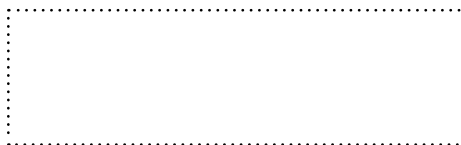




Ascension
LUTHERAN CHURCH
ELCA
January 2015

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THE *Ascension* NEWSLETTER



Ascension
LUTHERAN CHURCH
ELCA



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9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

FRIDAY

9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

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Ray Kinney Raywk2003@yahoo.com

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A PRICELESS PROMISE

Pastor Angela Khabeib

Happy New Year! Can you believe it is 2015? The hustle and bustle of the Christmas season is fading away. The warmth of a merry Christmas is slowly being replaced - here we are welcoming another new year. So you know what that means? That means that people are making promises - the ubiquitous New Year's resolutions. Promises, promises, promises. Certainly, there is nothing wrong with making New Year's resolutions. It's just that they tend to quickly evaporate as the calendar turns to February then March, and let's not even talk about April. You know it's funny - many of us make these resolutions with complete sincerity. While others know full well that our promise is really just a dressed up fib - a lie wearing a tuxedo. Believe me. I've made a few of these myself quite aware that my resolve would weaken and I would eventually revert back to my old habits.



But, whether our promises are rooted in determination or doubt, one thing is sure. Even though some of our promises may never go the distance, there is good news. God keeps promises. Unlike some of the promises that roll around this time of year, God's promises are like a treasure. The Psalmist teaches us that "The promises of the Lord are promises that are pure, silver refined in a furnace... purified seven times" (Ps 12:6). God's promises give us something that we can cling to even in the midst of uncertainty. When all else seems bleak, God's promises are a light. Psalm 119:50 reads, "This is my comfort in my distress, that your promise gives me life."

So, sisters and brothers, trusting in God's promises, I encourage you to enter 2015 with new resolve. A wise man once said, "Be the change you wish to see in the world." How's that for a New Year's resolution? In fact, take a moment and imagine what that would mean for us. What if we each committed to a cause that is bigger than ourselves? What if you walked faithfully, throughout 2015, with a non-profit agency, ministry, or volunteer organization (or even started one on your own) that gave voice to a cause that is near and dear to your heart? I invite anyone who is passionate about a cause to put that passion into action. One of our Savior's most powerful promises is reinforced through our baptismal rite: "You are the light of the world... Let your light shine before others in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 5:14, 16). Perhaps you are passionate about animal rights or affordable housing. Certainly there is no shortage of worthy causes. Our world is brimming with concerns like mental health issues, homelessness, cancer awareness, job creation, food scarcity, HIV/AIDS awareness, autism awareness, drug addiction, spousal abuse, or any host of other important concerns - the list is seemingly endless. Or perhaps you don't have a strong inclination to any particular cause. Well, if that's you, you're in luck because the Holy Spirit is an amazing guide. Through prayer, the Holy Spirit can open your eyes, heart, and mind and direct you to the perfect ministry for your gifts!

In this New Year, I pray that God will give us new eyes to see Christ again. And may God give us new ears to hear God's glorious good news again. And may God give us new hearts to minister to God's people again. It is my hope that we would serve one another like we actually believe that Jesus did, in fact, come to us...here...today! And with these gifts of newness, it is my hope that we encounter the fullness of God's grace and truth even in the ordinary. Because today, in 2015, there is still an awesome promise in our midst. God has revealed God's self to us through the priceless promise of Jesus. John's gospel message is just as relevant today as it was over 2000 years ago, "God's light shines in the darkness and the darkness will not overcome it." Be the change. Be the salt of the earth. Be the light of the world!



THE LIGHT OF EPIPHANY

Pastor Chris Marien

Dear People of God,

I am borrowing the words of one of my favorite poets, Ann Weems, to share with you the hope of this new year. She has an incredible gift to describe with such clarity my feelings of these days after Christmas. She writes:

