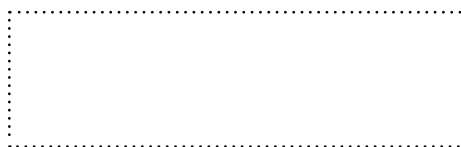




*Ascension*  
LUTHERAN CHURCH  
ELCA  
August 2015

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# THE *Ascension* NEWSLETTER

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### Director of Music Ministries

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### Administrator for Caring Relationships and Mission Outreach

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Rachel Stemper

### Wedding Coordinator

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Vacant

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### Director of Operations

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## MUSIC STAFF

### Director of Choirs

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### House Band Leader

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### Pianist

Ray Kinney [Raywk2003@yahoo.com](mailto:Raywk2003@yahoo.com)

### Organist

Rhonda Kwiecien  
[Rhonda@ascensionelca.org](mailto:Rhonda@ascensionelca.org)

## THE POWER OF PRESENCE

*Pastor Chris Marien*



On Saturday, June 27, my day began at 3:30 a.m. as I made my way to the Milwaukee airport to fly to Seattle because my oldest friend invited me to preach at the worship service at which she was being installed as a new pastor. Flying to Seattle via Chicago meant there would be no time to change clothes before the worship service, so I wore my clerical collar through the airport, on the plane, and at lunch before finally getting to the worship service at 2 p.m.

I do not usually notice the stares, and sometimes glares, of people who see me approaching when I wear my collar. On this day, I traveled with a friend whose dad is a pastor. Several times, Jordan mentioned the stares pointed in my direction. I smiled as I remembered I was wearing my collar; after I put it on, I sometimes forget I'm wearing it. What was surprising to both Jordan and me was the deer-in-the-headlights look that so often confronts me when I travel in my collar. I imagine people have three main reactions: one offers respect and often a smile or head nod; a second is one of disdain (usually because of an experience with the Church where the person was mistreated, judged, or ignored); and the third reaction, which is the most fascinating because it speaks to our world as it is today, is one of complete and utter helplessness. As if some far off memory reminds them that they might know the collar represents something but they are unsure of where to place it or how to interact with it so they give me a wide berth. The symbol of the collar can be both an invitation and a distraction for people. I struggle to find a balance between the two, but I like to believe that the invitations outweigh the distractions.

I joined my friend at the service of installation and preached a message about new beginnings and hope for futures resting squarely in the grace of God. I shared a message that spoke to my friend's gifts for the ministry and her hunger to share God's love. And I promised the congregation she is now serving that she would love them but also push them out of their comfort zone. I asked them to consider the future as an adventure to share with their new pastor to the glory of God. At the end of the sermon, I reminded them that God is faithful – that they should feel blessed for being the “luckiest congregation in the ELCA” and invited them to “be at peace.” It was a wonderful day to worship God and to share in the journey of my friend as she begins a new chapter in ministry. The funny thing is – after wearing my collar all morning, through airports, plane rides, and lunch on the beach – it was so hot at the church that my friend invited me to choose to continue wearing my collar or to cool off by changing into a different dress shirt. I chose the cooler shirt, which did not make me that much cooler but did remind me that the journey we travel as people of faith is one that calls us to be wholly present for the good and the not so good moments of this life.

So, my friends, look for the moments in these summer days and remind yourself to be wholly present, so you might share all of who you are with a friend, a child, a parent, a spouse, and especially your God. Perhaps, in these summer days, you might even consider giving your whole self to yourself as a gift - to rest for a quiet time of reconnection with who you truly are and not who you think the world expects you to be.

Peace be with you.



*Ascension*  
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ELCA



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1415 Dopp Street  
Waukesha, WI 53188



### MONDAY - THURSDAY

9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

### FRIDAY

9 a.m. - 4 p.m.



## LET'S CELEBRATE

*Pastor Angela Khabeb*

One of the most common remarks I receive after my sermons goes something like this, “Pastor Angela, I wanted to say something while you were preaching. But I just didn’t know what I was supposed to say.” Another popular response is something to the effect, “Be patient with us, we were taught to be quiet in church otherwise we are being rude.” In fact, I have received this type of feedback so frequently that I thought it would be helpful if I shared a little about my preaching philosophy.

Firstly, preaching is an event. For example, the sermon is delivered at least twice every Sunday. But even if I preach the exact same sermon for each worship service, the experience will not be identical because the Spirit of God is always moving. John’s gospel teaches us the Word became flesh and lived among us. So wherever and whenever God’s word is proclaimed, there is living, moving activity between God’s word, the preacher, and the congregation. Consider this description of sacred scripture, “Indeed, the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing until it divides soul from spirit, joints from marrow; it is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12). Consequently, I take preaching very seriously. I believe that preaching is one way that the Holy Spirit enters our human condition and brings empowerment. Preaching has always been my passion and I count it a privilege whenever I have the opportunity to proclaim God’s word.

