

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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Establishing New Routines

This fall at Lutheran Church of the Ascension is full of renewed activity. As the following pages of *The Witness* will show, there are many opportunities for us in the coming weeks to get involved in new ways or to be reacquainted with people and events we may already have come to know.

If you like the routines of each new season, this fall will have several: the return to the regular worship schedule each Sunday (traditional service at 9:00 a.m. and the *Celebrate* service at 11:00 a.m.), the start of another Sunday school year with Rally Day on September 13, the continuation of the confirmation ministry program, the resumption of regular choir rehearsals, and weekly adult forums at 10:30 a.m.

But there will be a different twist to many familiar things as well. Most of the instruction in the confirmation program will be taking place during the education hour on Sunday mornings. Several activities related to the congregation's observance of its 50th anniversary are coming up this fall: appearances by former pastors of the congregation who will be guest preachers (Donald Bravin on August 30; Curt Gerald on September 20; and Donald Fagerberg on October 25). Mid-November will be a highpoint in the yearlong anniversary celebrations with a banquet on Saturday evening, November 14, and a festive anniversary worship service on Sunday morning, November 15 at 10:00 a.m.

Certainly one of the new developments is the possibility that a pastor will be arriving as Ascension's next regularly called pastor sometime this fall (pending the vote at a congregational meeting on August 30). The installation of a new pastor comes after a number of months of intense and dedicated activity on the part of the congregation's call committee.

Even as much as the coming season is a welcome return to familiar routines for many of us, this fall at Lutheran Church of the Ascension will also provide much that is new. If you have not been as active as you once were in participating in events at Ascension, now would be a great time to become re-involved. Likewise, if you are new to the congregation, this is a time to explore what we have to offer. This fall especially is a time to begin *new* routines.

Dennis Bushkofsky

Interim Pastor



Focus on Health

Health Care Reform News and Alerts from ELCA e-Advocacy Network

Where Things Stand

In the U.S. House of Representatives, all three committees of jurisdiction - Education and Labor, Ways and Means, and Energy and Commerce - passed roughly similar versions of health care reform. These three versions now need to be merged into one unified bill, which will be debated and voted upon when the members return in September.

In the U.S. Senate, progress has been slower. Of the two committees of jurisdiction, one - the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee - passed a version of health care reform in mid-July. The other - the Finance Committee - continues to work out details but has yet to complete their version of health care reform legislation. Once the Finance Committee produces a bill and votes on it, likely in September, that version will be merged with the HELP Committee bill. Then that final Senate version will be debated and voted upon by the full Senate this Fall.

What you can do

- Read the ELCA's social statement on health and health care, [Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor](#). Although not geared to any particular legislation, this statement provides the baseline principles that the ELCA uses to evaluate the health care reform legislation currently moving through Congress. The ELCA has not endorsed any particular health care reform bill, but we are working to ensure that all bills come as close as possible to the standards set in our social statement.

- Learn about the legislation moving through Congress. The Associated Press put together [some basic information](#) on the three bills being worked on in Congress, and the Kaiser Family Foundation has an excellent [online interactive side-by-side comparison tool](#) that allows you to compare several pieces of introduced legislation by topic. To help you sift through the plethora of competing claims in health care ads and emails, check out the nonpartisan, 2009 Pulitzer Prize winning "[Politifact.com](#)" site, run by the St. Petersburg Times.

Questions? Please feel free to contact the ELCA's Director for Domestic Public Policy, Robert Francis, at robert.francis@elca.org.

Stephen Ministry

Over the past several months, the Ascension family has experienced the death of several members of our spiritual community. When we are in grief, we rely on our faith in Christ and the support of others to help us through. Stephen Ministry is active in our congregation for just these needs. If you would like a caring Christian partner on your grief journey, please speak with Pastor or one of the Stephen Leaders.

Stephen Ministers also invite you to be present to share conversation about grief and loss on Thursday evening, September 10 at 7:00 p.m. in the Augustana Room. A local counselor will facilitate and share insight into the grief experience. Please come.

In His Love,

Joan West

Flu Prevention Clinic

Adult flu and pneumonia immunization will be available at Ascension Church on Sunday, October 4, 8:30-11:00 a.m. Payment of \$22 for flu vaccine will be accepted by cash, check, money order, Blue Cross/Blue Shield PPO, or Medicare Part B. Pneumonia shots will be offered for \$45. Sign up for a time that suits your Sunday morning schedule and invite others to join you in caring for your good health. Contact Gail Price for more information.