I must admit to a certain guilt about stuffing the Holy Family into a box in the aftermath of Christmas. It's frankly a time of personal triumph when, each Advent's eve, I free them (and the others) from a year's imprisonment boxed in the dark of our basement. Out they come, one by one, struggling through the straw, last year's tinsel still clinging to their robes. Nevertheless, they appear, ready to take their place again in the light of another Christmas. The Child is first because he's the one I'm most reluctant to box. Attached forever to his cradle, he emerges, apparently unscathed from the time spent upside down to avoid the crush of the lid. His mother, dressed eternally in blue, still gazes adoringly, in spite of the fact that her features are somewhat smudged. Joseph has stood for eleven months, holding valiantly what's left of his staff, broken twenty Christmases ago by a child who hugged a little too tightly. The Wise Ones still travel, though not quite so elegantly, the standing camel having lost its back leg and the sitting camel having lost one ear. However, gifts intact, they are ready to move. The Shepherds, walking or kneeling, sometimes confused with Joseph (who wears the same dull brown), tumble forth, followed by three sheep in very bad repair. There they are again, not a grand set surely, but one children (and now the grandchildren) can touch and move about to reenact the silent night. When the others return, we will wind the music box on the back of the stable and light the Advent candles and go one more time to Bethlehem. And this year, when it's time to pack the figures away, we'll be more careful that the Peace and Goodwill are not also boxed for another year!

The days of Epiphany call us to bask in the light of Christmas. Not the light of a star, but the light of a Savior. Here, the darkness is chased away by the promise of new life. The long nights of winter are beginning to give way to days filled with increasing moments of light. For many of us, the darkness seems to overwhelm us. It is only when we remove our hands covering our eyes and lift up our heads that we are able to see the light of Christ that surrounds us. May you be blessed by the hope that God has already placed within you in these days of Epiphany – these days of light.

Peace be with you.

PASTORAL ACTS

Baptisms

Dec. 7, Jadrien Gonzales Jr.



ONE LORD
ONE FAITH
ONE BAPTISM
(Ephesians 4:5)

FACILITIES UPDATE

Amy Gilgenbach, Director of Administration

2015 brings a few facilities changes at Ascension. Custodian Don Malchow, who had delayed his retirement this summer to get us through a busy fall and Christmas season, has retired.

We are grateful for Don's work here over the past seven years and thank Don for his stewardship of our church.

The good news is that Don will continue to be a member, although we'll probably see less of him here, especially over the summer and hunting seasons as he enjoys his well-earned second retirement.

This fall, with Don's retirement pending, we reviewed options for maintenance and custodial work. Consequently, we contracted with a janitorial company for cleaning duties and eliminated the assistant custodial position for 2015. In the first quarter of 2015, we will be reviewing the remaining custodial position and options for ensuring the upkeep of the building.

During this time of transition and possibly into the future, with no custodian on staff, groups meeting at Ascension will once again be responsible for their own room set-up and clean-up. Both East and West Halls will be set with tables and chairs for use and groups can rearrange them as necessary, making sure to put them back the way they were found for the next people. Groups are also asked to take garbage to the dumpster after their events. This is especially important with food garbage. To summarize: when you're done with your meeting, leave the room like you found it, or even a little better.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation in maintaining our building and being good stewards of what the Lord has given us.



ASCENSION'S 2015 BUDGET

**2015 budget; approved at the
Nov. 9, 2014 Congregational
Meeting**

Item	2014 Budget	2014 Projected	2015 Budget
Income			
Contributions	\$721,250	\$666,943	\$670,000
Rent, Interest, & Other Income	\$58,750	\$66,069	\$60,000
From Restricted Funds	\$3,000	\$13,173	\$69,428
Total Income	\$783,000	\$746,185	\$799,428
Expenses			
Communications	\$27,500	\$27,592	\$24,100
Facilities	\$136,466	\$143,765	\$135,016
Financial Development	\$97,162	\$97,131	\$97,162
Leadership Development	\$13,900	\$20,272	\$1,600
Administration	\$249,571	\$214,817	\$260,637
Caring Relationships	\$27,293	\$27,148	\$26,093
Joyful Worship	\$58,072	\$73,402	\$97,738
Mission Outreach	\$78,000	\$74,090	\$67,000
Spiritual Growth	\$95,036	\$90,483	\$96,382
Total Expenses	\$783,000	\$768,700	\$805,728
Surplus/(Deficit)	\$-	\$(22,515)	\$(6,300)