Painting with a broad brush, I believe there are four basic preaching styles: preaching as education, dissertation, contemplation, and celebration. Preaching as education is the method employed when the pastor’s primary goal is to provide the congregation with a deeper understanding of the biblical text. I think of it as a bible study from the pulpit. Preaching as dissertation is the technique of choice for the preacher who wants to engage the hearers intellectually. After hearing a finely crafted manuscript, often delivered lecture style, the congregation is encouraged to ponder the sermon and draw their own inferences. Still, there are other pastors who approach preaching as a time for contemplation. Instead of a bible study, or dissertation, this preacher offers a brief homily often sharing a practical story that integrates the gospel and practical application. Lastly, there is preaching as celebration. The celebratory preacher aims to touch the hearers’ heart by connecting scripture to their lived experiences. Each technique is equally worshipful. The diversity in preaching styles gives glory to God’s creativity.

I resonate most with preaching as celebration. Through celebratory preaching, it is my hope to engage the hearer, heart-to-heart. This heart-to-heart may be an experience in resonance or dissonance. Sometimes the celebration is evident with joy and laughter. Other times, celebration is present through tears and lament. Celebration, therefore, is not only marked by festivity but also remembrance. For example, even during solemn occasions, like a funeral, we ‘celebrate’ our resurrection hope in the midst of sorrow.

Celebratory preaching often embraces the “call and response” interaction between preacher and congregation. We have written forms of “call and response” throughout the liturgy. If I say to any Lutheran congregation, “The peace of Christ be with you always.” The response will be, “And also with you.” During Easter, I never grow tired of hearing, “He is risen!” “He is risen indeed. Hallelujah!” We enjoy congregational participation throughout the

*Continued on page 5*

liturgy, right up to the sending, “Go in peace and serve the Lord.” “Thanks be to God.” But something happens during the sermon. The participation from the congregation falls silent. Certainly it is fine to be quiet during the sermon especially if you do not feel led to say anything. But if you find the Holy Spirit stirring within you and you just don’t know what to do or say, it might be helpful to think of your response as unwritten liturgy. On more than one occasion, I’ve said, “God is good!” And I received a hearty “All the time!”

Rest assured that what you say is not necessarily as important as staying connected to the Spirit. The beauty of “call and response” is that the preacher and the congregation are in dialogue together. The congregation becomes part of the sermon and the preacher is preaching with the people and not at the people. But, let’s be clear. The sermon is not a time to heckle the pastor or just yell out random things, “Go Packers!” Nor is the congregation a group of cheerleaders for the pastor. Rather, the sermon is a shared experience between pastor and people. (And of course this can happen even in the quietest of congregations). But when the Holy Spirit is moving and we choose to ignore the Spirit or quench the Spirit, the preacher can sense that the Spirit is not flowing freely.

Now, back to the question that started this all—what does one say during the sermon if one wants to say something? Certainly, “Amen” is always welcome. “Hallelujah,” is also a good choice. When I hear Pastor Chris preaching sometimes I say, “Preach,” or “Say that.” One more point here, you don’t hear me yelling at Pastor Chris during his sermons. So this is not about being loud in church. In fact, some celebratory preachers refer to it as a ‘hum’ that is present during the sermon. I can’t really explain it but it is so uplifting. That said, I understand that some people will never make a sound during the sermon but do want to acknowledge that the Holy Spirit is indeed moving. Well, feel free to nod your head, or even wiggle your finger, or just pat your leg. Simply keep being open to the Holy Spirit and God will be glorified and Ascension, energized.

I leave you with a prayer attributed to Martin Luther. “Dear Lord God, I want to preach so that you are glorified. I want to speak of you, praise you, praise your name. Although I probably cannot make it turn out well, won’t you make it turn out well?”

Can I get an AMEN?

## PASTORAL ACTS

### Baptisms

June 28	George Lee Payne
July 12	Gianni Alberto Vasquez
July 19	Lena Lee Erke

### Weddings

July 25	Tony Kitterman and Sarah Froschmayer
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*Indeed, the word of God is living and active... it is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.*





## YOUR COUNCIL AT WORK

*Nada Draeger, Council President*

July's council meeting began with devotions led by Pastor Angela. We discussed the fall programming for children's ministry. Congratulations to Tony Acompanado on his new position as Director of Faith Formation on behalf of myself and the entire church council. We know he will be very successful in this role and we are excited not only for Ascension's children and their parents, but for the entire congregation. Tony, council and the planning committee will be sharing these plans beginning August 9th.