Save the Date for the Blood Drive at Ascension: Sunday, October 18

LifeSource makes it convenient for us to donate blood right here at Ascension. Our donations will provide for those in need and ensure a safe and adequate blood supply in our community. The actual donation process is easy and painless. And always remember....with every donation that we give, we are saving up to 3 lives!

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).

Reach Out Through God's Love

50th Anniversary Service Weekend

Throughout this Jubilee 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. Even as we look back to past experiences, we acknowledge the needs of today and anticipate the needs of the future. In thanksgiving for our shared history, please plan to join in at least one of these Service Weekend opportunities to reach out through God's love to serve others.

Saturday, October 17—Habitat for Humanity, Lake County, ages 16 + welcome
7:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Carter Crossing, Waukegan

Saturday, October 17—Service Day at Ascension Church, all ages welcome
Visit with a refugee family and share in preparing and enjoying a meal in cooperation with Interfaith Refugee and Immigration Ministries

Sunday, October 18—LifeSource blood drive, ages 16 +
8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Ascension Church Fellowship Hall

Sunday, October 18—Glenbrook C.R.O.P. Walk, all ages welcome!
1:00 p.m. North Northfield Methodist Church, Northbrook

Tuesday, October 20—Good News Community Kitchen, ages 12 + welcome to serve
Donate food, shop in advance, prepare and serve the meal at the Kitchen
4:00 - 7:00 p.m. Good News Community Kitchen, Rogers Park

Can't get out to serve? Monetary contributions in support of these ministries are always appreciated.

Serving in other ways, on other days? Let us know how you serve others through your work, your school, Scouts, in the neighborhood. Drop an email to Gail@Ascension-Church.org or call the office, 847-446-8335.

And may our gracious God bless your service and those you serve.

Peace in Christ,
Gail Price

CROP Hunger Walk

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

We walk because they walk!! What's enough for us looks like a great wealth to those around the world who walk for the water and food just to survive. Church World Service supports innovative programs to develop sustainable sources of fresh water and food in our country and 80 plus others. CROP, Christians Reaching Out to People is a part of CWS. Please be a part of this out-reach by walking with us!! If you can't walk, please support a walker with a generous donation. See Lois Giberson or Irm Claiborne for detail

Refugee Resettlement

We are still anxiously awaiting notification of the arrival of the Joad family, refugees from Iraq who have been living in Amman, Jordan for 2 1/2 years. Interfaith Refugee and Immigration Ministries (IRIM) anticipates that they will be in Chicago before the end of September, but their travel arrangements are still uncertain. As we wait, they wait also. Please keep Mohammed, his wife Rana, daughter Rawan, 8 years old, and daughter Rayal, age three, in your prayers. Please don't bring additional household items to church at this time. We will enlist your help in welcoming them and settling them into their apartment when we hear.

Lakeview Pantry Benefit Night

Faces of Hunger

Saturday, September 26

6:30-10:30 p.m.

Tsuki Japanese Restaurant and Lounge

1441 West Fullerton, Chicago

\$65 per person

Contact www.lakeviewpantry.org for information

This exciting event to benefit Lakeview Pantry will include dancing, sumptuous Asian cuisine, complimentary wine/beer, silent auction and live music courtesy of Dr. Bombay.

Lakeview Pantry opened its doors in 1970 with the mission of providing food to those living below the poverty level. Today it not only distributes groceries, but also helps clients address the issues that often lead to food insecurity such as unemployment and housing instability. 2400 individuals are served every month.

Habitat for Humanity



I hope you have seen the photos of our work trips. Building has been exciting this year, and the projects have been varied. In August we had 8 folks in our crew, (Vanessa Young, Julie Oimoen, John West, Jon Reid, Bob Reid, Mark Swenson, and nonmembers Jack and Chris Brewer). We put up roof trusses and fascia on the Thrivent Builds home for the Martinez family.

Three work dates remain (Saturdays, September 19, October 17, and November 21). Mark your calendars, bring a friend, and let me know that you plan to come along and reach out through God's love.

