

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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The 2007 ELCA Assembly at Navy Pier is finished. You may remember that I served as the Secretary of the Local Arrangements Committee, which was responsible for recruiting the volunteers needed to run the Assembly. There were a number of Ascension people among the approximately 550 volunteers who worked at the Pier August 6 - 11, which greatly pleased me.

Donna Irmis and Alice Kosnik visited with me during the Assembly and said to me, "Pastor, our church has simply got to feel more connected to the ELCA." They were impressed by the church-wide breadth and diversity of ministries and programs of our Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

In truth, I spent six years in that kind of ministry when I served on the Division for Mission in North America of the Lutheran Church of America. However, in the 21 years since then, I had forgotten the immensity of work done in and for Christ by the church-wide expression of our church, and I was as impressed as were the two people talking to me.

Like Donna and Alice, I also feel we need to become more connected to the life and ministry of our church-wide expression of the ELCA. Many of us know our congregation is part of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod, but many of us are unaware that we are also a part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and in partnership with the ELCA's church-wide agencies. To help make that connection apparent, I will include articles about the various ministries of the ELCA's church-wide agencies in future issues of *The Witness*.

At the time this article was written, August 15, summer was almost finished and the beginning of the Fall season nearly upon all of us, and by the time you receive this issue of *The Witness*, the season of Pentecost will be more than half over. Thanksgiving Day and the start of Advent will be in sight. All this simply tells us, once again, that time marches relentlessly onward.

There is much on our congregational plate. In this edition you will find notification of plans for "Rally Day" on the 9th of September. This is planned to be a big event and I look forward to your participation. Please read the article on page 8 for some of the details.

We continue walking into the future by considering what to do with our facility. You received a letter dated July 30 that described how the plan now focuses on "must do's" and "should do's." The result is a plan that will be smaller in scope and probably cost less than what was presented to May special congregational meeting. Again, this changed plan will probably come to fruition during this coming fall.

The Call Committee reports in this edition that they have received four candidates from the Metropolitan Chicago Synod and have been told they will most likely receive a fifth. They will be busy this fall with interviewing and visiting.

These are only some of the issues and ministries that are or will soon be upon us. This says nothing about all the regular ministries that will start up again: confirmation, Cross Training on Tuesday evenings, Bible study groups, and almost countless others. In all of this we should be mindful that, as was pointed out at the ELCA Assembly, this is God's work and our hands. Let us be about being faithful to the mission to which we are called.



Focus on Health

Managing diabetes? It's essential to keep your blood sugar level consistent to avoid the big "ups and downs" that can be dangerous. A registered dietician (RD) or certified diabetes educator (CDE) can help you make a plan for healthy eating and active living, along with medications, if needed.

When it comes to eating, there's no single prescription for blood sugar control. What matters is managing your intake of carbohydrate, protein, fat and calories and controlling your weight. Overweight and obesity increase risk for diabetes and its complications. That said, you don't have to give up favorite foods; instead, keep track of the types of foods you eat and learn how to fit them into your daily meal plan.

Whether you use carbohydrate counting or the exchange system, match your eating plan for diabetes management to your food preferences and lifestyle. If you're overweight, plan for weight loss too.

Make Carbohydrates Count

Carbohydrates affect your blood sugar level more than protein or fat does so carbohydrate counting is one method used to map your intake of food and insulin (if you take it). This system is like a budget: you get a certain number of carbohydrates per meal and per day.

Select nutrient-rich carbohydrates, such as starchy vegetables, legumes, fruit, juice, and whole-grain, enriched breads and cereals without too much fat or added sugars.

Check food labels for serving sizes and carbohydrate amounts

Get carbohydrate savvy with unpackaged foods.

In general, a small piece of fresh fruit (apple, banana, orange) counts as 15 grams of carbohydrate; one-half cup cooked or one cup raw vegetables (broccoli, carrots, spinach) counts as 5 grams.

Find a book or website with carbohydrate facts to help figure carbohydrates in mixed foods, such as lasagna.

