

The Witness
July 2010

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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In this Issue:

<i>From the Pastor</i>	2
<i>Worship Notes</i>	3
<i>Communications</i>	3
<i>Youth Ministry</i>	4-5
<i>Reach Out Through God's Love</i>	6-7
<i>Focus on Health</i>	8



On June 4th and 5th Alice Kosnik, Ruth Newman and I attended the 23rd Annual Synod Assembly of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod held in Rosemont. We were there as delegate/representatives of Lutheran Church of the Ascension, gathering together with delegates from over 200 other congregations of our Synod.

The theme of the Assembly was "You will be My Witnesses" based on a passage from Acts 1:8. Throughout the assembly, we were challenged to consider what it means to be a witness and how each one of us as believers in Jesus Christ as Savior can witness to each other and to others in our lives and in our communities.

One of the most important things I took away from this Assembly was a reminder of the power of story. When we gather together for worship each Sunday morning, we come to an intersection of God's story and our story. God's story comes to us in Word and Sacrament. Our story is the accumulative narrative of the events and circumstances of our lives, the meaning that we attach to these events and circumstances, and how we interpret them through the eyes of faith. To be a witness is to tell our stories.

Some of the most memorable times at Synod Assembly are when we gather for worship. We gathered for worship on three occasions with three different worship formats: Communion, Evening prayer, and Morning Prayer. In addition to giving witness to the ethnic and cultural diversity of our Synod, our services prominently featured children's choirs and youth dance groups. You could not help but leave those services feeling a sense of joy.

The stories we heard and shared at the Assembly painted a wonderful picture of the word we do individually and together as members of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Certainly we have been challenged throughout the ELCA by the after-effects of the decisions made at the Church-wide Assembly last August. However, we affirmed that those decisions do not define who we are and what we do. God's work and our hands are changing lives and transforming communities throughout the world.

I am honored to be a part of that work as a pastor serving in the ELCA. I am grateful to be a part of such a diverse Synod as the Metropolitan Chicago Synod. And I continue to look forward to our transformative work together as I serve as pastor of the Lutheran Church of the Ascension.

Finally, let me offer a word of thanks for your birthday greetings, for the resounding "happy birthday" sung after worship on June 6th, and for the surprise birthday reception held between services. I feel truly blessed to be a part of the Ascension church family.

Yours in Christ,
Dennis Kelly, pastor

Worship Notes

Many thanks to all the worship participants, liturgists, crucifers, ushers, readers, singers, instrumentalists, and members of the altar guild, whose participation enhanced our worship services each and every Sunday of the past school year. You truly made our worship services vibrant and this would not be possible without your dedication and faithfulness. We encourage those of you who have not previously volunteered to contact the church office to offer your services. You will enjoy taking part in this rewarding experience.

Regarding our second service, here are some facts you may not be aware of due to the recent changes:

- Time: 10:30 a.m. (not 11:00 a.m.)
- Format: Liturgical and Eucharistic service using ELW setting 8 (identical to the 9:00 a.m. service)
- Music: Utilizes music mostly written in OUR era (1970-Present), which lends a generational relevance to the service. We also use our all-time favorite hymns in new colorful ways, as transcribed by Mischa. Each week there are anywhere from one to three singers who support congregational singing. The instrumentation consists of piano, acoustic guitar (occasionally electronic), and drums.
- Atmosphere: Very casual, but not losing the sacred spirit of our worship style.

Please note that the Advent/Christmas concert CD's are available for pick up. We apologize for the long delay, but there were several technical issues that came up which needed to be resolved in order for you to get the best possible recording. Please see Diane in the office to submit payment and collect your copy.

Blessings,

Mischa & Minkyoo

Communications

The church has recently started a facebook page, found under the title "Ascension - Northfield" on facebook. Facebook pages are a popular way for organizations to participate in Social Media, and Ascension plans to use its page in a variety of ways as part of its outreach efforts. Ascension staff encourages you to become a "fan" of this page.

If you're not a member of facebook, we can help. If you are already a member of facebook, you can become a "fan" by typing "Ascension - Northfield" in facebook's search box (at the top left of the facebook page) and when the "Ascension - Northfield" page appears on the screen, press the "Like" button to the right of the page title. Once you become a fan of the page, you can choose to "comment," "like," and/or "share" the individual posts. These actions help spread awareness of Ascension's page.

Consider inviting family and friends to become fans of the page. You can also mention the facebook page to those (non-members) inquiring about Ascension. If the inquirer is not on facebook, refer them to Ascension's website at <http://www.ascension-church.org/>. Any suggestions or comments regarding the "Ascension - Northfield" facebook page are encouraged. Please see Ted Kavadas in church, email him at ted_kavadas@yahoo.com or send him an email through facebook.

YOUTH MINISTRY

During the month of June, Ascension Youth got the summer started by spending a day out at Six Flags Great America and Hurricane Harbor! With a few friends along with us, the group had a GREAT day riding the roller coasters, splashing around in the water park and winning some funny prizes together. A big thank you to Katherine Kinnaird for serving as a chaperone and to the Althoff's & Michalec's for being drivers!!



