

The Witness
October 2006

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



The Soul Children of Chicago



Under the Direction of Mr. Walt Whitman

Come See, Hear, & Be Inspired By
One of Most Celebrated Youth Choirs in the World...

Saturday, October 21, 7:00 pm

Lutheran Church of the Ascension

460 Sunset Ridge Road

Northfield, IL 60093-2797

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Staff Directory

Curt Gerald	Pastor	PastorCurt@Ascension-Church.org
Janeen Ross	Office Administrator	Janeen@Ascension-Church.org
Gail Price	Service Ministries Leader	Gail@Ascension-Church.org
Mischa Zupko	Worship Leader	Mischa@Ascension-Church.org
Minkyoo Shin	Ass't Worship Leader	Minkyoo@Ascension-Church.org
Claudia Williams	Spiritual Growth Leader	Claudia@Ascension-Church.org
Jonathan Anderson	Youth Director	Jonathan@Ascension-Church.org
Bob Frost	Celebrate! Leader	RFrosty@comcast.net



Focus on Health

When you experience a health concern or crisis, Ascension Church offers spiritual care for you. Because hospitals are no longer able to notify the church of your admission without your permission, we rely on you or a family member to call the church office to share that word. A member of the pastoral care team (pastor, minister of health, Stephen Minister) is available to share your concern in prayer and will visit if you are willing.

If you are unable to be present in worship, you may invite a lay communion minister to bring the sacrament to you. Communion is usually distributed at home on the first Sunday of the month including October 1.

Are you unable to get out without transportation? Do you need a ride to the grocery store? doctor's appointment? Bible study? worship? Ascension's Support Teams have been organized to provide help with meals, friendly visiting, and transportation and are now meeting some of the special needs of people in our congregation. ministry. You may contact Gail Price or the church office for assistance or to become engaged in caring for others.

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.

Ascension is a SafeSitter teaching site. Safe Sitter instruction will again be offered at Ascension on Saturday, November 18, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Please encourage your children, grandchildren, babysitters and neighbors who are at least eleven years of age to join the class. Cost is \$35 and scholarships are available. Registration materials will be mailed to students in this age group. Class size is limited; please register early. To learn more, please contact Gail Price in the church office.



Ascension's **FALL BLOOD DRIVE** will be here before you know it. The need for donated blood is always great. Please set aside **Sunday, November 5th** from 8 a.m. until 1 p.m. to give the "gift of life." YOU are a potential blood donor if you are at least 16 years of age, weigh at least 110 pounds, have a regular heart rhythm, control your blood pressure with or without medication, are free of fever, and have not given blood in the past eight weeks. LifeSource will provide thorough health screening.

LifeSource requests that, if you are contacted by their telemarketers and asked to donate prior to November 5, and if you intend to donate at church, please inform them that you are not available. For more information please see Terry Willason or call Gail in the church office.

IPL Presents

an inconvenient truth

A GLOBAL WARNING

October 2009

On **Thursday, October 5 at 7:00 p.m.** Ascension will be part of a movement. Along with more than 65 congregations around Chicago, we will be offering a free screening of **"An Inconvenient Truth."**

This film explains the best available scientific data on global warming, and helps us as people of faith to see that curbing our appetite for fossil fuels is truly a moral imperative.

We believe that this screening is an opportunity for our congregation to look squarely at its own practices and to begin a deeper conversation about what we can do here to be even more a part of the solution to this critical human problem.

The screening has been arranged through **the Illinois Interfaith Power & Light** campaign of **Faith in Place**. Since 1999 Faith in Place has helped over 150 congregations conserve energy, support renewable power, and be active in support of the policies that can restore the earth. They are ready to help us fulfill our commitment as religious people to be good stewards of the earth. Please join us for the screening, and feel free to bring your neighbors and friends.

Parents, Schools Can Work Together to Address Childhood Obesity

The number of overweight children between the ages of 6 and 11 has more than doubled since the late 1970s. According to surveys conducted by the Center for Health and Health Care in Schools and the National Association for Sport and Physical Education, parents support efforts by schools to strengthen exercise and nutrition programs to help halt the progression of childhood obesity.