Plan the Exchange Way

For many, the exchange system is the full-service meal plan approach for managing diabetes. This system puts foods and beverages into three main groups and "free foods." These are subdivided into exchange lists, with measured amounts of food supplying similar amounts of nutrients and calories. It's like a "mix-and-match" system for selecting foods. With this system, paying attention to portion sizes is a must.

Carbohydrates: choose mostly fat-free or low-fat options, as well as those without added sugars. Go easy on rich desserts and high-fat snacks offering few nutrients.

Meat and meat substitutes: choose fish, legumes (beans) and lean or very lean meat and poultry.

Fat: choose vegetable oils, such as olive and canola oils and soft margarine, as well as nuts.

Free foods: add flavor with low-calorie or calorie-free foods, as recommended by your health care provider.

Managing your diabetes with diet, exercise and prescribed medication is essential for your good health. Healthy eating benefits everyone in your family, so get them on board too.

Flu Prevention Clinic is scheduled for Sunday morning, November 11, at Ascension. Save the date; details to follow.

Reach Out Through God's Love

Northfield Farmer's Market

Saturday, September 8

Ascension will host a booth at the Northfield Farmers' Market, Happ Road across from New Trier West High School, 7:30 a.m.-noon on Saturday, September 8. We'll offer free fair trade coffee and a gift to encourage care of the environment. We'll invite the neighborhood to visit for Rally Day and let people know about our many ministries. There will be a special story hour for children at 10:00 a.m. Come to share in the fun of the day! Would you like to help staff the booth for one hour? Please call the church office.



The Support Team is looking for drivers. If you can drive someone to church once a month, it would be appreciated. Contact Marilyn Johnson, (847) 272-4325.



When you or someone you love has an urgent need for blood or blood products, you will remember that Ascension donors help to replenish the fragile blood supply by frequent donations. We thank July donors from the community and congregation: Wayne Brunzell, Patty Cain, Bruce and Pam Carlson, Doug and Elaine Chester, Helen Costello, Pat Daley, Jim Duke, Linda Grandt, Janice Greenwald, Fran Gustafson, Shirley Kreutzfeldt, Joan Lee, Carol Mueller, Ron Nally, Jeanne Peterson, Bob and Jill Reid, Peg Sickeler, Joan Stevenson, Reinie Wasemiller and Terry Willason.

Habitat for Humanity



Ascension's Habitat for Humanity crews have been hard at work building affordable housing for deserving families. You cannot imagine the feeling of working along side these future homeowners as they see their dreams coming to fruition. They are constantly thanking us for our participation.

So far, through August 17, people from the Ascension crews have contributed over 300 person hours of labor. There are three more trips scheduled. Consider joining us on one or more of them.

The labor we provide is free, but the materials are not. We need your contributions to help pay for them. We are halfway there.

Builder Bob will be in church on Sept 16th to keep you informed and garner your support. Let's help reach this year's goal of \$4,000 for this ministry.

Bob Reid

ELCA Churchwide Assembly

Pastor Schnell served as secretary on the Local Arrangements Committee of the Churchwide Assembly at Navy Pier last month. Ascension volunteers included Joan Wettstein, Alice Kosnik, Donna Irmis, Mark Swenson, Mischa Zupko, Minkyoo Shin and Gail Price.

C.R.O.P. Walk
Sunday, October 14
Grace Lutheran Church
2245 Walters Avenue, Northbrook
1:30 p.m.



- Daily the average American eats almost five pounds of food and throws away enough to feed a family of six in India or Africa!
- More than 1.2 billion people in our "global Village" live on \$1 or less per day, and if they are fortunate enough to eat, their diet amounts to two ounces of rice or the equivalent.
- Men, women, and children spend half of their waking hours each day walking....for food, for water, for firewood....for all of their needs.

