

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



Contact Information

Lutheran Church of the Ascension

460 Sunset Ridge Road

Northfield, IL 60093-2797

Phone: 847-446-8335

Fax: 847-446-8308

E-mail: info@Ascension-Church.org

Web site: www.Ascension-Church.org

Staff Directory

Michael Schnell	Interim Pastor	PastorSchnell@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
Carol Wasemiller	Spiritual Growth Leader	PastorCarol@Ascension-Church.org
Jonathan Anderson	Youth Director	Jonathan@Ascension-Church.org
Bob Frost	Celebrate! Leader	RFrosty@comcast.net

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POTPOURRI

I will be absent from Ascension July 17 - 31 and August 5 - 12. For pastoral emergencies during my absence in July, Pastor Carol and Gail Price will cover for me. Call them at the office. For the period during August, call Pastor Eric Dawson of St. Philip Lutheran Church: 847.998-1946

You may remember my asking people from Ascension to sign up as volunteers for the ELCA Assembly. More than 500 volunteers signed up, most signing up for multiple days, so we recruited the requisite number of volunteers needed to run the Assembly. Thank God!

The Call Process is running in good order, as you should find in reading the article from the Call Committee. Three candidates should be available for interviewing in short order, hopefully by the time you receive this publication.

Progress is also being made in gathering information from the congregation concerning the Facilities Plan and the Council is on schedule with its intention to make a recommendation in September for the congregation to consider.

Last, if you have been to church you know we are using Crucifers during worship. With the Fall season coming upon us, we will need twice as many Crucifers as we have used during the summer. If you would like to participate in this ministry of helping lead the congregation's worship, please contact the church office and tell Janeen you would like to sign up as a Crucifer and whether you wish to so serve during the first or second liturgical services. We will use Crucifers both of the liturgical services.

God's peace be with you.

Pastor Schnell

Focus on Health



Have Some Fun!

Finding joy in life—as well as the sister activities of smiling and laughing—deserves your time and attention because *happier leads to healthier*.

Unfortunately, many of today's adults no longer play. Busy schedules, burdensome responsibilities, and constant contact with the day's news put the idea of play in a world reserved for children. Even fun, adult activities such as music are now often referred to as "my therapy," justifying fun time with a more serious label.

Simple, everyday things incorporated into a routine can make a day happier and start someone on the road to joy. Eat breakfast. Have lunch with someone who lifts your spirits. Breathe. Take a walk. Eat a little dark chocolate to improve your heart and your health.

Here are some guidelines for anyone wanting to play more:

Actively seek ways to play. Schedule play dates for yourself.

Look for opportunities to laugh. Hang out with funny, upbeat, offbeat people.

Get outside. Lie on the grass. Exercise your bones in the sunlight.

Learn new things.

Think of what you enjoyed when you were a kid. Chances are you will still find pleasure in them.

Hold a party to watch funny DVDs. Have a 2-joke cover charge.

Watch animals at the zoo. Get a pet. Stop at the pet store and observe new pups.

Go on a media diet. If you simply *must* watch the news, at least, stop watching it at bedtime.

Smile Test

Take this quick quiz to see what you know about smiling and laughing. If you don't do well, simply laugh at yourself! It's a very healthy thing to do. You'll enhance respiration and circulation, oxygenate your blood, and suppress the stress-related hormones in your brain. Laughter is the jest medicine!

How many different kinds of smiles are there?

How many muscles does it take to smile?

How many muscles does it take to frown?

How many times do you have to laugh in one day to equal the calories burned in a 10-minute rowing session?

If you laugh for 15 seconds, how much time have you added to your life?

A genuine smile is infectious—to ourselves as well as to others. We smile because we're happy, and we're happy because we smile. It's what you might call a not-at-all vicious circle. Also keep in mind, genuine laughter has a health benefit. It can jolt the immune system into gear.

Answers: 1) 18 kinds, including the "I'm so happy I'm crying" smile, the polite smile for someone you hardly know, the "you can go ahead and propose it but your idea won't fly" smile, and the teasing or "I told you so" smile. 2) A smile takes 13 muscles. 3) A frown takes 50 muscles. 4) Laughing 100 times equals 10 minutes or rowing...without the perspiration! 5) Laughing for 15 seconds adds two days to your life.