More than 70 percent of parents believe that physical education should be a part of the school curriculum; that PE helps children perform better in the classroom; and that nutrition education should be included in the curriculum. Similar numbers of parents believe parents and schools should work together to plan school meals.

The surveys' findings are in keeping with the official position of the American Dietetic Association - that "the school and community have a shared responsibility to provide all students with access to high-quality foods and nutrition services as an integral part of the total education program. Local school policy, developed through a collaborative process that responds to community needs and priorities, should include the integration of the school nutrition program with education."

Produced by ADA's Public Relations Team

Linda Clinton

Reach Out Through God's Love

Issues Caucus

Saturday, October 21, 2006

LutheranAdvocacy.org, a joint ministry of the three ELCA synods in Illinois, Lutheran Social Services of Illinois and ELCA Church and Society, invites you to the second annual "Issues Caucus" to participate in determining the priorities for LutheranAdvocacy.org's public policy advocacy in the Spring session of the Illinois General Assembly.

Issues to be considered include the reauthorization of the US Farm bill, state budget reform, health care reform, immigration reform, Restorative Justice and other issues. A keynote address on looking at budgets as reflections of societal values will be given by Andrew "Drew" Genszler, Associate Director for Domestic Policy at the ELCA's Washington, D.C. advocacy office.

The 2006 Issues Caucus will take place on Saturday, October 21, from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. (including lunch) at St. John's Lutheran Church in Bloomington, Illinois. For registration information, please visit www.LutheranAdvocacy.org or contact Barbara Tokarski at barbara.tokarski@LSSI.org or 847-635-4653. To arrange a carpool, please contact Gail Price in the church office.



Lakeview Pantry will again benefit from the clothing we collect during the fall clothing drive. They have requested winter clothing for all ages, including boots, and blue jeans, especially men's. Please bring your donations to Ascension during the week of October 1-8. It is helpful to have clothing in closed boxes labeled with contents. Please place hanging clothes on the rack in Fellowship Hall. Thanks!



Habitat for Humanity

Ascension has completed 4 of the 6 work trips scheduled for 2006. Twelve Ascension members, and two non-members have volunteered over 144 hours of labor so far to this year's project. Applause and a **great BIG thank you** are due to **Jill Reid, Elaine Chester, and Susan Swenson**, who have donated sandwiches, fruit and cookies for the workers on three of these trips. Two more trips are planned for Saturday, Oct. 7 and Saturday, Nov. 18. Anyone over 16 years of age can participate, so please consider joining us on one of these remaining trips. Sign up on the bulletin board in the fellowship hall.

So far Ascension members have contributed \$3,400.00, and our goal is **very** close. Our drive ends in November, and it would be great to match last year's donation of \$4000. If you wish to support this service ministry please make a check payable to Ascension with Habitat in the memo line and we will forward it on to this Thrivent Builds-Habitat project. If you have items you feel could be used by Habitat, contact the Re-Store coordinator, Kathy Bohlman at 847-623-1020 ext. 122 on Tuesday or Thursday afternoons.

Crop Hunger Walk

Sunday, October 15, 2006, 1:30 p.m.

St. Philip Lutheran Church

1609 Pfingsten Road, Glenview

Communities Reaching Out to People

During World War II, CROP stood for Christian Rural Overseas Program. The idea remains the same: food for hungry people. We walk because we care. More than $\frac{1}{2}$ billion people in our world live on less than \$1.00 a day. They eat the equivalent of two ounces of rice per day. Men, women, and children spend half of their waking hours each day WALKING- for food, water, and firewood.

By joining in the WALK or SPONSORING a participating Ascension WALKER, you can help.



Good News

Community Kitchen Banquet

Your participation in the Good News benefit strengthens the kitchen's ability to feed the hungry in Chicago's Rogers Park neighborhood and advocate for policies that work to eliminate the root causes of poverty and hunger. You are invited to The Oak Room on the 66th floor of the Sears Tower on Sunday, October 8 at 5:00 p.m. Invitations are on the bulletin board at church.



Elijah's Pantry, housed at St. Luke Lutheran Church in Chicago's Logan Square, will benefit from the Fall Harvest Concert to be held at St. Philip Lutheran Church in Glenview on Saturday, October 7 at 4:00 p.m. Mischa and Minkyoo will be among the performers as will our own Don Gordon! Hors-d'oeuvres and dessert are included.