We walk because they walk. Each October in our communities, people of faith gather to walk in support of hungry people throughout the world. C.R.O.P. Walk takes place on Sunday afternoon, October 14. Please join in this year! Walkers will gather at Ascension at 12:30 p.m. or meet at Grace Lutheran at 1:00 p.m. Refreshments are provided at the end of the walk. Can't walk? Then sponsor a walker and know that you are caring for hungry people. 25% of contributions is used locally while 75% goes to support international efforts through Church World Service. To register to walk or for more details please contact Lois Giberson 847-967-9758 or Irm Claiborne 847-256-3302.



Overrun with tomatoes? Inundated with zucchini? Northfield Township Food Pantry will happily accept the excess produce from our gardens and include it in distribution of food to their clients. Thanks for sharing your bountiful harvest.

Stephen Ministry Affirmation

Sunday, September 16

Since its beginnings at Ascension in 1994, Stephen Ministry has trained seven leaders and over 39 members of the congregation for service as Stephen Ministers. Together they have served 188 care receivers from within the congregation and throughout the community. They continue to provide a caring Christian presence in time of personal change and assure us of God's loving care for us.

Join in worship on Sunday, September 16 as we affirm the past and future of Stephen Ministry at Ascension Church.

Stephen Ministry Corner

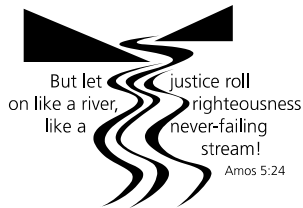
Q: How bad does my situation have to be to have a Stephen Minister?

A: Anyone in a life transition can ask for a Stephen Minister.



Social Justice Forum on Fair Trade

Sunday, October 7
9:45 a.m.
Augustana Room



Ten Thousand Villages Fair Trade Fair at Ascension

Sunday, October 21
9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Gifts for All Occasions

Baskets	Home Furnishings	
Clothing	Food	
Collectibles	Jewelry	
Toys/Games	Plant/Garden	
Holiday	Personal Accessories	
Stationary	Kitchen/Tableware	CD's
	Musical Instruments	

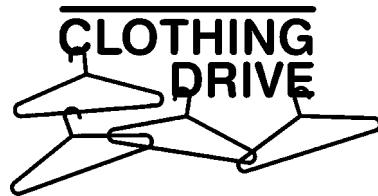
As one of the world's oldest and largest fair trade organizations, Ten Thousand Villages has built long-term relationships with artisans from more than 30 countries in Africa, Asia and South America. Fair trade enables artisans to earn a fair wage and provides the opportunity for a better quality of life.

Invest in your world.
Shop fair trade.

Book Angels Needed

Holy Family Lutheran School is looking for volunteers to help sort, stamp and get books ready for their new school library. No experience is needed. Training will be provided. Even one visit (or more) would help.

An informational meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 11 from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. at the home of Linda Rosholt in Palatine. Please call 847-991-4672 to RSVP and to get directions.



Lakeview Pantry will benefit from the clothing we collect during Ascension's fall clothing drive. Due to very limited storage space, Lakeview requests ONLY winter outerwear—coats, scarves, gloves, mittens, caps and hats. Please bring your donations to Ascension only during the week of September 30-October 7. It is helpful to have clothing in closed boxes labeled with contents. Please place hanging clothes on the rack in Fellowship Hall. Thanks for sharing!

Communion Assistants Needed

As we return to two liturgical worship services beginning Sept. 16, 2007, there is an increased need for communion assistants for the 8:30 and 9:45 a.m. services. Anyone attending these services can participate. No extra time is required. Instructions will be provided for all assistants. To help with this vital ministry, contact Jill Reid at (847) 256-5259, the church office or sign up on the sheet on the bulletin board.

Spiritual Growth

Plans are being finalized for Spiritual Growth programs beginning in September. Watch for details in the bulletin or check out Ascension's website to see the variety of programs offered Sunday morning and throughout the week.

Be sure to come for the fun and fellowship on Rally Day, September 9th, but don't forget to register your children for Sunday Church School on that day. On September 16th Sunday School children will attend worship with their parents, and teaching staff will be installed at the 9:45 a.m. service.