FINANCIAL REPORT

Doug Bue, Treasurer

November 30, 2014 Year to Date

Item	2014 Actual	2014 Plan	Variance to 2014 Plan	2013 Actual	Variance to 2013 Actual
Income					
Contributions	\$598,280	\$650,500	\$(52,220)	\$629,363	\$(31,083)
Rent, Interest, & Other Income	\$60,145	\$53,338	\$6,807	\$47,907	\$12,238
From Restricted Funds	\$10,751	\$2,750	\$8,001	\$3,600	\$7,151
Total Income	\$669,176	\$706,588	\$(37,412)	\$680,870	\$(11,694)
Expenses					
Communications	\$25,337	\$25,550	\$213	\$26,508	\$1,171
Facilities	\$139,824	\$131,450	\$(8,374)	\$121,215	\$(18,609)
Financial Development	\$89,042	\$89,079	\$37	\$94,067	\$5,025
Leadership Development	\$20,206	\$13,700	\$(6,506)	\$2,822	\$(17,384)
Administration	\$194,066	\$228,773	\$34,707	\$232,938	\$38,872
Caring Relationships	\$25,155	\$25,019	\$(136)	\$15,650	\$(9,505)
Joyful Worship	\$65,082	\$53,428	\$(11,654)	\$44,146	\$(20,936)
Mission Outreach	\$65,484	\$68,125	\$2,641	\$68,369	\$2,885
Spiritual Growth	\$82,571	\$86,000	\$3,429	\$83,915	\$1,344
Total Expenses	\$706,767	\$721,124	\$14,357	\$689,630	\$(17,137)
Surplus/(Deficit)	\$(37,591)	\$(14,536)	\$(23,055)	\$(8,760)	\$(28,831)
Mortgage Balance	\$942,678				
Ascension Arise Contributions	\$216,210				
Restricted Contributions	\$102,870				
Restricted Funds Balance	\$179,884				

What the numbers mean:

Our general contributions are 8.0% behind plan for 2014, and they are 4.9% behind 2013 actual.

Our expenses are under plan due mainly to our pastoral and youth minister transitions.

Based on our bottom line, we are behind plan by \$23,055.

Our general fund balance is currently positive.

If you have any questions, please contact Doug Bue at dwbue@wi.rr.com.

CRASH: WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO

Tony Acompanado, Director of Youth Ministries



Retreats, such as the Gratitude Immersion Retreat, help participants to learn about global needs and how the choices we make impact the world around us. Events like this help us to learn compassion that inspires us into action. Events like the Random Acts of Kindness Scavenger Hunt offer opportunities to fulfill the call to lead lives of service. Through service to others we learn to value one another and the role we each play in God's revealing story for the world.



Mime is an amazing opportunity to dive deeper into God's story of love for the world. Bible study helps us to understand more about our Creator and His love for all of us. Fun and games invite us to let go of the tensions that keep us from authentic relationships with one another and allow us to bond over laughter and fun in a safe and trust filled environment.



What lies ahead in 2015? Ascension's CRASH Youth Ministry will focus on forming faith in the God who creates, sustains, and redeems, by "living out" the call to love one another as we have been loved by God.

We pray that these and many, many other opportunities to "BE" the Body of Christ will arise and open our hearts and minds to God's mission for each of us.

CRASH & JOLT: JANUARY SCHEDULES

JANUARY CRASH CALENDAR

10th	8 a.m.-12 p.m.	Rescue Mission Service Project
11th	4-6 p.m.	Life of Jesus Retreat
11th	6-8 p.m.	Mime Tryouts
18th	12:30-2:30 p.m.	Mime Lunch & Rehearsal
18th	6-8 p.m.	Youth Group
25th	12:30-2:30 p.m.	Mime Lunch & Rehearsal

JANUARY JOLT CALENDAR

1st	NO JOLT
8th	6:30-8 p.m. (All Advent projects due to PC)
15th	6:30-8 p.m.
22nd	6:30-8 p.m.
29th	NO JOLT
Remember Advent projects are due to PC on or before our first class back after break!	



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Jennifer Koutnik, Director of Children's Ministries

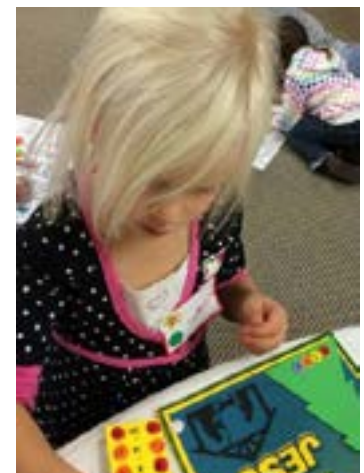
Wishing all our families a wonderful New Year full of blessings. I am grateful to be able to see your children each week and watch them grow on their faith journey.