We strategized for filling upcoming 2016 vacant council positions and present and future ministry vacant slots. We will be counting on congregation input and nominating of fellow members who would be an asset and have a passion for the role nominated to. Cindy Carlson will be heading this process which will also be starting up in the near future.

At 8 p.m. we were joined by Craig Greenwood and Shirley Wehmeier for the next step of our Vision Arise 2025 planning. Becky Klotz presented the current and envisioned states of the Caring Relationships as did Shirley for Mission Outreach. The next steps involve action plans being developed for all four wings that will be presented to the congregation in the first listening session slotted for September. Again, I want to thank Craig for his dedication to this huge project. We would not be this far in the process or have stayed on task without his expert knowledge and guidance through this journey.

We adjourned with The Lord's Prayer.

## SUMMARY OF SYNOD ASSEMBLY

*Paul Wehmeier, Council 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President*



The theme for this year's Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly, May 29-30, at Carthage College in Kenosha, was *Hope for a Broken World*. Out of 130 congregations in our synod, 358 delegates attended; 190 were lay persons and the rest were rostered clergy.

The assembly viewed a number of videos - *Lutheran World Relief, God's Work. Our Hands; Malaria; World Hunger; and Lutheran Social Services* - which described the inspiring things that the ELCA is doing. There were also videos of exciting programs in our area: a partnership grants overview; Redeemer Milwaukee Partnership Grant; Unity Partnership; and Cross Partnership. Of particular interest to me was the Redeemer Milwaukee video, which described *mapping their neighborhood* as a tool, providing direction for mission outreach in their area.

There were 11 informational workshops, including: *11x15 Campaign; Human Trafficking in our Backyard; Immigration*; and more.

Rev. Linda Norman, the ELCA treasurer, presented the ELCA report. She was an inspiring speaker.

Pastor Angela was elected to the Synod Council representing the Waukesha Cluster Clergy. Benhi Khabeb was elected to attend the Churchwide Assembly in 2016 as a lay male representative.

Our synod's mission support from congregations was \$2,036,573 in 2015. 55% of this was forwarded to churchwide ministries of the ELCA. A number of our synod's ministries receive financial support from the ELCA.

One resolution was brought to the assembly by St. Matthews, Wauwatosa. It was resolved that our synod will dedicate efforts toward promoting social justice.

If anyone would like to read any of the documents from the assembly, please contact me.

## FINANCIAL REPORT

June 30, 2015 Year to Date

General Fund Activity					
Item	2015 Actual	2015 Plan	Variance to 2015 Plan	2014 Actual	Variance to 2014 Actual
<b>Income</b>					
Contributions	\$314,960	\$343,500	\$(28,540)	\$340,547	\$(25,587)
Rent, Interest, & Other Income	\$28,866	\$30,825	\$(1,959)	\$30,992	\$(2,126)
From Restricted Funds	\$35,856	\$34,714	\$1,142	\$2,383	\$33,473
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$379,682</b>	<b>\$409,039</b>	<b>\$(29,357)</b>	<b>\$373,922</b>	<b>\$5,760</b>
<b>Expenses</b>					
Communications	\$13,464	\$12,050	\$(1,414)	\$14,988	\$1,524
Facilities	\$78,226	\$88,315	\$10,089	\$92,547	\$14,321
Financial Development	\$48,610	\$48,661	\$51	\$48,648	\$38
Leadership Development	\$951	\$1,400	\$449	\$3,087	\$2,136
Administration	\$130,853	\$130,318	\$(535)	\$97,695	\$(33,158)
Caring Relationships	\$13,169	\$13,047	\$(122)	\$11,517	\$(1,652)
Joyful Worship	\$51,320	\$48,494	\$(2,826)	\$30,397	\$(20,923)
Mission Outreach	\$27,483	\$29,270	\$1,787	\$29,388	\$1,905
Spiritual Growth	\$37,668	\$47,541	\$9,873	\$41,349	\$3,681
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$401,744</b>	<b>\$419,096</b>	<b>\$17,352</b>	<b>\$369,616</b>	<b>\$(32,128)</b>
<b>Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>\$(22,062)</b>	<b>\$(10,057)</b>	<b>\$(12,005)</b>	<b>\$4,306</b>	<b>\$(26,368)</b>
<b>Mortgage Balance</b>	<b>\$826,058</b>				
<b>Restricted Funds Balance</b>	<b>\$152,461</b>				
<b>General Fund Balance</b>	<b>\$(14,431)</b>				
<b>Ascension Arise Contributions</b>	<b>\$58,469</b>				
<b>Restricted Contributions</b>	<b>\$32,328</b>				

### What the numbers mean:

- Our general contributions are 8.3% behind plan for 2015, and they are 7.5% behind 2014 actual.
- Our bottom line is \$12,005 behind plan.
- Our general fund balance is currently at a loss of \$14,431.