Prayer: *Forgive me for going through days with few smiles and sometimes no laughter at all. Help me to remember that while suffering is part of life, happiness is always possible. Lighten my heart.*

When was the last time you went out and played?

Show me how to take myself less seriously. Open my eyes to the joys in my life. Amen.

Reach Out Through God's Love

Habitat for Humanity



Ascension continues its effort to provide affordable housing in our communities, by working with Habitat for Humanity Lake County. Work crews have completed 4 of our scheduled 8 work trips for 2007. We enjoy working with the families whose homes we are helping to build.

Please continue your support of our efforts. We need volunteers for our remaining work trips. I am happy to say that the youth will join us on our October trip thanks to the efforts of Eileen Bornscheuer.

We still need financial support to fulfill our goal to contribute \$4,000.00 to the construction of these homes. We are 48% of the way there. The labor we supply is free, but lumber, nails, wallboard, shingles and paint are not free. If you wish to be involved with building affordable housing for needy families, donate a check to Ascension with Habitat in the memo line and we will send all funds collected to Habitat for Humanity Lake County.

Bob Reid

Blood Drive

Thanks to all who donated blood at Ascension's July LifeSource blood drive. You share your love for others through this priceless gift of life. God bless you in your generosity and thank you.

Safe Sitter

Plans are underway for a Safe Sitter babysitting class on a Saturday at Ascension shortly after school resumes in the fall. Safe Sitter is a wonderful teaching program for 11-13 year olds who want to care for younger children. Tell your young friends and family about Safe Sitter and watch for the date announcement. For more information please contact the church office or Ruth Ann Nally.

Hurricane Katrina Relief Trip September 30-October 5

After nearly two years, cleanup from the devastation of Hurricane Katrina continues in Biloxi, MS, and Lutheran Disaster Response remains hard at work. Ascension's Service Team offers you another opportunity to take part in the restoration of the area through a five day work trip. We plan to fly to Gulfport-Biloxi on Sunday, September 30 and return after the work week on Friday, October 5. Accommodations and meals will be at Bethel Lutheran Church, Biloxi. Cost is dependent on prompt purchase of airline tickets, so please let Gail Price know of your interest by calling the church office or emailing Gail@Ascension-Church.org

Refugee Resettlement

The Service Team is working with IRIM (Interfaith Refugee and Immigration Ministries) to plan for resettlement of a refugee family in late summer or early fall. As soon as details are available you will be invited to help welcome the stranger and *Reach Out Through God's Love*. Thanks for caring! See Pam Carlson for more information.

Fair Trade Fair

What's the difference between fair trade and free trade? Save Sunday, October 7, 9:45 a.m. to learn how we can demonstrate our faith through our fair trade practices. Then plan to attend Ascension's inaugural Fair Trade Fair Sunday morning, October 21 in Fellowship Hall. Eleanor Pattie and Mitch Mitchell would welcome your assistance in preparing for the fair.

Northfield Farmers' Market Saturday, September 8

If you don't routinely shop at the Northfield Farmers' Market on Saturday mornings, you will surely want to be there on September 8. Ascension will occupy a prime spot in the middle of the market. Come and be part of the fun! Invite shoppers to enjoy a cup of fair trade coffee, share in the children's story time at 10:00 a.m., come for Rally Day festivities, take home an earth-friendly shopping bag. Here is an opportunity to share your love of the Lord and enthusiasm for Ascension's ministries with our neighbors. The Northfield Farmers' Market is held in the field on the west side of Happ Road, directly across from the New Trier West Campus. For more information please contact Gail

Support Teams

A Support Team is a group of volunteers organized to provide practical, emotional and spiritual support to people with health concerns or other special needs. Ascension's Support Team ministry offered orientation in June and welcomes Peg Sickeler, Dale McCleary, Ed Giberson, Carolyn and Gordon Dahlquist to serve.

One of Ascension's Support Teams provides rides to church and appointments; another makes meals available at home when needed. Still another Support Team provides receptions following funeral or memorial services. Some Support Team members have offered to assist with errands or minor home repairs or yard work. Some are available to visit in hospitals or nursing homes or at home. When you know someone who would like the care of a Support Team, please contact one of the Support Team Leaders, Lois Giberson, Marion Guyton, Marilyn Johnson, Marion Young or see Gail Price in the church office.