I am so proud of all our Sunday School kids. They did phenomenally in the Christmas Pageant! Our amazing teachers and volunteers helped pull everything together. Thank you all from the bottom of my heart for all your hard work.

A HUGE thank you goes to Vicki Taylor for the beautiful job on the music. This could not have been done without all her work. How lucky we are to have such a fabulous Director of Music Ministries!? We are very grateful for her talent and time.

I am looking forward to another year growing our youngest members in their faith. Blessings on your 2015!

ROAD TO BETHLEHEM PHOTOS



CARE MINISTRIES

Brenda Lytle, RN, Director of Care Ministries

A heartfelt thanks to all of you for your commitment to Care Ministries. You have all been blessings to our church! A Happy New Year to you! If you are looking for some volunteer opportunities in the new year, please consider joining our Care Ministries' Touch a Heart team! Interested in volunteering to drive people to and from church or an appointment during the week? Contact Judy at 262-547-3921. Interested in visiting a lonely homebound member in their home? Contact Beth at 262-542-7447. Volunteers who help in these capacities help our homebound members and members who otherwise couldn't make it to worship feel like they are still a part of our Ascension community.

CONTINUED PROGRAMS 2015

Grief Share: We are starting off our year with another Grief Share Program beginning on Tuesdays, Jan. 6-March 31, from 6-8 p.m., for 12 weeks. This program is for those that have suffered significant loss and features biblical concepts for healing from grief through a DVD series, workbook, and support group. The cost of this program is \$15. Please feel free to join us or invite a loved one. Please contact Brenda Lytle, at Brenda@ascensionelca.org if you are interested or have questions.

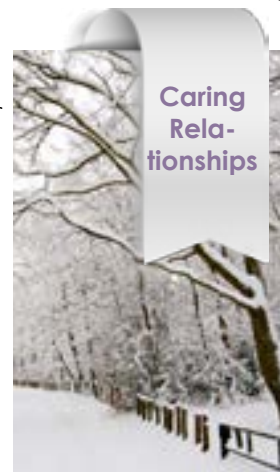
Yoga/Tai Chi: Our Yoga/Thai Chi classes will resume Monday nights, Jan. 26-March 9, from 6-7 p.m., in East Hall. Please sign up on the bulletin board outside of Brenda's office. Ann Hurley from the YMCA will be teaching the class. The cost is \$12 for six weeks. One week is free! Come join in the fun, become more flexible, and relax in 2015.

NEW TO 2015!

Divorce Care: Care Ministries will be facilitating a new Divorce Care Program in 2015. This is a program for divorce recovery: to help with hurts, discover hope for the future, and experience God's healing. Childcare will be provided. More information to come!

Spiritual Care Ministry: Our Care Ministries at Ascension is offering a new way to provide spiritual care to our hospitalized, rehabilitating, and homebound members. New bags will be given by our Pastoral Assistants to provide this spiritual enrichment. Thanks to Kay Stone, the leader of this new Care Ministry.

Smart Driving Course: Are you interested in learning new or refreshing your safe driving skills? Care Ministries is offering an AARP Smart Driving Course on Wednesday, March 25, from 12:30-4:30 p.m., in room 106. It is a four hour course. The AARP member cost is \$15. The non-AARP cost is \$20. All fees are payable at the time of the class. Sign up on the bulletin board outside of Brenda's office. Some insurance companies will give reductions for the completion of this course! Certificates will be given.



KNIT WITS

Join the Knit Wits for our Knit-a-Thon, Knit Fest, on Saturday, Jan. 17, from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Come when you can, leave when you must. We spend the day knitting, crocheting, and looming charity hats. Lunch is potluck, and we conduct a business meeting around 11:30 a.m. If you have questions, call Maddie at 262-527-4013.

Other January Knit Wit events include:

Monday, Jan. 5, 6:30-8:30 p.m. - Meeting at church

Monday, Jan. 12, 12:30-3:30 p.m.: Lunch & Knit at a restaurant TBD. RSVP to Maddie.

Monday, Jan. 26, 6:30-8:30 p.m.: Meeting at church

We can always use more yarn. Donations of clean, unused yarn are always welcome!





SUPERMOMS

Ileen Marien, Supermoms Member

3RD ANNUAL WHITE ELEPHANT GIFT EXCHANGE PARTY

*One woman's trash
Is another woman's treasure!
The bigger the laugh,
The greater the pleasure!
So bring a gift,
You don't even need to spend a dime!
If it's useful or pretty,
Some might say you've committed a crime.*

I hope you can join us for a fun holiday party! If you haven't had the chance to come to a Supermoms event, this is your time.