## NEW DIRECTORY - VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

*Linda Elder, Communications Leg Leader*

As Ascension grows, our membership is ever changing: the addition of new members, families growing, members relocating, etc. There are so many new and changing faces that we have trouble putting names with our Ascension family members.

It's been five years since we published our pictorial directory and, with your help, we can have a new updated directory for each member family. We will begin registration and picture taking on Sunday mornings (before, between, and after services) beginning on Sunday, August 16 through Sunday, October 18.

We need your help, during this 10-week period, we need volunteers for the following areas:

- Taking pictures – Sunday mornings only
- Calling member families during the week to schedule Sunday morning appointments
- Registering people at the table on Sunday mornings - before, between, or after services
- Updating of member information – at registration

Would you be willing to help in any of these areas? If so, please contact Linda Elder, Communications Leg Leader, at 262-650-9182 or [labs4fun@wi.rr.com](mailto:labs4fun@wi.rr.com).

Also, don't forget to update your information if you move, get married, or have other information changes. You can update your information online at <http://ascensionelca.org/membership/> or by calling Ascension's office, 262-547-8518.

## DEAR ABBY

*Paul Webmeier, Council 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President*

Every morning, I look at this column to read Abby's response to a writer's dilemma. The majority of these letters concern another person with whom the writer has a close relationship. The writer wants to discuss a dilemma that could affect the relationship. Abby's responses usually fall under three headings: communication techniques, seek outside counsel, or let it go.

Change is difficult for most people. When new people come into our midst, they bring their own histories and perspectives. Often, we try to repel these changes. Jesus knew this about us; he adapted a preaching and teaching style that was loving, provocative, and confrontational at times. He called people to task, to bring the hearers and us to self-examination, to get closer to Jesus, and to live out the Gospel.

Ascension has and will continue to go through changes. Churches that do things the same way it was done forty years ago are not healthy and vibrant.

A Lutheran pastor's call is built around the principle of faithfully preaching and teaching the Gospel within the Lutheran traditions articulated in the *Book of Concord*. This call will involve challenging the congregation to reflection, repentance, and new thoughts and behaviors.

Through this process, communication and dialogue are a necessity. As we discuss changes with one another, I would ask that you consider several things:

1. Does this contradict Scripture?
2. How do I talk to the other person so that there is mutual respect? As we talk, we need to remember that we are all God's sons and daughters.
3. Have I prayed about this more than once?

I offer these comments as a member of Ascension for 41 years and a church council member. I welcome the opportunity to listen to your comments.



## GLORIFY GOD, REFRESH YOUR SPIRIT

*Vicki Taylor, Director of Music Ministries*

While we are still enjoying the blessings of summer, it's not too early to consider opportunities to join one of Ascension's musical groups in the fall. September brings the return of the Ascension Choir, Handbell Choir, and children's choirs, along with the continuation of the Folk Choir and House Band. Please contact Vicki Taylor, [vicki@ascensionelca.org](mailto:vicki@ascensionelca.org), with any questions.

<b>H</b> andbell Choir	Wednesdays, 6-7:15 p.m., begin Sept. 2	Grade 9-Adult
<b>A</b> scension Choir	Wednesdays, 7:30-8:45 p.m., begin Sept. 2	Grade 9-Adult
<b>J</b> oyful Sounds Choir	Thursdays, 5:45-6:30 p.m., begin Sept. 10	Grades 4-9
<b>A</b> ngel Choir	Time TBA	Grades K-3
<b>F</b> olk Choir	One Saturday morning/month, 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m. Contact Ray Kinney, <a href="mailto:raywk2003@yahoo.com">raywk2003@yahoo.com</a>	
<b>H</b> ouse Band	One Sunday afternoon/month, 12-1:30 p.m. Contact Ben Janzow, <a href="mailto:ben_janzow@yahoo.com">ben_janzow@yahoo.com</a>	

## AUGUST HYMN SING

You are invited to submit your favorite hymns for our hymn festival taking place on August 16, at 9 a.m. Please email suggestions to Vicki Taylor, [vicki@ascensionelca.org](mailto:vicki@ascensionelca.org), or write them on a blue prayer card with the label *Hymn Sing* and place them in the offering plate by August 9. We will begin singing at 8:50 a.m. and sing as many of the suggested hymns as time allows.

