

*The Witness*  
October 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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## Staff Directory

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Dear Members of the Lutheran Church of the Ascension,

It is with joy and honor that I accept the call you have extended to me to be your pastor. I am looking forward to exercising the office of Word and Sacrament within this congregation and to establishing our relationship together for ministry in Christ's name. I also look forward to being with you in celebrating your first fifty years of ministry while at the same time setting the groundwork for the next fifty years!

Throughout the call process, I have sensed a commitment and enthusiasm among the members, leaders and staff of Ascension to be a powerful witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the Northfield area. I share that same enthusiasm and commitment and look forward to working with you. Together, we can celebrate the past and honor those who helped to shape that past. Together we can cast a vision for the future and empower those who will lead Ascension into that future.

In every congregation I have served, I have asked the same basic question: "What is God calling this congregation to be and do in this time and in this place?" Our challenge will be to discern the answer to that question. The answer may or may not be the same as it was 50 years ago. Nonetheless, I am confident that God has a plan and purpose for Ascension, which is yet to unfold. I look forward to being your pastor as together we discover that plan and live into that purpose.

I am mindful of some the challenges this congregation has faced in its recent past. I also know that there are some challenges still to come. That is the nature of parish ministry. However, I am confident that if we keep our focus on the Gospel of Jesus, if we remain faithful to our calling to be the Church, and if we work together to overcome whatever obstacles may come our way, the Spirit will lead us forward into new possibilities and greater opportunities for ministry.

I plan to begin my ministry at Ascension on Tuesday, October 13th, with my first Sunday in the pulpit on Sunday, October 18th. This will allow me to fulfill the terms of the Interim Minister Covenant to give thirty days notice of resignation to Christ the Lord Lutheran Church, Elgin. Meanwhile, I ask for your prayers as Mary and I say goodbye to the members of Christ the Lord and take the steps necessary to make the transition from one congregation to another.

May God bless us in our journey together!

*Dennis H. Kelly*

Dennis H. Kelly, pastor



## Focus on Health

Adult seasonal flu and pneumonia immunization will be available at Ascension Church on Sunday morning, October 4, 8:30-11:00 a.m. Payment of \$22 for seasonal flu vaccine will be accepted by cash, check or money order payable to ISR Consulting, Blue Cross/Blue Shield PPO, or Medicare Part B (be sure to bring your card). Pneumonia shots will be offered for \$45. Sign up for a time that suits your Sunday morning schedule and invite family and friends to join you in caring for your good health. This clinic is not equipped to serve children under the age of 18 or pregnant women. Please contact Gail Price for information.

Recent information from the website of the Centers for Disease Control and Protection regarding H1N1 (swine flu) is shared here and at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

**Will the seasonal flu vaccine also protect against the 2009 H1N1 flu?** The seasonal flu vaccine is not expected to protect against the 2009 H1N1 flu.

**Can the seasonal vaccine and the 2009 H1N1 vaccine be given at the same time?** It is anticipated that seasonal flu and 2009 H1N1 vaccines may be administered on the same day. However, we expect the seasonal vaccine to be available earlier than the H1N1 vaccine. The usual seasonal influenza viruses are still expected to cause illness this fall and winter. Individuals are encouraged to get their seasonal flu vaccine as soon as it is available.

We do not expect that there will be a shortage of 2009 H1N1 vaccine, but availability and demand can be unpredictable. There is some possibility that initially the vaccine will be available in limited quantities.

**Are there other ways to prevent the spread of illness?** 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.

**Follow public health advice** regarding school closures, avoiding crowds and other social distancing measures. These measures will continue to be important after a 2009 H1N1 vaccine is available because they can prevent the spread of other viruses that cause respiratory infections.

Peace and good health to you,

*Gail Price*

### Blood Drive at Ascension Sunday, October 18

Please schedule your appointment time by signing up on the Blood Drive sheet on the bulletin board in the narthex or the insert in the Friendship Book. LifeSource advises donors to eat healthy foods and drink plenty of fluids in the days prior to giving blood, and to eat a good breakfast on the day of giving blood.

You are eligible to donate blood if you weigh at least 110 pounds, are in good physical health, are at least 17 years old (16 years of age with parental permission and there is no upper age limit), and have not given blood in the past eight weeks (56 days).

The entire process of registration, mini-physical, giving blood, and enjoying refreshments takes about an hour. What an easy way for all of us who are enjoying good health to express our gratitude to God and to provide for those in need.

Please call Fran Gustafson (847-724-0783) if you have any questions.