To participate in our white elephant game, each person should bring a cheap, silly, fun, ridiculous, or "just lying around the house" wrapped mystery gift to be exchanged in a whacky session of bargaining, strategy, and luck.

Please bring an appetizer to share. Hope you can make it!

Please text (262-422-4232) or e-mail Ileen (Ileenmarien@gmail.com) to RSVP.



PUPPETS OF PRAISE

In spite of the rain, hundreds of people turned out for the Waukesha Christmas parade.

The Puppets of Praise and Special Friends reminded everyone that Jesus is our pilot as their rocket ship float drove by. Afterwards, we were welcomed back to church with hot chocolate, walking tacos, bingo, crafts and a bouncy house. Thanks, Marge Schroeder and Sara Doyle.

Cheryl Anspach, Puppets of Praise Leader

A special thanks to Shawn Graser for providing the truck, trailer, float materials, candy to pass out, and, most importantly, his HEATED shop, Extreme Woodworking, where we were able to paint, string lights, and decorate the float. (Remember how cold it was earlier in November). And thanks to Don Doyle and Don Anspach for helping Shawn create a roof for the float so we could keep dry and for making sure the float made it to the parade route.



FRIENDS OF MARTA

Barb Hammer, Friends of Marta Benefit Committee Member

The Friends of Marta benefit committee invites you to join them in supporting Marta Aparicio as she goes through hip surgery and an extensive recovery period. Her parents, Edwin and Sarah, face many emotional, physical, and financial challenges as they care for her.

Marta's recovery will require: equipment to support her in her cast; special clothing; 3x the diapers; extensive physical therapy; and medical bills, plus miscellaneous items not presently known.

Please keep Marta and her family in your prayers and consider a donation to help them. The *Friends of Marta* benefit account has been set up at Waukesha State Bank. To donate, please make a check out to *Friends of Marta* and send it to Waukesha State Bank, PO Box 648, Waukesha 53187-00648, or bring your donation to any of the 14 Waukesha State Bank offices throughout the Waukesha area. Find updates on Marta's recovery at www.caringbridge.org/visit/martaapario.

SMALL GROUP MINISTRIES

Karen Schmiechen, Small Group Ministry Team Member

Small Groups at Ascension are an important part of our community focusing on building relationships with God and one another. God is a God of relationships, demonstrating this by sending Jesus Christ to walk among us and teach us his love. Small group studies build our relationship with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit while nurturing relationships that reflect the love of God with one another.

There are many small groups available at Ascension that will graciously welcome you. To peak your interest and consideration, below are a few that are starting new studies in the New Year.

The Daniel Plan study will kick off on Wednesday, Jan. 7, at 7:30 p.m. for interested people. Attendees will decide when they will meet for future meetings. The Daniel Plan focuses on five essentials for health: faith, food, fitness, focus, and friends. Contact Sarah Anderson, saclan19@gmail.com, for more information.

AMEN Men's Ministries will be starting a five-week study titled *Faith Commander* by Korie Robertson and Chrys Howard on Monday, Jan. 5, at 6:30. The five study sessions are based on Jesus' parables concerning faith, forgiveness, prayer, obedience, and kindness. Contact Keith Kallin, krkallin@yahoo.com, for more information.

Jim Ballantyne's group meets on Thursday nights at 7 p.m. starting Jan. 8, 2015, in room 107. Jim's group will also be studying the *Faith Commander* five-week study. Contact Jim Ballantyne, jandjballantyne@att.net, for more information.

Jan Zastrow's group, TGIT (Thank God It's Tuesday) is moving to a new time. The group will begin meeting the first and third Tuesdays at 9:30 a.m. The group has just finished the Old Testament of "The Story" and will be starting the New Testament. The first meeting is Tuesday, Jan. 6, in room 107. Contact Jan Zastrow, jan_zastrow@yahoo.com, for more information.

A church-wide bible study is being planned for Lent. The study and details will be announced later in January.



PRAYER GROUP MINISTRY

Bonnie Thiesenbusen, Prayer Group Leader

During the month of January, we celebrate Epiphany, at which time we commemorate the Wisemen's journey to see the child Jesus with their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

To us now, these seem to be strange gifts, but a friend has suggested that in these times the gold may represent something that we want; the frankincense is something that we need; and the myrrh is something to enhance our spiritual journey. Indeed, it all sounds like a closer personal relationship with our Lord and Savior Jesus. It is something that we want - something that we need - and something to enhance our spiritual journey.