## CRASH

*Tony Acompanado, Director of Faith Formation*

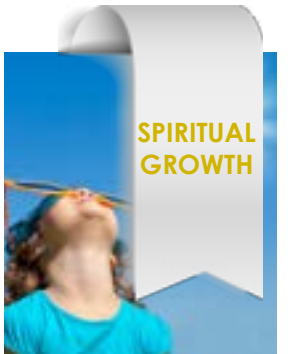
Thank you to everyone who supported the CRASH trip to the ELCA Youth Gathering in Detroit a few weeks ago! While in Detroit, Ascension's group experienced God in amazing ways, and they now look ahead to engaging in exciting new ministry endeavors that will seek to reflect the Youth Gathering themes of: Rising Up Together, Bearing Burdens, Building Bridges, Breaking Chains, and Bringing Hope.

Check out the CRASH Facebook page to see pictures, videos, and reflections from the group's experience in Detroit.

In the month of August, CRASH will meet a few times for some summer fun activities, and we invite all incoming freshmen to join us! Be sure to check the CRASH Facebook page for the most up-to-date information on CRASH activities.

### CRASH AUGUST SCHEDULE

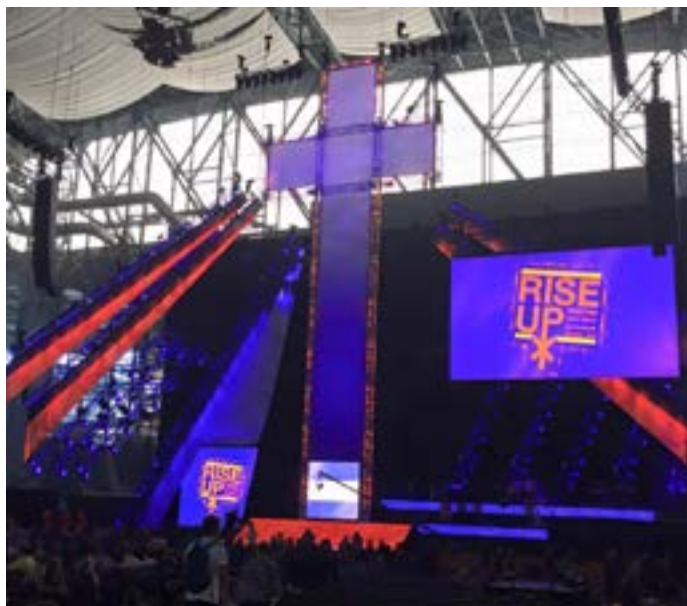
August 2, 6-8 .pm.  
August 16, 6-8 p.m.







ELCA  
NATIONAL  
YOUTH  
GATHERING  
RISE UP  
TOGETHER



CARE MINISTRIES: BABYSITTING CLINICS

Brenda Lytle, RN, Director of Care Ministries

Babysitting certification classes will be August 17 and 19 for teens and pre-teens, ages 11 years-old and up. One full-day class is required to become certified. Class runs from 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Cost is \$35, which includes lunch, Red Cross certification, and all course materials. Class size is limited to 10 students each day, so sign up now on the Care Ministry bulletin board, or contact Brenda Lytle, [brenda@ascensionelca.org](mailto:brenda@ascensionelca.org)

GRIEFSHARE, DIVORCECARE, & DIVORCECARE 4 KIDS

Care Ministries will be introducing new programs at Ascension called DivorceCare and DivorceCare 4 kids (DC4K) to help families in our congregation and in our community who are dealing with all aspects of divorce. Care Ministries is also offering another GriefShare program for people who are grieving the loss of a loved one. These programs are facilitated through leaders, videos, workbooks, music, crafts, and activities that address grief in a biblical context along with ongoing support and discussion groups. They are all 12-week programs, on Tuesday evenings, from 6-8 p.m., from September 1-November 17. DivorceCare programs will be held in the Spiritual Growth Wing and GriefShare will be held in the Youth Room. If you, a family member, or a friend would like to join a program please contact Brenda Lytle, at 262-547-8518 or [brenda@ascensionelca.org](mailto:brenda@ascensionelca.org)

ADOPT A GRIEVING CHILD

With the new DivorceCare 4 Kids program (DC4K), Care Ministries needs help supporting children struggling with divorce. Waukesha County has the third highest divorce rate in the state. In 2014, the number of divorces in Waukesha County was 1,084 impacting 1,080 children younger than 18. 52 % of all Wisconsin divorces in 2014 involved couples with children, ages 18 and younger. DC4K will help children heal from the hurt caused by the separation or divorce of parents. They will make friends with other kids who understand how they feel and the things they are going through.

We would like to make this program affordable for participants, and we need your help.

Please consider *adopting* a grieving child for \$25. Many participating families will have multiple children and so this *adoption* will be necessary for them to afford this program. The money for your *adoption* will provide the following: DC4K workbooks (\$15/each), activity supplies, facilitator or childcare fees, and snacks and drinks. Care Ministries is seeking 100 benefactors willing to help support these children.