# Reach Out Through God's Love

## Kicking Off the Fall Stewardship Emphasis

What a busy and joyous time in the life of Lutheran Church of the Ascension! Look back at the glorious work we've done in God's name for the past 50 years, and look forward with excitement to the next steps in our journey doing His work.

I once heard Stewardship defined as "Everything you do after you say 'I Believe...'" . It's the way we live our everyday life, how we show Jesus' love to everyone we meet, and how we take care of all that God has entrusted us. Stewardship happens year round and in so many ways at Ascension—it's a blood drive, a focus on Fair Trade, an emphasis on caring for God's creation, the resettlement of a refugee family. It's the dedication of Sunday School teachers and choir members and Bible study leaders. And, the Bible also clearly tells us that it's about giving back a small part of the many financial blessings we receive from God in response to His grace and generosity in our lives.

We will be kicking off our Fall financial stewardship emphasis in our services on Sunday, October 4<sup>th</sup>. In the spirit of our Jubilee celebration, we will lift up our financial commitment to God on Sunday, November 8<sup>th</sup>. Please plan to attend!

You will also notice that in 2010 we will more deliberately weave stewardship into many aspects of our daily church life, to reflect the idea that we are God's stewards on Earth in many different ways. Stay tuned to learn more!

Yours in Christ,  
Bruce Carlson  
Stewardship Team Leader

## Habitat for Humanity



Another month of construction and we are getting close to closing out our year. We hope to dedicate the home for the Martinez family before the holidays. There are two work dates remaining, so put your faith to work and join us either October 17, or November 21. Contact Bob Reid for further information (847)256-5259.

We are nearing our goal of \$4000, which we are donating to help defray the cost of construction. Thrivent Builds, along with other Lutheran congregations, will help build the Martinez home. So far Ascension has 75% of its commitment filled. Considering the current state of the economy, this is really great news! Help us reach our goal by contributing whatever you can. Please make your check payable to Ascension with Habitat in the memo line. Thank you for your continued support.

*Builder Bob*

## CROP Hunger Walk



Sunday, October 18 1:30 pm  
N. Northfield United Methodist Church  
797 Sanders RD. Northbrook  
(Corner of Sanders and Dundee)

CROP—Christians Reaching Out to People—is a part of CWS. Please be a part of this outreach by walking with us!! If you can't walk, please support a walker with a generous donation. See Lois Giberson or Irm Claiborne for details.

## 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Service Weekend

Throughout this year, Ascension Church is celebrating 50 years of ministry, 50 years of praising God and making a difference through our congregation, in our communities, and around the world. In thanksgiving for our shared history, please join in at least one of these Service Weekend opportunities to reach out through God's love to serve others.

<b>Date/Time</b>	<b>Ministry</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Leader</b>
Saturday, October 17 10:00 am - 1:00 pm	Interfaith Refugee and Immigration Ministries (IRIM)	Ascension Church	Donate specified kitchen needs - see list Pack kitchen boxes for refugee families Meet a refugee family, hear their stories Share ethnic lunch with the family Short duration service project, for adults and children of all ages	Gail Price
Saturday, October 17 7:00 am - 4:00 pm	Habitat for Humanity	Carter Crossing Waukegan	Habitat assigns volunteer crews based on the needs of the day. No experience required. (16 years of age minimum)	Bob Reid
Sunday, October 18 8:00 am - 1:00 pm	LifeSource Blood Drive	Ascension Church	Donating a unit of blood takes an hour and saves a life. (16 years of age minimum)	Fran Gustafson
Sunday, October 18 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm	C.R.O.P. Walk	North Northfield United Methodist Church	We walk because they walk—for food, for water, for the necessities of life. Walkers choose 1K, 5K, 10K distances. Ideal for the entire family	Irm Claiborne  Lois Giberson
Tuesday, October 20 4:00 - 7:00 pm	Good News Community Kitchen	Howard and Paulina Chicago	Shop for food and/or transport and prepare the meal at Good News. Serve grateful people in Jesus' name. (12 years of age minimum)	Irm Claiborne

No one can serve in all these capacities, but together we will provide a visible witness to Jesus' love through our service. Choose the project(s) that suit your schedule and abilities, and tell the leader(s) that you will be there. May God bless you in your serving.



## YOUTH MINISTRY

The 2009-2010 year of youth activities is off and running at Ascension! During September, we kicked off the year of Confirmation activities by gathering for an evening of bowling at Pinstripes! Everyone had a great time showing off their amazing bowling skills (!) while enjoying good pizza and the great company of family members and Ascension friends! We also kicked-off the year of high school youth group activities by heading up to the Richardson Farm Corn Maze for a night of wandering around the maze with flashlights and a bonfire surrounded by friends! It was great to connect with familiar friends and to meet some new ones among the youth who joined us from Holy Trinity (Glenview) and St. James (Northfield). The year is off to an exciting start, and we can't wait to see what the next several months will hold!