Lutheran Social Services of Illinois "A Masked Ball"

Westin Chicago River North Hotel
Saturday, October 28th, 6:00 p.m.

The Women's Network of LSSI will host the 25th Annual Amicus Certus (True Friend) Award Dinner to raise funds to support LSSI's Steps to Life, a program which empowers adolescent youth in foster care to plan for their futures. The even will also provide "seed" money for H.O.P.E. (Health, Opportunities, Planning, Empowerment) to assist youth with serious or severe emotional disturbances (SED).

Come enjoy an evening of dinner, dancing, and an exciting auction while helping to fund these worthy causes. Tickets for this worthwhile event are \$275.



Spiritual Growth

Spiritual Disciplines Saturday: Scripture

November 4th

8:30am—Noon

Join us for a wonderful mini-conference on the spiritual discipline of submitting to the Scriptures. Our inaugural Spiritual Disciplines Saturday in February focused on prayer, and over 50 people attended and had a great experience. Don't miss the opportunity to join us this time!

Speakers:

Mimi Larson, Naperville Presbyterian Church

Mimi has worked in children's ministry for over 16 years, serving at Naperville Presbyterian Church since 2000 where she coordinates a large staff and provides leadership in education to the variety of ministries for children. Her desire is to encourage and support parents, partnering with them in the spiritual nurturing of children. Mimi received an M.A. in Educational Ministries from Wheaton Graduate School and is currently working on a Masters in Theological Studies from Covenant Seminary in St. Louis. She will be speaking on Scripture and your children.

Jon Laansma, Wheaton College

Jon has been teaching New Testament and Greek for over 10 years and has been on the faculty at Wheaton College since 2003. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Aberdeen, in Scotland, in 1995, and taught at Moody Bible Institute from 1995-2003. Both Claudia and Keith Williams had the pleasure of learning Greek, and a whole lot more, in his classroom. He is a published author, contributing to several reference works and having his dissertation published. He is an excellent scholar and teacher, even if he is a Michigan Wolverine fan. Jon will be speaking on methods for understanding and applying Scripture to your life.

There will be a third speaker, who will lead a session on the devotional reading of Scripture.

Blessings,
Claudia Williams

Adult Forum

October 1st

9:45: Ralph Klein will continue his discussion on women and famous couples in the Old Testament this year. These stories in the Old Testament tell of challenges faced by God's people in every age and provide opportunity to discuss how we can work for ever-greater equality in the church and world today.

11:00: Keith Williams will discuss "God So Loved the World: What Salvation Means, and Why it Matters." What does it mean that God has given us salvation? Why did Jesus have to die and rise again? What does salvation mean for me, today? We will talk about these questions and more.

October 8th

9:45: Ralph Klein will continue his discussion on women and famous couples in the Old Testament this year. These stories in the Old Testament tell of challenges faced by God's people in every age and provide opportunity to discuss how we can work for ever greater equality in the church and world today.

11:00: Keith Williams will discuss "Living Stones, a Church of Priests: A Theology of Church." What is the Church universal supposed to be like? What is a local church supposed to look like? How should you live in light of what it means to be a part of this church, both inside and outside of these four walls? And, are *you* really a priest? Yes, you are! We'll talk about the theology of the church and what difference it should make for you.

October 15th & October 22nd

9:45: Ralph Klein will continue his discussion on women and famous couples in the Old Testament this year. These stories in the Old Testament tell of challenges faced by God's people in every age and provide opportunity to discuss how we can work for ever greater equality in the church and world today.

11:00: Keith Williams will start a series on Evangelical Lutheran Worship. We will be talking through the new liturgy, pointing out the significance of each piece and noting how it has changed from the Green book.

Senior Youth Forum

Youth Forum meets each Sunday morning from 9:30-11:00 a.m. in the Youth Room. Come enjoy bagels, cream cheese and donut holes while the group connects with one another and grows in Christian faith under the leadership of Jonathan Anderson.