Please join us on the first and third Monday evenings in the Prayer Room from 6-7 p.m. as we lift up the prayer concerns of our church and community and praise the Lord for His many gifts and blessings to us.





A TASTE OF THE DANIEL PLAN

Steve and Carol Spieker, Daniel Plan Team Members

We have been gratified to be approached by a number of Ascension members commenting on how they enjoyed reading about The Daniel Plan in past newsletters. Unfortunately, some people still mistakenly refer to The Daniel Plan as a “diet.” It is so much more and that is what makes it so great.

The Daniel Plan is different because it is founded on faith and God is the source of all inspiration and power. The program incorporates guidance in every life area, so you not only get healthy physically, but spiritually, emotionally, and relationally as well. Beyond access to practical food and fitness tips and resources, you will learn how to focus your mind on those things that will encourage healthy choices. This is an ancient biblical principle taught by Paul in Philippians:

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable - if anything is excellent or praiseworthy - think about such things. - Philippians 4:8 (NIV)

Throughout your journey, you are surrounded by friends who offer continual support and encouragement. Even when you experience a setback, you simply make a U-turn and get back on track. While living The Daniel Plan lifestyle, your focus is on progress, never perfection.

Many diets and fitness plans use guilt as a motivation, but that never works in the long run. You can guilt yourself into doing anything short-term, but the change will last only as long as the guilt (or fear) does. In contrast, The Daniel Plan is built with love as the motivation: experiencing

God’s unconditional love for you, learning to love him back, learning to love whom God made you to be, and learning to give and receive love from others in a small group setting.

As you embark on your journey, one of the greatest benefits is the ripple effect you will experience along the way. As you incorporate more whole foods on your plate, schedule fitness into your routine, and focus your thoughts on what is true, you will start feeling better, and become motivated to make changes in other areas of your life.

We find ourselves feeling energized whenever we try a new food or activity. We feel God’s embrace when we remember we are making the extra efforts because of our love for Him. With God as our cheerleader, how could we possibly fail?

Here is an important little tip we would like to share as we enter into the depths of winter here in Wisconsin. Most people that live in our area of the world are significantly deficient in Vitamin D-3. This vitamin is key to fostering a strong immune system. A simple, inexpensive blood test from your doctor will likely confirm your need to supplement this important vitamin. In our house, Steve supplements daily with 7000 IU’s and Carol supplements with 5000 IU’s of a GOOD QUALITY Vitamin D-3. A strong immune system will not only help you battle bothersome colds and flu but more sinister diseases including cancer.

A new Daniel Plan group is starting in January. Why not make 2015 the year for a new lifestyle?

CACAO HEMP HALLELUJAH BITES

Ingredients

- 1 cup raw pecan pieces
- 1/3 cup raw cacao
- 1 dash sea salt
- 1/2 cup hemp seeds
- 2 tbsp coconut oil
- 2 drops stevia or 1 tbsp raw honey

Preparation

- In a basic food processor with the s blade attachment in place, process all ingredients until a dough ball forms. Scoop out the mixture 1 tbsp at a time and roll into a delicious bite to enjoy any time. (Chilling the balls will keep them firmer.) These make great desserts or quick energy pick-me-ups when on the go.

NOTE: Some of the ingredients may seem foreign to you but they are all readily available at Woodman’s (or local health food stores).

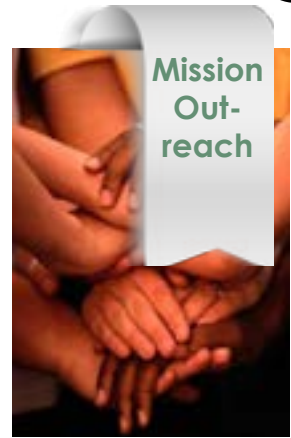
OUR PARTNERSHIPS: CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH

Shirley Wehmeier, Mission Outreach Wing Leader

Several Ascension members participated in Cross's Ministry Sunday. We worshipped together and then participated in their Ministry Fair. Ascension has been active in the meal program on the first Wednesday of the month; we have donated many food items for the Food Pantry; and we have had some worship exchanges. How else can we grow our partnership? There are many opportunities for individuals or small groups:

- Crafters and quilters participate in Cross's quilter program
- Children attend Cross's VBS this summer
- Youth do a joint activity with Cross Youth
- Tutor students who are working to become successful
- Provide a meal for tutoring participants or Choices Girls Group
- Be a guest speaker or present a craft project at Choices Girls Group
- Volunteer at Bread of Healing Empowerment Ministry: serve food, attend Bible study with guests, play music or sing during Bible study, present a topic for Bible study
- Assist at Food Pantry

Contact Dave Hammer or Shirley Wehmeier for more information about how to get involved.