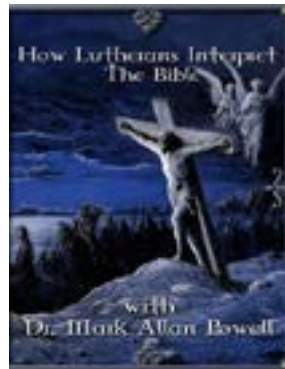
If you would like to *adopt* a child, please contact Brenda Lytle, [brenda@ascensionelca.org](mailto:brenda@ascensionelca.org); put a check in the offering plate; or drop one off at Ascension's office and write *DivorceCare* in the memo line. Thank you for your support!

MEAL DONATIONS NEEDED

Care Ministries is asking Ascension small groups to volunteer to provide and serve ONE meal on a Tuesday evening this fall for the GriefShare, DivorceCare, and DC4K program participants. The programs are 12 weeks long, and the meals would be provided in West Hall, at 5:30 p.m., on Tuesday nights, beginning September 1-November 17. The meals can be as simple as pizza or subs. Groups can provide the meal and help serve it. Please sign up on the Care Ministries bulletin board or contact Brenda Lytle, RN, Director of Care Ministries, [brenda@ascensionelca.org](mailto:brenda@ascensionelca.org). This is a perfect opportunity for your small group to serve others. Thank you!







## SMALL GROUP FALL CAMPAIGN 2015

*Pastor Angela Khabeb*

### HOW LUTHERANS INTERPRET THE BIBLE

Ascension's 2015 Fall Campaign will focus on rediscovering our Lutheran identity. As Lutherans, we have wonderful gifts to offer the body of Christ. We are excited to engage the sacred texts with a prominent Lutheran theologian, Dr. Mark Allan Powell. Dr. Powell is a Lutheran pastor and Bible professor at Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Columbus, Ohio. In this five week video series, Powell invites us to explore important questions about Lutherans and the Bible. He does not prescribe "the Lutheran way" to read the Bible, nor does he dismiss the way you may have come to understand the Bible. Instead, Powell presents a variety of Lutheran perspectives for interpreting the Bible. Through Powell's rich discussions, we will discover answers to questions we have about the Bible.

This August, small groups will form. Please select a day and time that works for you and your family and sign up at the Welcome Center. Our small group kick-off will begin the week of September 20. Our Lutheran identity Bible study will culminate with a special worship service on Reformation Sunday, October 25.

Current small group leaders and those interested in leading a new group should contact Pastor Angela at [pa@ascensionelca.org](mailto:pa@ascensionelca.org) or sign up online, at <http://tinyurl.com/lutheranidentityleader>, by August 14 so we can order materials. Materials for your group will be available in early September. New leaders, please watch for information about a training session coming soon!



### AMEN: UPCOMING EVENTS

AMEN Ministries is grilling out after the August 2, 10:45 a.m. outdoor worship service. Everyone is welcome to enjoy hamburgers, hot dogs, brats, and all the fixings. Mark your calendars, invite your friends for lunch, enjoy some good food, and we'll see you there!

It's not too late to sign up for the AMEN Big Guy/Little Guy Camping Trip! AMEN has reserved a group camp site for the weekend of August 14, at the Pinewoods Campground, which is part of the Kettle Moraine State Park, by Ottawa Lake. It is less than 30 minutes from Waukecha. The trip is open to all men and their sons, grandsons, and nephews. Contact Kurt Burie, [kburie3@gmail.com](mailto:kburie3@gmail.com) or 262-510-2150, with questions or to sign up.



### YOUNG AT HEART

Ascension's Young at Heart is a group of seniors open to anyone over 55 years. On the first Wednesday of each month, we have breakfast at Denny's on Grandview Blvd., from 9 a.m. to whenever we have to leave. On the third Wednesday of each month, we have a potluck luncheon in Ascension's East Hall. All you need to do is show up. If you are able, bring a dish to pass. If not, there is always plenty of food. This is a casual afternoon of socializing and playing games, from 12-3 p.m. Our next luncheon is Wednesday, August 19. If you have questions, please contact Arlene Davis, 262-542-9119; Celeste Defenbaugh, 262-370-4522; or Beth Hoffmann, 262-542-7447. We hope to see you at one of the events.

### YOUNG AT HEART FALL TRIP TO SCHAUER CENTER

Young at Heart will be going to see 4 Guys in Dinner Jackets presenting a fabulous 50's & 60's music show at 3 p.m., on Saturday, October 17. We'll leave at 1:30 p.m. from Ascension and return at 8 p.m. After the show, we'll have dinner at the Mine Shaft restaurant. The cost is \$60/person, due by Wednesday, August 19. You can sign up for the trip August 2, 9, or 16. If you have questions, please call Celeste Defenbaugh, 262-370-4522.