Stephen Ministry Corner

Q: Do I have to be a member of Ascension to have a Stephen Minister?

A: Anyone can ask to have a Stephen Minister. No one is refused.

Want to learn more? Contact John or Joan West or call the church office.

Price or the church office.	
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<h2>Spiritual Growth</h2>

Summer, our time for recreation, seems to race by at a rapid pace! Our recreation.....re-creation.....is not limited to summer, especially when it comes to our spiritual growth and development. Summer is the time when planning for Ascension's programs. As your interim leader of this team, it has been a joy to meet with volunteers and staff who work with the Spiritual Growth Team to see that Ascension offers opportunities to re-create spiritually for everyone.....not just children. As you and your family prepare for fall, prayerfully consider how you will be participating in the varied programs offered.

Parents will want to be particularly mindful to the ways they can partner with us at Ascension as they follow through on the commitments they made as their children were baptized. As your family's calendar begins to fill in for fall, you will want to be sure to include worship and various opportunities for service and spiritual growth.

A special opportunity is being planned for those who are in Junior High/Middle School (6th-8th grade), High School and their families on Sunday, August 26th. Mark you calendars now! We will gather after the Celebrate service. A light lunch will be served at noon. You will have the chance to learn the plans underway for fall programs. Jonathan will share vision and plans for youth activities for these age groups; 6th - 8th grade families will have the opportunity to register for confirmation (look for your materials to be mailed in early August). Sign up for fall retreats and discover opportunities to support these programs with your time, talent and treasure. Get copies of the schedule of future classes, small groups and activities. Meet staff and volunteers who coordinate the programs. You will not want to miss this opportunity!!!

Rally Day, September 9, promises to be a special day for everyone! You can learn more about them in this newsletter. Be watching for specific details about Sunday School, Adult Forum, Bible study, small groups and Tuesday evening supper and programs.

I look forward to growing with you, in service to Jesus Christ.

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.

ATTENTION !!

PARENTS OF IN-COMING 6TH, 7TH, AND 8TH GRADE STUDENTS!

Confirmation starts soon and planning for the new year continues. To align with the middle school format and to address an educational gap that exists today with the 6th graders, the decision was made to have 6th, 7th and 8th graders participate in a **THREE YEAR** program .

Therefore, all parents and students are invited to join us on **August 26th, 2007 at 12 NOON** (immediately following the Celebrate service), for an important meeting. Lunch will be served, program information will be available and registration paperwork can be completed. Families will not want to miss this meeting. If you have questions or concerns please contact Pastor Carol Wasemiller.

We look forward to seeing you there!

Yours in Christ,
Your Confirmation Team

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Thank you to all who helped to make this year's Vacation Bible School a success. From parents, to group leaders and teachers, the word "thanks" does not seem to be enough. The children loved VBS and most importantly, they learned so much about our Jesus! Again, thank you, it could not have been done without you.

Much like last year, our children will be following the Rotation Sunday School format. What this means, is that each month will be spent learning about one Bible Story. Throughout the month, the children will travel to different stations, learning the story through art, cooking, games, crafts and drama. In order for Sunday School to be a success, we need your help. There are two areas in which you can volunteer. The first way is in the role of a Shepherd and is a year-long commitment. During the year you are assigned to an age group of children which you travel with from week to week. There is no real preparation, but rather a commitment to being present on Sundays with your age group. The other way in which you can volunteer is in the role of a teacher and this commitment is one month. Would you please consider volunteering? Though it takes many people pulling together, the rotation Sunday School has been a great success in past years and this year should not be different. Please contact Jeanne Schambach at (847) 446-8335 if you are interested or have any questions. Thanks!!

Worship Notes

Bravo to you on your quick assimilation of the new liturgy, which has truly enhanced our worship together this summer. Because we've heard so many positive comments about using this liturgy, it has been decided that we will continue using it through the end of Pentecost and switch back to setting one at the beginning of Advent. Thanks to the lay liturgists and extra musicians (Mark Swenson on guitar...more to come) who have helped bring us to this point through their leadership!

As August approaches, we look forward to the **ELCA Synod Assembly** that will take place at Navy Pier. Members of the Ascension choir will represent Ascension as a part of a combined chorus that leads the **final worship** of this assembly. This worship service will take place on **Saturday, August 11 at 11:00 a.m.**, so make time to come and be a part of it. For more information about the Synod Assembly, go to: <http://www.elca.org/assembly/index.html>.