CROSS FOOD PANTRY

During January, we will be collecting packaged meals such as macaroni-and-cheese. Many of the recipients have limited kitchen supplies and utensils so these items are very important. Each week, Cross prepares 200 bags for those attending the Food Pantry. Ascension will have a goal to collect at least 200 items to provide enough for each bag for one week. Are there small groups who want to challenge each other? Could we do more than one week? We will do weekly updates in the e-alerts and bulletins to see how close we are to our goal. Contact Shirley Wehmeier, pwehmeier@wi.rr.com, with questions.

MARDI GRAS

Cross's 6th Annual Mardi Gras Dinner/Dance Fund-raising Celebration will be held Feb. 13 at the Hilton Garden Hotel in Milwaukee. Please consider joining others in celebration of our partnership at Cross while supporting their ministries. You won't be disappointed! Tickets are \$75 per person.



OUR PARTNERSHIPS: EL SALVADOR

Sarah Aparicio, Mission Outreach Committee Member

It is not too late to sign up for the mission trip to El Salvador which will be from the day after Easter to the following Saturday, April 6-12, 2015. This trip will provide an opportunity to get to know our partners at San Jorge and to walk more closely with them in their ministry. Join us on this spring break trip as we embark on this new journey of congregational partnership. In addition, we will meet the scholarship students, whom Ascension sponsors, in Rutilio Grande and visit the Agroferreteria that Ascension helped establish. On our mission trips to El Salvador, we worship together, we create together, we learn together, sometimes we cry together, often we laugh together. Watch the weekly announcements for an upcoming interest meeting. Contact Sarah Aparicio with questions, weh22@hotmail.com.





IN OUR OWN BACKYARD

Shirley Wehmeier, Mission Outreach Wing Leader

Many people are eager to support those less fortunate during the Christmas season. Sadly, the needs of the poor do not stop when the calendar turns. Please consider a donation either of cash, goods, or your time. There are ongoing volunteer and donation needs at many of our local agencies that care for those less fortunate. Mission Outreach is happy to link individuals or groups to the opportunities available. Contact Shirley Wehmeier, pwehmeier@wi.rr.com, for more details.

Watch for details during 2015 as we explore how to truly reach out to our own backyard by offering ministries to our neighborhood. As we continue to work with local agencies, we also have a responsibility to those who live close to Ascension. A major goal for 2015 is to begin a deliberate outreach endeavor with our neighborhood.



*College Care Package
Assembly*

IN GRATITUDE

FROM ALEAH MAAS

I was so excited to receive [Ascension's] care package last week! I miss each and every one of you and I am hardly going to be able to wait two more weeks to see you all. School is going well! We are gearing up for finals week here and you can feel the buzz in the air. The fantastic treats you sent will certainly be much appreciated during the long hours of study I have ahead of me.

Tonight, I have my last band event before we all leave for break. We are going on a hay ride, which should be interesting. Band has really been fun and I am excited for it to start up again after break. We just finished celebrating Christmas Fest here last weekend. It is quite the celebration! Alumni from many generations come back and visit, and the choirs put on a beautiful show with the orchestra. They even do a traditional Norwegian meal in the cafeteria for everyone who wants to come eat. I was brave and tried the lutefisk!

I have been in four classes this semester, which is standard for a full-time student. My favorite is International Relations, even though it is pretty difficult sometimes. Right now I am working on a really challenging paper for that class so I hope that it ends up going well! I miss everyone so much and cannot wait to be home! Thank you again so much for the care package!