On deck for the month of October:

- > **Confirmation meets every Sunday morning at 10:15 a.m. in the 'Confirmation Room' (at the east end of the Christian Education wing), unless otherwise indicated on the Confirmation Schedule.** Bring your study Bible and arrive early to get a good seat for class. Don't forget that you need to be turning in 'Worship Notes' no less than twice a month as a participant in the Confirmation program!! Turn these in after worship in the designated box located in the Youth Office.
- > **Tuesday, October 27<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. will be our Confirmation 'Fellowship Night' for the month.** Don't be late; we've got something fun lined up for all 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade youth that night. There will be more info to come, but for now all you need to know is: WEAR YOUR HALLOWEEN COSTUME WHEN YOU COME THAT EVENING AT 6:00 P.M. (adult leaders, too!). :o)
- > **Every Sunday morning at 10:15 a.m., high school youth meet for 'The Breakfast Club' in the Youth Room for discussion, fellowship and breakfast!** On the last Sunday of each month we're heading over to the Northfield Starbuck's for a change in scenery, so be sure to join us in the mornings before or after attending one of the worship services!
- > **Every Sunday night is LYFE (Lutheran Youth Fellowship for Everyone!) for h.s. youth from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.** We always meet at the church at 6:00 p.m. . . sometimes staying in for an activity, sometimes going out for that night's event! Stay tuned to your email and text messages to find out what we'll be up to week-to-week. The more people that come the better, so bring a friend to join us!!

Check out [www.ascension-church.org/youth](http://www.ascension-church.org/youth) for more info about all Ascension Youth Ministry activities, or call/email me with any questions. Looking forward to seeing all Ascension youth this month.

Peace,

**Vanessa**



Rally Day '09 Team Good News! was an amazing day, start to finish. A huge turnout, and so many families with their children in attendance, really have Beth and I excited to get the Sunday School year going! When planning an event like this there are so many people needed to pull it off, and Ascension happens to be blessed with a true community of volunteers who are willing to share their gifts to make days like these possible. From the heavy lifting to the service participants, from the food and grilling to crafts and games, then the huge job of getting everything cleaned and put away— THANKS TO EVERYBODY WHO HELPED! Special thanks goes out to Lisa Rude for preparing the kids for the Team Good News skit at the end of our service, honoring our 50th Anniversary Year. Thank you, Lisa, for all you do; the children were an inspiration to all of us in worship! Also a big "Thank You" to Mischa. Until you follow this guy around the halls of Ascension on any given week, you can't really wrap your head around how much he does for our congregation, and Rally Day was no exception. THANK YOU, MISCHA!

Now on to the beginning of our Sunday School year. Beth and I would like to thank our first rotation teachers Pam Carlson and Eleanor Pattie, for working with our Pre-K, Clare and Tim Engling for working our Cooking rotation, Linda Althoff for taking Bible Skills and Games and our Drama Leaders, Lisa Rude and Angela Erland. Thank you all for putting yourselves out there and sharing your talents and gifts with our children! We still need volunteers to teach rotations (mainly after the first of the year, during our second semester), and we hope that you will be inspired to share your love of Christ with the children of Ascension. Please contact Beth or Greg at [Beth@Ascension-Church.org](mailto:Beth@Ascension-Church.org) with any questions or to sign up.

On Sunday, October 4, our 4th and 5th grade students will be sharing a drama that they have been working on under the leadership of Angela Erland and Lisa Rude. The drama will be performed at both the Traditional and Celebrate services. So many members seem to enjoy having the children take an active part in service that it will be an ongoing theme throughout the year with children of all grade levels participating at various times.

Wrapping things up, we'd like to mention that Beth and I have planned a "sleep under" for Friday evening, October 30. All children ages Pre-K through 5th grade are invited to participate in this fun night of games, scavenger hunt, snacks and a movie, and please don't forget to wear your pajamas! (Parents of Pre-K and Kindergartners are required to stay with their child for the evening.) If you have any questions, please contact Beth or me at the email address above. We hope to see you all there!

In God's Love,  
**Greg & Beth**

## Adult Spiritual Growth



In a world divided by political, social, economic and religious hostility (sound familiar), Paul writes a letter to his brothers and sisters in Ephesus about unity. Jews, gentiles, slave and free--all are to live as a family. Here, Paul tells us how to conduct ourselves in our roles as husbands or wives, brothers or sisters, parents or children. He calls us to be knit together--with every part and member working properly--by the power of the Holy Spirit. This Men's Bible Study is an eleven-week look at the book of Ephesians, held on Tuesday evenings at 7 p.m. Although the study began September 15th, it is not too late to join us. All men are invited. Study guides are available for \$6.00. If you have any questions, please call or e-mail John West at 847-729-0609 or [jwestx2@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jwestx2@sbcglobal.net).