We are three quarters of the way to our goal of \$4000.00 for this year. You can help by making out a check to Ascension Church and putting Habitat on the memo line. This year Thrivent Financial for Lutherans (Thrivent Builds) is helping to meet the cost of a home at Carter Crossing in Waukegan, so our funding effort is multiplied.

Builder Bob

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SAVE THE DATE: Thursday,

October 1-7:00 p.m.

Ascension Church Fellowship Hall

Meet Anni Bodmer-Schulte and learn

about her book, *Anna's Ring*

Worship Notes

We would like to thank you all for your special acknowledgement of our 5th anniversary during the service and fellowship hour on August 2. We were touched by the sentiments that were expressed to us and by the choir's special anthem. We were also very appreciative for the gift and the offer to babysit....still deciding on the poor soul who has to listen to Leo play drums all night. It has been a pleasure serving here at Ascension and we hope to have the opportunity to do so for many years to come.

A reminder that Rally Day is coming up on **Sunday, September 13 at 10:00 a.m.** We are planning on the usual outdoor worship with games, activities and food to follow so be sure to save the date and bring a friend.

Another reminder: the next event in our concert series features music directors of Ascension, past and present in celebration of our 50th anniversary. Participants will include Robert Lind, Jill Hunt, 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 to your former music directors! A reception will follow the recital.

As the program year kicks off, we want to let you all know start dates for the various musical offerings. Adult Choir and Bell Choir will begin on Wednesday, September 9. We will convene at 6:00 p.m. to have some fellowship time and share a desert....please bring something to pass. The Bell Choir will meet for a short time after dessert to go over plans for the year. Choir rehearsal will then commence at 7:00 p.m. Children's choir will begin on Tuesday, September 15 at 6:00 p.m. and we look forward to their participation in Sunday worship in addition to their roles in special events. All are welcome to come check out any of these offerings, regardless of musical background or skill. You will gain those by making the commitment to give it your best shot and worship with your voice and hands.

At the Worship Team meeting on August 4, we decided to take a new approach to our intentional welcoming efforts here at Ascension. We are looking to form a team of about 10-15 members who have the gift of hospitality and 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 could help us reach out to our community in this role, please contact Jan Leverenz at janlev1@comcast.net. More details regarding our worship goals will be forthcoming as we were not able to tackle all of our issues at this meeting.

Finally, as we seem to be coming close to calling a new pastor, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to Pastor Bushkofsky for all he has done to help us through this time. He has been a steady leader with a boundless repertoire of resources and ideas, but most importantly, he has served with a generous and kind soul and we are grateful to now know him. Pastor B., we wish you all the best in the next chapter of your calling and pray that the next place of worship will benefit from your wisdom as much as we have.

Peace,

Mischa & Minkyoo



YOUTH MINISTRY

"...I'm busy. I'm probably going to be busy. I'm tired. It's the only day I get to sleep-in. I don't have a ride. I don't have gas in my car. I'm too young for that. I'm too old for that. I have too much homework. I have to study. I have practice. I have training. I have a game/match/tournament/competition. I have to work. I've never participated before. I don't know anyone. None of my friends go anymore. I have scouts. I'm too cool. I'm too nerdy. I'm different. I'm too smart. I'm not smart enough. My parents don't go to church. My friends don't go to church. I haven't been to church in a long time. I live too far away. I might be out of town. I don't eat 'breakfast'. I don't go to 'lock-ins'. I don't go to 'camp'. I don't like 'retreats'. I don't watch movies. I don't hang out with people my own age. I have another birthday party to go to. I have another bar mitzvah to go to. I have another bat mitzvah to go to. I won't have fun. I won't learn anything. I won't meet anyone new. I don't like Bible study. I don't like service projects. I don't like social activities..."

Jesus makes time with you a priority in His weekly schedule. Are you making time for Him?

Youth Ministry at Ascension is for ALL youth in grades 6 through 12, no exceptions. It doesn't matter if your parents are members/regular attendees or not, and it doesn't matter if you've been to a youth group activity before or not. Each activity is a new opportunity to get involved, no matter where you're coming from or how much you may or may not have been involved before. You are welcome here, and we would love for you to join us at any of Ascension's youth ministry activities this 2009-2010 year!