Cross Training, our Tuesday night program for all ages resumes September 11th. Supper is served at 6:00 p.m. and is followed at 6:30 p.m. by adult and youth Bible studies, FINK (confirmation class) and children's choir. If you are willing to help with any of these activities, please contact Pastor Carol Wasemiller in the church office.

Pastor Carol Wasemiller

Interim Spiritual Growth Leader

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Crossways Bible Study

Crossways Bible Study will continue this year on Tuesday evenings at 7:00 p.m. and on Wednesdays at noon. All are invited to participate even if previously unable. Crossways is a Bible study that examines the books of the Bible in depth and helps participants make the connections between the Old and the New Testaments. God's grace becomes evident from the first page of Genesis to the last page of Revelation. Over the course of this year the groups will study The Post-exilic period and Judaism, The Gospels and Acts, and The Letters and Revelation. The discussions are always spirited and interesting. Ruth Willason and Donna Irmis are the leaders. Materials are provided at a cost of \$11.00 per unit.

Join us for a challenging experience that just might change your life and will certainly strengthen your faith. Call the church office to register. Contact Ruth or Donna with any questions.

Weekly Prayer Group

Summer vacations are over, and Fall is upon us. Our Friday morning Prayer Group will resume September 7th. We meet weekly from 9:00 until 9:30 a.m. in the prayer room, located at the end of the education wing, to pray for congregational needs and national issues.

We invite you to come as often as you are able. For more information, contact Donna Irmis, (847) 272-8043 or Jill Reid, (847)256-5259.

Worship Notes

A truly magnificent worship was had at the **ELCA Synod Assembly** on Saturday, August 11. The choir numbered somewhere in the 200's - what a thrill to take part in! Special music was provided by a small orchestra and a select group of singers. We also had the pleasure of watching Thai Christians perform indigenous dance that reflected a spirit of love and charity stemming from their deep faith. A wonderful sermon was delivered by Rev. Susan Briehl and Bishop Mark Hanson was re-installed for another six-year term. All of this truly made one feel the presence of God in the world and instilled a spirit that anything can be accomplished through faith, especially when we come together in the body. It was a wonderful reminder of just how important places like Ascension are to the global community and an inspiration for how we will continue.

Rally day is just around the corner—**Sunday, September 9**—and speaking of coming together, we will celebrate a renewed sense of being one body in a day filled with inspiring outdoor worship and intergenerational activities. One of the many ways we learn about God is through one-another and this will certainly be a great opportunity to do so. Just a reminder that this event is for everyone, so make sure to invite your neighbors, friends, relatives and anyone else who we might welcome as a stranger and come to know as a friend! The schedule is as follows.

Rally Day Schedule:

9:00 a.m. Outdoor Worship (accommodations will be made for people with special needs and extreme weather)

10:00 a.m. Fellowship

10:30 a.m. Hymn Sing

11:00 a.m. Organized Games/Activities

12:00 p.m. Lunch (cookout)

Please bring your favorite dish to serve eight. Sign up for salad, side dish or dessert on the poster in Fellowship Hall or use the Friendship Book. There you may also tell the planners that you will help set up, grill, serve or clean up. Questions? Call Helen Costello at 847-486-8617.

Yet another reminder that the next event in our concert series will feature the **Chicago Virtuosi**, a string orchestra made up of faculty and students from the Music Institute of Chicago. This event takes place on **Saturday, October 13 at 4:30 p.m.** In case you didn't read last month's article, here is a little teaser about the concert. Chicago Virtuosi is a first-rate orchestra and will be performing works by Vivaldi (movements from "The Four Seasons") and Benjamin Britten. As mentioned before, this concert is for people of all ages and backgrounds and will have special opportunities for children in the audience. One of the many exciting aspects of this concert is that Lisa Rude, our congregational choreographer, will be working with some of the children here at Ascension to lend a visual interpretation of "The Four Seasons." We are also entertaining the idea of having children from the audience come up to sit with the orchestra at a selected time to give them a sense of what it is like to BE the orchestra! This promises to be a one-of-a-kind concert and a terrific opportunity to invite neighborhood families and friends to enjoy an afternoon of great music!