Crossways International is an historical, academic overview of the Bible that will carry over two years. There are two weekly groups offered: one meets Wednesdays 1:00-2:30 p.m., led by Ruth Willason, and the other meets Mondays, 7:00-8:30 p.m., led by Donna Irmis. Preparation consists of 1-2 hours per week spent reading the Bible and answering study questions. There will be a charge for materials. Please join us!



A 15-week Men's Bible Study continues on Tuesday nights from 7-8:30 p.m. The study, "Paul, the 13th Apostle," focuses on God's call to Paul, as recorded in Acts 13-28. Please join us to share "the Word" and fellowship with your Ascension Brothers.

Worship Notes

It was great to see so many back in Worship on Rally day and we are eager to share this next year together. For those who were in service on Sunday, September 10th, you heard us talk about the upcoming Advent / Christmas concert entitled "A Light Still Shines" on **Saturday, December 9th at 4:30 p.m.** We are excited by the initial response of volunteers for this event and anticipate it will be our most successful concert to date. In order to make this evening reach its full potential though, we are seeking voices to join the choir. We will begin rehearsing the program immediately and would ask that you stop by on Wednesday evenings at 7:30 p.m. to try it out, even if you're not sure you are able to do it. We will rehearse the music for the program from 7:30 p.m. to 8:15 p.m., after which you are more than welcome to stay if you would like to sing Sunday music with us, but are also free to go about your evening if you wish. We would also like to encourage all children from K-5 and youth from 6th-8th to join us to join us for the children's choir and youth choir rehearsals on Tuesday evenings from 6:30 p.m. to 7:15 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. respectively. Our goal is to have 40 in the senior choir and 40 combined youth involved in singing on the program. This will be a wonderful opportunity for all to experience the magic of singing with a full orchestra and being involved in something truly inspiring as we move into the Christmas Season. There are many other ways in which to serve other than singing and I would like to refer you to the volunteer sign up forms included with this Witness. Please look over it and consider how your gifts can help us reach out to our brothers and sisters in the community. When you have completed the form, either send it to the church through the mail or just bring it with you on Sunday and drop it off in the Volunteer Sign-up Sheet Return box in front of fellowship hall. If anything, just be sure to save the date on your calendar as this will be a program you don't want to miss!

We also commend to you a very special program on **Saturday, October 21st at 7:00 p.m.** **The Soul Children of Chicago**, a nationally recognized youth gospel choir, will perform a program at Ascension that will be sure to give you goose bumps. They are led by director Walt Whitman (not the writer) and have an impressive track record having performed with such greats as Harry Belafonte, Neil Diamond, Gladys Knight, Celine Dion, Stevie Wonder, Whitney Houston, Mariah Carey, Yolanda Adams and Garth Brooks. They have performed all over the world, before 1.7 billion people at the opening day of the World Cup, at The Democratic National Convention for President Bill Clinton and at the White House for President George Bush Sr., President Ronald Reagan and President Richard Nixon and also have recorded several albums. "My purpose and vision is to education the minds, elevate the spirits and illuminate the souls of our children and audiences worldwide," says Mr. Whitman. For more information on the group, visit <http://www.soulchildrenchicago.com>. This evening will also include a spaghetti dinner that starts at 5:30 p.m. and is being arranged by the spiritual growth team. Make it an evening to truly come together in our faith.

As always, it is our great pleasure to serve here at Ascension and we look forward to coming together with all of you in the many special days we have planned ahead.

Blessing to all,

Mischa & Minkyoo

USHERS NEEDED FOR 8:30 & 9:45 a.m. services. If your experience is limited, we will pair you up with a seasoned usher. The sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board in Fellowship Hall. Put your spiritual gift of hospitality into action!



August 17, 2006: The focus of the August Church Council meeting was a review of what has happened and been accomplished since March, when the new council was seated.

Devotions were given by Richard Kreuzfeld and were taken from Paul's opening letter in 1st Corinthians.

Discussion focused first on the Ascension Connections program, which took place over the summer. There was much positive feedback from those who attended, but the hope was for broader attendance. We welcome ideas from the congregation as to how we can continue gatherings like these and attract more participants.

Mischa Zupko spoke about the Worship Ministry and ways of enhancing our worship, both in weekly services and in special events programs. He announced that a fall Gospel Concert is planned for Oct. 21 at 7 p.m. with a fellowship period to begin at 5 p.m. Mischa also announced the date and time of our Christmas Advent Concert. It will be held on Dec. 9 at 4:30 p.m. and he is seeking volunteers to help in every aspect of the program.