### Adult Library

The featured Book of the Month in the Ascension Library is: *Life Among the Lutherans* Culled from Keillor's Lake Wobegon monologues from Prairie Home Companion days, this volume is a collection of short stories about (fictional, Lutheran) ordinary people in an imperfect world. Keillor's telling of the little details of life in mythical Lake Wobegon is bound to entertain, amuse, and delight. Published by Augsburg Press, we can be assured that there is sufficient sympathy in Keillor's good-natured exaggerations as to leave our faith intact. This book has it all: easy reading, convenient places to pause, no need to recall plot, warm comfort on a cold night. And those nights are coming soon enough. This book is filed under category "W" (Fiction) in the Library, located in the Augustana Room, and is available for self-checkout.

The Spiritual Growth Team invites you to the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Spiritual Discipline Retreat

“Growing Spiritually through Gratitude”

Saturday – October 24, 2009

8:30 a.m. until noon

Divine Word Conference Center at Techny

2800 Waukegan Road

Featured speakers:

Rev. Peg Otte, is the ELCA Senior Pastor of Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, in Prospect Heights. She was installed in November, 2006. Good Shepherd is a 1,000+ baptized member church, which celebrated 50 years in 2007.

Mark L. Vincent, Ph.D. is CEO of Design Group International. He has a B.A. in Biblical Studies, Taylor University; a M.A. in Ministry from Moody Graduate School; and a Ph. D in Organization Development, Leadership Specialization, Capella University. Dr. Vincent also is a Certified Stewardship Professional. He was the founding editor of *GIVING*, the annual periodical of the Ecumenical Stewardship Center, and serves on the board of the Christian Leadership Alliance.

Sign up on the Bulletin Board, or call the church office.  
BRING A FRIEND!

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### More Opportunities for Spiritual Growth

One of the most treasured books in the Bible is the book of Psalms. The structure, content and themes of many of the psalms help us discover their importance in our own Christian walk and the nourishment of our faith.

The psalms tell us who God is and who we are. Many of them help us learn how we can be encouraged to let our weight down on the God who promises to hold us, and never let us go. Other psalms teach us how we should praise Him. If you would like to find yourself in the Psalms and learn to incorporate them into your devotional and prayer life, join us for a 6-week study on Wednesdays, beginning October 7th, from 10 - 11:15 a.m. Ruth Willason will lead the study.

## Worship Notes

It was another beautiful Rally Day and so good to see all of you. Thanks to all who participated in worship and fellowship. and a special thanks to all who played an active role in making the day happen. Bravo to Lisa Rude and the kids for their terrific postlude, to Helen Costello, Marianne Piraro, Susan Vonnegut, Charlie Price and Lois Vining, and all who helped them in the kitchen; to master grillers, Mo Hincapie and Dick Amos, and to Beth and Greg for leading wonderful inter-generational activities. Thanks also to the musicians and choir who participated in the worship and to all who baked, bought, set up, served and cleaned up, especially Andy Price, who had the thankless job of cleaning the grill. Thanks to all of you! Rally Day always reminds us of what it means to be part of a church community; let us continue with this mindset as we head into the fall.

The next event in our concert series features music directors of Ascension, past and present, in celebration of our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Participants will include Robert Lind, Jill Hunt, Pastor Patrick Shebeck, Minkyoo and myself. This event takes place on Saturday, **October 3 at 4:30 p.m.** Please come and give a warm "welcome back" to your former music directors!

As for our musical groups, we are always looking for new voices, ringers and instrumentalists to join us in what we do. If you have a gift and/or a passion in this area of service, please let us know. We will find a way to make you a part of things musical, even if you can't commit on a regular basis. As a reminder, we have an adult choir, handbell choir, children's choir, praise team, assistant liturgists, and opportunities to play special music during the service.

We want to form a team of about 10-15 members who have the gift of hospitality and who would be willing to participate as greeters on a rotational basis. We will be outlining some procedures for identifying visitors and helping them to get connected to our congregation and staff. If you think you could help us reach out to our community in this role, please contact Jan Leverenz at [janlev1@comcast.net](mailto:janlev1@comcast.net).