Here are the July opportunities for high school and junior high/middle school youth to get involved in both fellowship and service activities, at church and beyond!

> **Saturday, July 10th, 9:00am - 7:30pm, trip to Magic Waters Water Park**

Join us for a day at this Rockford water park with friends! We'll arrive at the park before 11:00am, and plan to leave the park by around 6:00pm. Cost is \$10 per person plus some extra cash for food in the park and inner tube rentals. Permission slip is available online at www.ascension-church.org/youth or via the Ascension Youth Ministry Facebook page. Youth are definitely welcome to invite friends! Respond to let me know if you're planning to join us for this activity by no later than Monday, July 5th!

> **Wednesday, July 14th, 8:00 - 10:00pm, LYFE Sunset Cinema: *The Blind Side***

Invite a friend and bring your blanket/lawn chair to join us for our second outdoor movie of the season! An assortment of movie snacks and drinks, as well as bug spray (!) are provided.

> **Monday, July 19th to Saturday, July 24th, Leadership Lab**

Ascension youth will be attending this leadership development camp at Augustana College with around 500 other youth from Illinois. Please pray for our safe travel and for a transformative week that

helps us go deeper in our faith and learn about the gifts God has given us for the sake of sharing with the wider church!

> **Tuesday, July 20th, 4:00 - 7:00pm, volunteering @ Good News Community Soup Kitchen (ages 12+)**

5 youth volunteers are needed to help again this month with food prep and serving at this Rogers Park soup kitchen! Please sign-up in the Fellowship Hall or message me to indicate your interest in serving. This is a really great way to love and serve people in need, so thank you for getting involved in this ministry!

> **Saturday, July 24th, 7:30am - 4:30pm, volunteering with Habitat for Humanity (ages 16+)**

Help build a house for a family in need with other Ascension members! Youth can volunteer for the fully day (7:30 departure from church to begin at 8:00am, and finish at 4:00pm to back at church by 4:30pm), or for half the day (either 7:30 - 12:30pm or 12:30 to 4:30pm). Let me know what time you're interested and able to volunteer so that we can arrange transportation, and be sure to find the necessary waiver forms on the Ascension Youth webpage. Don't forget your work gloves, sunscreen and bottle of water!

Peace,

Vanessa

Reach Out Through God's Love

Good News Community Kitchen – A Just Harvest

The Good News Community Kitchen is committed to service, collaboration, and advocacy. Its mission is to reduce poverty and hunger in the Rogers Park and greater Chicago community by providing nutritious meals daily while building a just society through advocacy and collaborative relationship across racial, cultural and socio-economic lines to promote the well-being of patrons served.

Its vision is to transform the Kitchen into a community-based and community-led organization that not only feeds the hungry and responds to the needs of the community, but has the philosophy, systems and people in place to effectively address the underlying issues of hunger and poverty while affirming and developing the assets of the community.

Recently the Good News Community Kitchen was renamed **A Just Harvest**. The work of two entities, the **Community Kitchen** and **Northside P.O.W.E.R.** [People Organized to Work, Educate & Restore] remain the very heart and soul of its work. While the name and logo are new, the mission remains the same; *"until all have plenty and no one is left in need."*

Ascension Church volunteers serve a nutritious meal at the Community Kitchen on the third Tuesday of every month, and the church is a member organization of A Just Harvest. To serve at the Community Kitchen, or to donate a portion of the meal or funds to purchase food, you may sign up on the bulletin board, contact Irm Claiborne, 847-256-3302 or the church office. For more information about Northside P.O.W.E.R., see Irm or Gail Price.

Habitat for Humanity



Ascension's Habitat work crews have now made 3 trips to Waukegan. We continue to have new volunteers, for which I am very grateful. Chuck Larson, Dana & A.J. Guidice, John West, along with Jon Reid and several others from beyond Ascension Church, have worked to help build a home for our family this year.

Donations to help pay for the materials are welcomed; I am hopeful that the Spirit will move us to meet our target for this year as we have in the past. Thanks for your continued interest.

Builder Bob

Did you know?? The Habitat for Humanity ReStore is a retail warehouse specializing in the resale of donated building materials, both gently used and new. Proceeds help fund the necessary supplies and construction of Habitat for Humanity homes built in Lake County. If it is time for remodeling or refurbishing, the HFHLC ReStore is ready to take your donation. Cabinetry, doors, windows, unupholstered furniture, sinks, or other home furnishings in good condition are accepted.

Contact the ReStore at 847-249-3160 to schedule a drop off time; pick up can be arranged for large items. To make a purchase, stop by at 3545 Grand Avenue, Gurnee (south side of street between US 41 and Green Bay Road) Tuesday-Friday, 9-6, Saturday, 9-5.