Claudia Williams reported on the Spiritual Growth ministry. She said Sunday School, Youth Ministry and Vacation Bible School have been a success and announced the launch of Small Group Ministries on Rally Day. Claudia also said that Nov. 4 will be set aside as Spiritual Disciplines Saturday.

Gail Price talked about the Service Ministry and reported on the most recent hurricane relief trip to Biloxi and the video that came out of it. She announced upcoming service initiatives including the Crop Walk, flu shots, a blood drive, the monthly soup kitchen ministry and Stephen Ministry training. Gail also announced that the film "An Inconvenient Truth" will be shown at Ascension on Oct. 5 at 7 p.m. Admission is free and all are invited to come and bring guests. Follow-up materials will be provided by Faith in Place, an interfaith conservation group.

In the business meeting, council voted to approve transfers into and out of the congregation; to lend our chairs and tables to Winnetka Presbyterian Church for their 50th anniversary celebration; and to authorize the signing of a contract for a gospel choir to sing at Ascension. We also heard a financial report and an update on donations for the new hymnals, and discussed pending capital projects which include a new screen, projector, pew refinishing and parking lot resurfacing.

The September council meeting on Sept. 21 was devoted to stewardship. The October meeting on Oct. 19 will focus on facilities. All members of the congregation are welcome and encouraged to join us.

Peace,

The Church Council

ASCENSION CONNECTIONS



WORSHIP • SPIRITUAL GROWTH • SERVICE

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU to everyone who helped make *Ascension Connections* a success this summer!

Ascension Connections, our recent endeavor to build small group connections around social themes among Ascension's members, has completed its first season.

Thirteen programs were hosted from June through August, drawing 157 members. Attendance varied from 5 to 26 people at an event. The gatherings ranged from Ravinia parties and Salsa dancing to Korean BBQ and other culinary events. In keeping with the multiple objectives of the program to extend fellowship while educating members about ministries, and matching each person's spiritual talents with stewardship opportunities, each event included not only a themed social event but also presentation of Ascension's story on ministries and discussion of the Spiritual Gifts Inventory (By the way, the Spiritual Gifts Inventory is still available on the church website--check it out! You'll learn a lot about yourself!)

What did we learn? That you thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to get together in small groups to enjoy Christian fellowship! "Getting to know each other better" was the best result for many people. The hopes and results of *Ascension Connections* touched all three of our major ministry areas, Worship, Spiritual Growth, and Service. While *Ascension Connections* was specifically designed to take advantage of the summer period, many of the people who attended expressed their wish that this type of ministry would continue year-round. The fellowship team will work to incorporate your suggestions into the life of Ascension.

Claudia Williams, our Spiritual Growth Leader, has incorporated many of the lessons learned into a new Small Groups Ministry, a continuing program which you will hear more about. If you enjoyed *Ascension Connections* or if you have ideas to make small groups more effective in Ascension's life, call Claudia or email her at Claudia@ascension-church.org.

We'll begin to extend our discussion around spiritual giftedness to the topic of financial stewardship. Bruce Carlson is excited to be leading the efforts of the stewardship team this fall and is looking for members who would like to play a role on that team. If you're interested, please call the church office. If you have not yet taken or returned your spiritual gift inventory, you may easily go online at www.elca.org/evangelism/assessments/spiritgifts.html or pick up a copy on the shelf under the bulletin board. Please direct results to Gail Price at Gail@Ascension-Church.org.



Ascension Women's Luncheon
Thursday, October 5th, Noon
Hackney's on Lake

Mark your calendar and be sure to attend our next luncheon. Not only is this a wonderful opportunity for fellowship, it is also a chance to learn about an interfaith organization that is changing lives and planting seeds of peace.

Our speaker from Hands of Peace will tell of teenagers from Palestine and Israel coming together with teenagers in the U.S. for two weeks at a time to share their cultural experiences and to learn from one another. Distrust and bitterness are replaced with acceptance and joy as these teens discover new friends. You won't want to miss this event! Please come and bring a friend.