## SUPERMOMS GROOVIN' IN THE GARDEN



Join us for friends, family, food, fun, and fellowship as we celebrate summer with one last hurrah on Saturday, August 29, from 5-9:30 p.m., in the Ascension Memorial Gardens. This



is a family friendly event, so please feel free to invite friends and bring your children. We'll have a bounce house for the kids! The BBQ begins at 5 p.m. Although, we are providing the main course, please bring a side dish or a dessert to pass. Also bring your own lawn chairs and/or blankets. Our featured musicians are our own Ben Janzow and Dirty Boogie (pictured). The band will begin playing at 6:30 p.m.

### IN GRATITUDE FROM VICAR STEVE BOGIE

Dear Ascension,

Thank you for your guidance and friendship over the many years I have been a member. I truly appreciate your support and love with my decision to become a pastor for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Over the last three years, I feel that Ascension Lutheran Church has been instrumental to my growth as a pastoral figure. Your invested interest in my ministry will be something that I will look back upon and feel warmth and comfort with always. I do not have the words to articulate my genuine sense of appreciation, admiration, and love for the community at Ascension Lutheran Church. Because of Ascension's influence in my life, I know that I will be ready to start my internship at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, in Menomonee Falls, WI with confidence and enthusiasm. Finally, I know that God will bless the community at Ascension Lutheran Church for many yeasts to come. Thank you so much for your love.



### FROM ROGER NORDBERG

My Dear Brothers and Sisters of Ascension, thank you for the words of encouragement, cards, and, most of all, your prayers during the past year while I fought bladder cancer through six surgeries. Praise be to God, I am currently cancer free with more preventive treatments ahead. God's blessings!

*It is not joy that makes us grateful;  
it is gratitude that makes us joyful.  
~ Brother David Steindl-Rast*



## GOD'S WORK. OUR HANDS. SUNDAY

*Shirley Webmeier, Mission Outreach Wing Leader*

What is God's Work. Our Hands. Sunday? Here is an explanation from the ELCA website:

*God's Work. Our Hands. Sunday is an opportunity to celebrate who we are as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) – one church, freed in Christ to serve and love our neighbor. Since 2013, thousands of ELCA congregations have participated in this opportunity and dedicated one day to serve communities in ways that share the love of God with all people. The date for 2015 is Sunday, Sept. 13.*

Ascension is a church that rolls up its sleeves and gets to work. Whether it's volunteering at a shelter for individuals and families who are homeless, gathering food items to fill shelves at a local food pantry, or advocating for peace and justice in communities, your service activities offer an opportunity for us to explore one of our most basic convictions as Lutherans: "All of life in Jesus Christ – every act of service, in every daily calling, in every corner of life – flows freely from a living, daring confidence in God's grace."

Ascension's Mission Outreach Committee is organizing Ascension's involvement in this year's God's Work. Our Hands. Sunday. Volunteering can be done by groups, families, or individuals. It can happen around the church building, in the neighborhood, or in the community. During August, we will be putting together lists of possible opportunities and encouraging people to sign up for the activity that appeals to them. If you have ideas you would like to share, put your suggestions in mailbox #22. Watch for additional announcements and details.



## TANZANIA PARTNERSHIP: GOLF OUTING

Join other golfers to support the Mt. Meru Coffee Project on August 23. Options are available for 9 or 18 holes and dinner. Non-golfers can attend the dinner only and join in the fun, prizes, raffle, and live and silent auctions! The dinner is at 7 p.m., at the Kettle Hills Golf Course. Registration is on the Mt. Meru Coffee website, [www.mtmerucoffee.org](http://www.mtmerucoffee.org). Your participation and support of this event will provide funding for the Mt. Meru Coffee Project Micro Loan Program and Outreach for Hope, which supports life-giving ministries with the poor in communities of the Greater Milwaukee Synod. Registrations deadline is August 10.

## YOUTH PARTNERSHIP VISIT



As part of the ELCA National Youth Gathering, the Greater Milwaukee Synod welcomed two young men from our companion synods to spend time with area congregations prior to attending the Youth Gathering in Detroit, MI. Hillary Nicholous Ndossy from Mt. Meru and Jose Rafael Hernandez from El Salvador were at Ascension over Independence Day weekend. Friendships were made and our guests enjoyed a typical U.S. picnic. The kids swam, played volley-ball, and played catch, soccer, and cornhole. They roasted hotdogs in the firepit and made s'mores. Ascension youth were very friendly and made our guests feel at home.



### ASCENSION SUPPORTS OUTREACH FOR HOPE FAMILY BIKE RIDE FOR 8TH CONSECUTIVE YEAR SEPT. 12, 2015 ST. BRUNO PARISH - DOUSMAN

Join Ascension member Jeff Kirk as he gathers another team, consisting of bike riding families and road riders who will travel any distance on the dedicated State Glacial Drumlin Trail or do road rides of 20, 30, or 50 miles. All routes are sagged and have rest stops.