Please set aside the following dates in your calendar: **October 4, November 15 and December 12.** The October and November dates are Sunday worship times when we will be premiering new works written for our choir. November 15 is, of course, the day we are marking as the official 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, so you will definitely want to be present for that. Saturday, December 12 at 4:30 p.m. is our Christmas/Advent concert. This year we are doing a selection of pieces that make up a program we are calling "Voices from Heaven", featuring music for strings, voices, handbells, guitars, percussion and possibly harp.

Again, we'd like to thank Pastor Bushkofsky for his excellent service here at Ascension and wish him well on his next calling. We look forward to welcoming Pastor Dennis Kelly and his family this month as they come to answer the call we have extended. We have and continue to be blessed in this place so let us rejoice and give Him praise for all He has given us. See you in worship!

Peace,

Mischa & Minkyoo

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Blessing of Animals Service

**Sunday, October 4 at 12:30 p.m.**

**All pets and household animals welcome! Tell your friends & neighbors.**

## A Letter from our Council President

Grace and peace! I am pleased to tell you that your Congregation Council remains focused on the goal and four step plan that I laid out for you at the Annual Meeting.

First and foremost, we have called a new senior pastor and he has accepted! Dennis Kelly will begin his ministry at Ascension Tuesday October 13, his first day in the office. He will lead us in worship for the first time that following Sunday, October 18. The Bishop's Associate, Rev. Carol Breimeier, will formally install Pr. Kelly on All Saints Sunday, November 1st. Be sure to listen and watch for details of that celebration. In the interim, please take the opportunity to tell Pr. Bushkofsky how much you have appreciated his leadership and time with us during this period of transition.

Second, the Facilities Review Task Force is well under way. Under the stewardship of Andrew McCune, Task Force members Donna Craven, Kurt Vining and John West have held numerous meetings with the Staff and interested Congregation members. Thanks to so many of you, they have had the benefit of input from over 105 completed survey forms. They will be making a recommendation to the Council some time next month, and we will schedule a Congregation Meeting to vet and talk about it, likely some time in November.

Third, your Council, the Officers and Staff are making great strides in determining how to get our committees and teams working together. The byproduct of our efforts will be a substantially revised set of bylaws that we will distribute for comment well before the Annual Meeting in February 2010, when you will be asked to vote on and accept them.

Fourth, the Jubilee Committee has treated us all to a series of wonderful events and fellowship opportunities. You won't want to miss the gala dinner on November 14th. It will be a great event, filled with reflection on the past and focus on the future. (Mark your calendars: Sun. Nov. 15th will be a special jubilee service with Bishop Kenneth Olson (Ret.) and Nov. 29th is the official anniversary) And, in case it was not apparent from the foregoing, we are in the process of building for our next 50 years. Thanks be to God!

Finally, we have committed to be a pilot or focus congregation in the Synod's Turnaround Initiative. This is a new venture that the Bishop and his staff are promoting for the rejuvenation and growth of Synod congregations. As a first step, you will be asked to complete a survey - yes, another survey - that will help determine the areas in which Ascension needs to focus to ensure that we fulfill our mission: both as individual disciples and missionaries of the Word and as God's community of faith in this place/space. Keep lifting up!

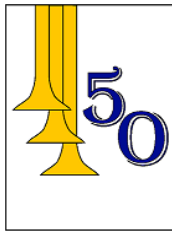
*Stephen W. Schwal*

## Ascension Women's Luncheon

October 1 - 12:00 noon

**Hackney's on Lake**

Anni Schulte Bodmer, a former Ascension member who now lives in Switzerland, has recently published her first book entitled *Anna's Ring*, a story of faith, love and hope in a hostile environment. Anni and her husband Stefan, will be present at the Women's Luncheon at noon at Hackney's on Lake, to share in a discussion of the book. Anni's deep Christian faith and her extensive travels in the Middle East are reflected throughout the book. You will want to hear her story. Invite your friends to join us!



You are invited to be present to celebrate the Lutheran Church of the Ascension's first 50 years of making a difference in ministry. Join in these special events:

- Organ concert on Saturday, October 3 (see page 9)
- 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Service Weekend (see page 5)
- The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner, which will take place on Saturday, November 14 at the Glen View Club in Golf. Share an evening of fellowship and fun, storytelling and reflection with former and present members, and enjoy a delicious dinner. Invitations will be in the mail shortly. Please advise the church office of the contact information of former members you know want to be included.
- Sunday, November 15, we will come together at 10:00 a.m. for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary festive worship service. Former pastors will take part in the service and the preacher will be former Metro Chicago Synod Bishop Kenneth Olsen. Remembering the past, we rededicate ourselves to the mission and ministry of the Lutheran Church of the Ascension in our community, our nation and throughout the world. A special time of fellowship will follow worship.