers at both Sunday morning worship services on the following dates:

July 26 -- Pastor Michael Schnell

August 30 -- Pastor Donald Bravin

October 25 -- Pastor Don Fagerberg

Plan now to attend worship on these days and to invite former members of Ascension who may remember these former pastors to join us as well.

## All Aboard!

Put on your sailor suits and join your Ascension friends and families on Sunday, July 19, for an afternoon cruise on the Chicago River and Lake Michigan aboard a Wendella boat. We will "set sail" on our narrated tour at 3:00 p.m. Reservations are required, so please sign up at church or call the office. Plan to meet at church or at dockside, which is located at the northwest corner of Michigan Avenue and the Chicago River.

## Church Picnic, Sunday August 16th

Pack your picnic basket and join your Ascension friends and families for an afternoon on the shores of Pistakee Lake located in Johnsburg, IL. We will gather at 1:00 p.m. at the Swedish Gym Club for an afternoon of good food, fun, and just plain old relaxation. There will be a sign-up sheet in church as we get closer to the date. Start now to think about your favorite picnic fare and plan to bring it with you. And, just a quick FYI, there is a full kitchen and two Weber grills. By the way, bathing suits are not required, but highly recommended, if you plan to swim. We look forward to seeing all of you on August 16th!

## 2010 Oberammergau Passion Play and Lutheran Heritage Site Tour

September 12-22, 2010

Ascension friends will journey to *Germany* next summer to visit sites significant in the life of Martin Luther--castles, cathedrals and churches—and attend the historic Passion Play in the village of Oberammergau, nestled in the Bavarian Alps. Reservations are being accepted by Trans World Travel of Highland Park. Complete details including registration forms are available in brochures at church.