FROM STUDENTS

Friends,
Thank you for supporting Caitlin Marshall
with an EPIC grant this year.
Yours in Christ,
The Lutheran College Community

Your gifts provide the needed funding that ensures that classes continue led by our stellar faculty members. Tuition revenue got us this far, but the rest of the school year is made possible by faithful LSTC donors like you. - *The Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago (Ki-Min, Emilie P., Peter V., Lina Heise, Jason Churchill)*

**GIVE THANKS ALWAYS AND FOR
EVERYTHING TO GOD.**

EPHESIANS 5:20

January 2015

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
Room Key EH = East Hall HR = Hearth Room K = Kitchen PL = Parking Lot PR = Prayer Room S = Sanctuary WH = West Hall YR = Youth Room				1 NEW YEAR'S DAY Office Closed 10am AI Anon WH	2	3
4 7:30am Worship 9am Worship 9am Spanish Worship PR 10:30am Puppets EH 10:45am Worship 10:45 Sunday School 6pm AA mtg WH 7pm AA closed mtg WH	5 9:45am AI Anon WH 6pm Prayer Grp PR 6:30pm AMEN 107 6:30pm Knit Wits WH	6 EPIPHANY 6:30am AMEN 107 9:30am TGIT 107 9:30am Women's Bible Study HR 6pm Grief Share EH 7pm Mutual Ministry PR	7 9am Young at Heart, Denny's 9:30am Cross Meal 9:30am Staff Mtg 6pm Handbells S 6:30pm Women's Nurture Grp PR 7pm AA Wisdom Grp WH, HR 7:30pm Choir S	8 10am AI Anon WH 10am TGBG PR 12pm Cluster EH 5pm Angel Choir S 5:45pm Joyful Sounds S 6pm Quilting, Bissetts 6:30pm JOLT EH, YR 7pm Ballantyne 107 7pm Care Ministries 106 7pm Mission Outreach 106	9	10 8am CRASH MKE Rescue Mission 5pm Supermoms Party
11 Blood Pressure Screening 7:30am Worship 9am Worship 9am Spanish Worship PR 10:30am Puppets EH 10:45am Worship 10:45am Sunday School 4pm Life of Jesus Retreat 6pm AA mtg WH 6pm Mime Try-Outs YR 7pm AA closed mtg WH	12 9:45am AI Anon WH 12:30pm Knit Wits Lunch 6:30pm AMEN 107 7pm Living Letters 106	13 6:30am AMEN 107 9:30am Women's Bible Study HR 1pm Pastoral Assistants 6pm Grief Share EH 7pm Holloway 107	14 11:45am Men's Nurture Grp 106 6pm Handbells S 7pm Wisdom Grp WH 7:30pm Choir S	15 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE 10am AI Anon WH 5pm Angel Choir S 5:45pm Joyful Sounds S 6pm Quilting, Bissetts 6:30pm JOLT EH, YR 7pm Ballantyne 107	16	17 9am Knit Fest EH 10:30am Folk Choir S
18 7:30am Worship 9am Worship 9am Spanish Worship PR 10:30 Puppets EH 10:45am Worship 10:45 Sunday School 12pm Mime WH, S 6pm AA mtg WH 6pm CRASH EH, YR 7pm AA closed mtg WH	19 MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY 9:45am AI Anon WH 6pm Prayer Grp PR 6:30pm AMEN 107	20 6:30am AMEN 107 9:30am Women's Bible Study HR 6pm Grief Share EH 7pm Council EH 7pm TGIT 107	21 9:30am Staff Mtg. 12pm Young at Heart EH, K 6pm Handbells S 6:30pm Women's Nurture Grp PR 7pm Wisdom Grp WH 7:30pm Choir S	22 10am AI Anon WH 10am TGBG PR 5pm Angel Choir S 5:45pm Joyful Sounds S 6pm Quilting, Bissetts 6:30pm JOLT EH, YR 7pm Ballantyne 107	23	24 7:30am CRASH Hope Center
25 7:30am Worship 9am Worship 9am Spanish Worship PR 10:30am Puppets EH 10:45am Worship 12pm Mime WH S 12pm Care Ministries Speaker EH 6pm AA mtg WH 7pm AA closed mtg WH	26 9:45am AI Anon WH 6pm Yoga Tai Chi EH 6:30pm AMEN 107 6:30pm Knit Wits WH	27 6:30am AMEN 107 9:30am Women's Bible Study HR 6pm Grief Share EH 7pm Holloway 107	28 6pm Handbells S 7pm Wisdom Grp WH 7:30pm Choir S	29 10am AI Anon WH 5pm Angel Choir S 5:45pm Joyful Sounds S 6pm Quilting, Bissetts 7pm Ballantyne 107	30	31 10am WELCA EH