Soon after the Assembly ends, **Rally Day** approaches. As we mentioned in the last article, the Worship team began working on a concept for Rally Day that would bring all of us in the church together to worship and have some great fellowship time. Pastor Carol and Gail also have their teams involved and now the event is really picking up steam. Rally Day takes place on **September 9th** this year, and contrary to previous years, there will only be one worship service, so please take note of the schedule below. We would truly like this to be a day of joyful reunions and the discovery of new relationships, so be sure to invite old friends, new friends and anyone else you know who might need a helping hand in beginning their spiritual journey.

Rally Day Schedule:

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

10:00 a.m. Fellowship

10:30 a.m. Hymn Sing

11:00 a.m. - ? Lunch and Organized Games/Activities

Finally, we would like to bring your attention to the next event in our concert series that 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.** Chicago Virtuosi is truly 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! Peace, Mischa & Minkyoo

Blessings,

Mischa & Minkyoo

Council Report

Words from your Church Council...

The Church Council focused most of its attention on facility issues at its meeting in June. The Council approved a process for moving forward with the facility planning process. That plan includes Town Hall meetings in the June-September time period for members to voice opinions and ask questions on the ideas presented by JNA Architects. Based on feedback from the congregation, the Executive Committee, with input from the Facility Planning Team, will prepare a proposal for review, discussion and approval by the Council. In October, the Council will present a proposal to the congregation. It may range from only making necessary repairs to a significant facility improvement project. No decision has been made at this time. The vote on the proposal at the congregational meeting in October will provide direction on the scope of the project. Another meeting and vote of the congregation will be held in March or April of 2008 to determine final plans. In the interim, we are proceeding with repairs that require immediate attention, such as patching of the parking lot.

The Council approved a "Fair Trade Fair," that is being organized by Harold Mitchell, Eleanor Pattie and Gail Price, to be held at our church in October. As supporters of fair trade through the coffee, tea and chocolate product sales, we are happy to bring information and other fair trade products to our congregation. Ascension will not benefit financially from the sales.

Call Committee Update

As of July 13, we have been advised by the Bishop's office that two individuals are interested in our Senior Pastor position and two additional individuals may be identified by the time this issue of *The Witness* reaches your mailbox. At this time, we do not know anything about any of the candidates, except that they are being recommended by our synod. We are expecting a call from the synod office letting us know if we will have two, three or four people to consider.

We are looking forward to evaluating these candidates and sharing information about our church with them. If you have any questions, please contact any of the members of the Call Committee: Ted Hartley, Alice Kosnik, Grant Krafft, Joan Lee, Nina McCune, Ruth Newman, Lisa Rude and Kurt Vining.

Stewardship

Announcing This Year's Fall Emphasis... *Save the Date—October 27*

"Declare how much God has done for you." - Luke 8:39

"We cannot keep from speaking about what we have seen and heard!" - Acts 4:20

We all have stories to tell: humorous happenings, learning experiences, news about our families, triumphs and tragedies, and plans for the future.

And as the people of God, we have stories to tell about what God has done for us and about the difference that God's grace has made in our lives. Sometimes we are less aware of these stories until they are coaxed out of us—but they are there, part of whom we are.

That's not all. Whether we know it or not, we also have stories to tell about what God has done *through* us—stories about how God has used us to make a difference in the lives of others. Getting to know those stories makes us even more aware of God's grace.

God has given us so much—and the gifts of God are for sharing.

The Bible is a collection of stories about people with gifts to share—stories about people whose lives were so changed by God that they were able to make a difference in the lives of others. This year's fall Stewardship financial emphasis, called *Stories to Tell, Gifts to Share*, will focus on *storytelling* and on *giving*, both of which are grateful responses to the grace of God.

We will formally kick off the fall emphasis on September 23rd, and will conclude with Commitment Sunday on November 4th.

We're asking you to hold one important date—Saturday, October 27th. That night, we'll hold a fun event at the church which will be one part storytelling/talent show, one part fellowship, and 100% family fun. So please plan to attend!!! More details will follow.

Bruce Carlson

Stewardship Chair