Life is busy, complicated and stressful, and church is a place where you can simply come and take a step back from the weekly grind of school and extracurriculars, and just 'be'. The reason we have Bible study and intentional 'God time' is so that we can continue to think about all this God/Jesus business and figure out what it means to be a Christian for us. Don't let anyone fool you: every single person who comes into the church building at Ascension is trying to figure out their faith and relationship with God & Jesus, and that's exactly why we come together at least once a week - to work on it together. The reason we participate in service projects is because Jesus' last command was that we love one another just as he loved (and continues to love) each one of us. Loving people means doing whatever you can to meet the human needs that others may have; loving and serving others the way that God has loved and served us. Jesus shared conversations, food, shelter, and much, much more with whomever needed it, so we need to be doing the same. The reason we participate in retreats, social activities, etc. is because we all have more in common with each other than we have in difference or contrast, and once we break the ice and know more about each other, we'll be more able relate on matters of life and faith. After God, we're accountable to each other and can provide a source of support for one another. Youth group friends can be the people you share life-changing experiences with that you remember for a lifetime!

Like anything else, youth group will be what YOU put into it. So do yourself a favor: make some time, and come to church this year! The time spent will be worth it, and God will be glad to see you.



Welcome back, Kids! September means Rally Day and the first days of our new Sunday School year. We are excited to have all of you back (including some new faces!), and are looking forward to what we hope is going to be an exciting year of friends, fun and great activities! Rally Day will be held on Sunday, September 13, and that day we will also commission our Sunday School teachers and other volunteers. Please make every effort to attend this wonderful worship service, which will be followed by games, arts and crafts and food! We are always looking for volunteers, so let us know if you could help us with this exciting and vital church ministry, the Christian education of our children. If you have any questions about how you can help and what the level of commitment would be, please grab one of us or send an email to bnqpeterson@att.net. Thank you for considering Children's Ministry!

The first "official" day of Sunday School will be Sunday, September 20. Following the same tradition as last year, all kids will gather inside the sanctuary at 10:15 a.m. for our opening. Following the opening, the teachers will lead the children to their classroom for Sunday School activities. New this year is how parents will meet their children at the end of class. About 11:05 a.m., the teachers will lead the kids back to Fellowship Hall for a brief closing and then parents can pick their child/ren up.

Also, at one of the worship services Sunday, September 20th, children in 2nd grade through 5th grade will be presented a Bible by their parents. These Bibles will be used by the children during the course of the Sunday School year. Beth and I want to emphasize the commitment that you as parents have made to raise and educate your children as both Christians and Lutherans. We feel that presenting your child with his or her Bible shows that commitment to our entire church community. Please be sure to attend both a worship service and Sunday School that day.

What an exciting time this is: a new year of Sunday School, getting back together with "church" friends, and being blessed with such wonderful and talented teachers and volunteers to make this year memorable for everyone involved!

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. Let us let his message of order and wholeness heal and empower us. This Fall's Men's Bible Study will be an eleven week look at the book of Ephesians. It will be held on Tuesday evenings at 7 p.m., beginning September 15th. All men are invited. No experience is necessary. All you need is a desire to grow on your spiritual path. Study guides are available for \$6.00. If you have any question, please call or e-mail John West at 847-729-0609 or jwestx2@sbcglobal.net.



Summer is rapidly waning away, but there is still time to pick out a good book from the Ascension library, and settle in for a quiet evening. Featured Books for September:

{Crazy Book} - A Not-So-Stuffyc Dictionary of Biblical Terms, by Jacobson, Jacobson, and Wiersma. Three Lutheran professors focus on major people, places, events, books, and types of literature found in the Bible. This is an accessible book, filled with scholarly insight, but presented with a lightness and humor that will engage you throughout.

First You Have to Row a Little Boat, by Richard Bode. Reflections on life and living, using sailing metaphors. An inspiring book that teaches us to maneuver with patience and resolve around the obstacles in our own lives. Well written, with substance, and a fast read.

These two books can be found displayed at the check-out stand just inside the Augustana Room, and are available for check-out. If you have questions about the library, or suggestions for its content or operations, see John Vonnegut, or leave a message for him in the Library box in the Church office.