Blessings,

Mischa & Minkyoo

Council Report

Words from your Church Council...

As reported to the congregation in a recent letter, a team consisting of Wayne Brunzell (Co-Chair), Jan Funk (Co-Chair), Keith Lee, Jon Leverenz and Carl Peterson is developing a facility improvement plan for consideration by the congregation this coming fall. This plan will take into account feedback received from the congregation in response to the master facility plan presented at the May 20 congregational meeting. It is expected that the facility improvement plan will be smaller in scope and cost less than the master facility plan discussed in May. The Council also authorized the team to work with JNA architects to help develop the proposed facility improvement plan and approved funds for this purpose. The Council also approved limited repairs to the parking lot, which need to be done before the winter.

Youth leader Jonathan Anderson provided a report on the mission trip to Costa Rica scheduled for July 28 through August 7. Jonathan discussed the preparations for the trip, which included one-on-one meetings of Jonathan with each of the participants to discuss their hopes and goals for the trip. Jonathan also reviewed the daily itineraries for the trip, which include working with Costa Rica children and doing home repairs and/or building. Following their return, Jonathan and some of the other trip participants will report on what they did and the success of the mission effort.

Call Committee Update

The work of the committee is moving forward, even during this popular vacation time when it can be difficult to get people together. After receiving the availability papers from two candidates, the committee met to discuss their backgrounds and decided to invite both to our church for an interview. They accepted and were interviewed by our committee the last week in August.

Subsequently, we received the papers on two additional candidates, and we will evaluate their qualifications as well. Pastor Klonowski from the synod office has advised us to expect a fifth candidate in the near future. The committee will be busy in September and October interviewing candidates and making visits to other congregations on several Sundays to observe candidates as they deliver sermons and lead worship services.

Kurt Vining

Chair of Call Committee

Stewardship

Stories to Tell & Gifts to Share

If you're like me, you like to hear a good story. A funny story, a touching story, a motivational story, they all can move me. Recently, at a memorial service for John Beebe's brother, Adam, we heard quite a few stories from friends and loved ones that were at the same time funny, touching, and inspiring. These stories served to remind me of the incredible blessings in my life and the importance of appreciating the gift of every day of life.

What is your favorite story? How have you shared that story with others? Where does your faith connect to storytelling? Beginning this month, our congregation will be undertaking a new initiative entitled *Stories to Tell & Gifts to Share*. Together we will be engaging in storytelling about our mission, ministry, and life together. We believe telling these stories is like sharing a gift from God.

You and your family will be invited to join us in telling stories. The purposes of this initiative are to:

- Explore how the Bible invites us to live gratefully and gracefully,
- Develop ways to share the good news of Jesus Christ with those around us,
- Learn about the many ways God works in peoples' lives through our giving,
- Discover how giving can be both a duty and a delight,

Some stories will be directly connected to our community, while others will tell how we are connected to ministries around the world. We will connect this effort several ways, including a sermon series and the sharing of faith stories by members. Also, we will have a fun family event at the church on Saturday, October 27th, so please save the date.

As faithful and generous storytellers, we look forward to sharing a valuable gift with others.

Yours in Christ,

Bruce Carlson

Ascension Women's Luncheon



The first meeting of the fall season will be held on **Thursday, September 13th at 12:00 noon at Hackney's on Lake Avenue**. Please note: for September only the luncheon will be held on the second Thursday instead of the first Thursday of the month.

This will be an excellent program. Our own Pastor Schnell will speak to us, and you will not want to miss out. Please come and bring a friend. For more information, contact Jan Leverenz, (847) 998-1799.

Annual Holly Fair
Covenant Village of Northbrook
2625 Techny
Saturday, September 15th

Elijah's Food Pantry Benefit
October 6 at 4:00 p.m.--Save the date
See bulletin board for details
Or call the church office