If you can assist the recently-arrived Bhutanese refugees Yadu and Tika Kafley by providing transportation to their appointments or introducing them to life in Chicago, i.e. public transportation, library, post office, please contact Pam Carlson at pcarlson640@comcast.net or 847-650-2049, or contact Gail Price at church. If you are able to provide financial support as they assimilate, study English, and seek employment (first three months rent, food), please make your check payable to Ascension and mark "refugee resettlement" on the memo line. Thank you for crossing borders and oceans in order to reach out through God's love.

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ELCA missionary Rev. Kevin Jacobson to visit Ascension

Ascension Church has financially supported the work of ELCA Global Mission missionaries for many years. Our 2009 contributions were directed to the Rev. Kevin Jacobson, an ELCA missionary in Suriname. Pastor Jacobson will be in the U.S. for home assignment this summer, and will be with us in worship on Sunday, July 25. We look forward to hearing of his work with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Suriname (ELKS). With historical ties to The Netherlands, the people of this country in the northern part of South America speak Dutch. The ELKS was begun in 1741. Pastor Jacobson knows Ascension through his friendship with Pastor Ken Johnson. Join in welcoming him back!

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On a recent Sunday these words formed one petition of the congregation's intercessory prayers in worship: "Encourage governments and peoples to foster economic justice in all lands. Teach us to eliminate poverty and financial practices that exploit the vulnerable among us." Each Sunday we pray for justice. I hope you will note the many and varied opportunities to work for justice through the ministries of this congregation. I welcome a discussion with you about any of them.

Peace,
Gail Price,
Service Ministries Leader

Save the Date for the Blood Drive at Ascension: Sunday, July 25

LifeSource is the largest blood center in Illinois and distributes a half-million blood products annually to approximately 60 area hospitals and over 100 home healthcare agencies in meeting the need for patient transfusion therapy. Lifesaving blood donations from generous volunteer blood donors enable lives to be brightened and saved in our local communities.

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 old with parental permission; there is no upper age limit), and have not given blood in the past eight weeks (56 days).

Did you know that 60% of the population is medically eligible to give blood, yet only 5% of the national population donates blood? If all blood donors gave 2 to 4 times a year, it would greatly help prevent blood shortages.

Please schedule your appointment time by signing up on the Blood Drive sheet on the bulletin board in the narthex, and invite your friends and neighbors to join you. Pose your questions regarding medication and travel restrictions to the Life Source Medical Help Desk at 847-803-7921 any time.

Fran Gustafson

Focus on Health



Cancer Wellness Center Offers FREE Services to “help more people live better, while living with cancer”

For over 20 years, The Cancer Wellness Center has offered **FREE** psychological and social emotional support to cancer patients, their families and friends. Cancer Wellness Center works closely with the medical community, as an adjunct to traditional medical treatments for cancer.

- all services are **FREE**
- learn from and talk with others who have had a cancer experience
- discuss concerns with an experienced professional
- learn how to reduce the stress associated with cancer
- take control of overall health through wellness programs

A diagnosis of cancer may result in a crisis of faith for anyone. The Cancer Wellness Center can assist in addressing those needs, with a highly professional staff and an array of wellness activities that are both healing and therapeutic.

All of the Center's services and programs are completely **FREE of CHARGE**. The Center brings you together with like-minded people and solidifies your base of support. The Center helps every member of the family - the patient, the spouse, the partner, the children, the siblings, the parents - and gives you someone to talk to who *understands*. You walk in the doors and you feel warmth that's so very different from the other places you go to address your cancer.

CWC is located in Northbrook. Counseling, support groups, yoga, meditation, educational programs and spirituality discussion groups are some of the services offered. Private meetings can be arranged at our offices by calling 847-509-9595. Visit the website: CANCERWELLNESS.ORG.

CPR-AED Instruction Monday, July 19

American Heart Association CPR training and AED instruction (Automated External Defibrillator) will be offered on Monday, July 19, 5:30-8:00 p.m. at Ascension Church. This life-saving training will benefit you at home, at work, in public. Sign up on the bulletin board in Fellowship Hall for the training session or contact Gail in the church office to learn more. Invite friends and neighbors to come, too.

Safe Sitter Babysitting Instruction

Safe Sitter is a medically accurate babysitting preparation program designed for boys and girls ages 11 to 13. This nationally recognized program teaches sitters how to have fun with children as well as how to recognize a medical emergency and know the appropriate action to take. Students also learn how to relate to specific ages and stages of development, injury prevention techniques, safety for the sitter and the children, care of the choking child, preventing problem behavior, and the business of babysitting.

Safe Sitter instruction will be offered at Ascension in two parts on **Monday, July 12, 4:00-7:00 p.m. AND Tuesday, July 13, 3:30-7:00 p.m.** Both parts are required for satisfactory completion. Cost is \$35 and scholarships are available. Registration materials are available on the information table. Classes are open to Ascension students and children in the community. Class size is limited; please register early. Registration will close Wednesday, July 7.

Both of these programs are sponsored by Ascension's Health Ministry Team and all information is taught by trained instructors.