Property Team

This past month our attorney has been developing a contract for the engineering consulting firm, who will be documenting the design and writing the specifications for the new boiler system. When they reach agreement, the engineering work will begin, followed by creating the specifications for the new system and contacting contractors to request bids for the actual work.

Burning bushes were planted in the area north of the rear parking lot and while it was done earlier than planned, our landscaper has been keeping them watered. We plan on building a temporary wall between the burning bush and Willow to protect them from winter plowing.

The window replacement for Fellowship Hall and the window adjacent to the glass door leading to Memorial Gardens has been scheduled and may have been completed by the time you are reading this update.

Did you notice that the sidewalk leading to the rear entrance has been repaired? The appearance has improved and more importantly, it is safer.

We have eight doors opening directly to the outside and occasionally they have been left open after someone exits the building. Don Gordon is busy installing closers on those doors to help keep the cool (or warm in the winter) air in and reduce our energy costs.

Future projects include the possibility of upgrading the women's washroom and making it an internal project (asking volunteers to design and do the work), our fire alarm and telephone system, and the need for a fence around the dumpster area. We may not work on all of these immediately and some may become budget items for next year.

Kurt Vining

50th Anniversary Jubilee Celebration

As the summer draws to a close, many of you have already joined in some aspect of celebration of the 50th Anniversary of Ascension Church. Whether sharing in the Ascension Sunday opening worship and festive brunch on May 17, laughing along with Garrison Keillor at Ravinia, experiencing *South Pacific* with the Glenview Theater Guild, cruising Lake Michigan on the Wendella Boat Tour, welcoming former pastors to the pulpit, or picnicking at the Swedish Gym Club, the 50th Anniversary Team hopes you are connecting with Ascension friends and inviting others to be with you. Brochures highlighting future anniversary events are available at church—why not include a friend and neighbor?

Anniversary activities continue throughout the fall and into 2010. Please mark your calendars and plan to be present in

Worship—any Sunday and with returning pastors as guest preachers on

September 20

Pastor Curt Gerald

October 25, Reformation Sunday

Pastor Don Fagerberg

November 15, Festive anniversary worship

Former Bishop Kenneth Olsen

Fellowship—at the 50th Anniversary dinner (Invitations will be mailed in early October)

Saturday, November 14, 6:00 p.m. Glen View Club, Golf

Contact the church office to offer help with any aspect of the evening (invitations, reservations, decorations, historical exhibits, program, entertainment, table host/hostess, tickets)

Service—Jubilee Service Weekend—October 17-20 (Details on p. 4 in this issue of *The Witness*)

Storytelling—The Wall of Remembrance is growing each week, and your remembrance of experiences at Ascension Church will help to tell the story of our shared life as a congregation. Share scripture, story, a photo or hymn. Mail or email it to church, bring it in, or create it on the spot some Sunday.

Travel—to Oberammergau and the land of Martin Luther in Germany, September 12-22, 2010. Brochures are available at church, and the deposit is due now. Contact Gail Price for information.

Even as we celebrate our congregation's past, we look forward to the future with great excitement! Ascension Church began as a mission congregation of the Augustana Synod. In thanksgiving and celebration, we intend to offer support to a mission congregation in the Metropolitan Chicago Synod. The 50th Anniversary Team meets next on Wednesday, September 2, 10:00 a.m. at church. Join us!

*Pastor Dennis Bushkofsky, Gail Price, Jan Hincapie, Ellen Kollmann,
Bob Nagel, Nancy Nagel, Debby Schwab, Caryl Scott and Mitch Zaleski*

Ascension Women's Luncheon

September 10 - 12:00 noon

The first meeting of the fall season will be held Thursday, September 10th at 12:00 noon at Hackney's on Lake Avenue. Please note: beginning in October the women's luncheon will be held on the first Thursday of the month.

We have an excellent program planned: our interim pastor, Dennis Bushkofsky, will speak to us. You won't want to miss him! The luncheon is open to all Ascension women. Please come and bring a guest. For more information, contact Jan Leverenz at 847-668-6880.

Please note that the following women's luncheon will take place Thursday, October 1, with guest speaker, Anni Bodmer-Schulte, speaking about her book, *Anna's Ring*, a story of love and hope in a hostile environment. Anni Schulte was an active member of Ascension Church from 1971 to 1994. You will want to hear her story; invite friends to join you.