**Contact Jeff for additional information at 262-524-8975 or [jeffrey@kirks.us](mailto:jeffrey@kirks.us)**

This signature fundraising event is a ministry of the Greater Milwaukee Synod, ELCA. This year, money raised will help fund ministries that provide opportunities for transformation and hope among 19 congregations in some of the poorest neighborhoods in Milwaukee, Racine, and Kenosha. Ascension members have been leading contributors in ridership, volunteers, and donations since the event began.

### 2015 GOAL IS \$120,000

Our most ambitious goal yet has been supplemented this year by a special \$50,000 Challenge Grant in memory of Ned Bechthold, who played a pivotal role in the early years of Outreach For Hope.

### HERE'S HOW TO PARTICIPATE?

Everyone can play a role as a rider, fund raiser, contributor, or volunteer, and participation begins by following these easy steps:

1. Go on-line to [www.ofhbikeride.com](http://www.ofhbikeride.com)
2. Riders – Register as single or family. \$35/adult, \$25/youth (under 18), and \$70/family.

**For the first 300 registrations, co-sponsors Brennan's Market and Pavement Consulting i LLC will donate \$10 per registration to Outreach for Hope. Be one of the first 300 riders to help generate \$3,000 for Outreach for Hope!**

3. Fund Raising - Activate your personal web page to request donations from family and friends. Suggested fund raising goals begin at \$100 or more.
4. Volunteers – There's always a need for extra hands to assist in event day organization and clean-up. A button on the website, [www.ofhbikeride.com](http://www.ofhbikeride.com), will take you to a sign-up sheet.
5. Just Donate – The web page allows family and friends to conveniently contribute via a secure web portal to any rider of your choice or to the general OFH Family Bike Ride event.
6. Sponsorships - Cash or in-kind gifts that defray event expenses are available beginning at \$250. To participate, contact your Ascension Pacesetter, Dave McAdow, 262-544-9084 or [dmcadow45@gmail.com](mailto:dmcadow45@gmail.com).

### WHAT DO PARTICIPANTS EARN FOR THEIR EFFORTS?

- A healthful, family-friendly activity that will be long-remembered
- Trail ride for families or road routes of 20, 30, or 50 miles
- Free t-shirt for pre-registered riders
- Free goodie bags to the first 350 registered
- Eligible for drawings
- Breakfast snacks to send you on your way
- Conveniently spaced rest stops on all routes
- Post-ride lunch to replenish your energy and share fellowship
- Satisfaction that you've done your part to *Pedal To Push Down Poverty*





## A TASTE OF THE DANIEL PLAN

Steve and Carol Spieker



Last month we introduced you to what The Daniel Plan calls “The White Menace.” Hopefully, you were horrified by the realities about sugar that we shared with you. Knowing how we have felt in the past when we learned some bad news about a favorite food we ate, perhaps you felt a bit deflated leaving you to ask, “Now what?!” If this sounds like you, you –hopefully- didn’t run out and fill your cabinets with artificial sweeteners because we’re about to share some equally horrifying news about that.

Long before The Daniel Plan was around, we made a conscious effort to practice a healthy lifestyle through a good diet, exercise, proper rest, etc. We filled our refrigerator and cabinets with all sorts of low fat/low sugar foods that we were lead to believe were healthier for us. We religiously scoured the nutritional charts on the back of each package we purchased. In spite of all of our efforts, I (Steve) began experiencing declining health including reduced mobility issues. Fortunately, a friend shared some information she had learned about aspartame (also known as Nutra Sweet) and its negative effects on the body. The information was so compelling, I willingly went cold turkey from aspartame. Within four days, I began to regain my health.

Aspartame is found in countless products you might expect including diet soda, yogurt, and dessert mixes. When we really examined ingredient labels, we even found it in unexpected foods like Fiber One cereal. You might be interested to know that aspartame is one chemical element away from formaldehyde. In spite of the fact that it is contained in many products, it is not “approved” by the FDA. Because it cannot be proven to be safe, it only has the “GRS” status with means generally regarded as safe. The bottom line is aspartame and other artificial sweeteners are chemicals and your body is not designed to handle it. The result is actually counterproductive. Artificial sweeteners are addictive, increase cravings, weight gain and type 2 diabetes.

Yes, you can still have sweetness in your life! A good alternative to natural and artificial sweeteners is stevia. Stevia is a natural herb which has been around since the 16th century. We were appalled to find out it was banned in the US until 1995, not because it was harmful, but rather, through relentless lobbying efforts from none other than the makers of aspartame. Fortunately, stevia is becoming more familiar to people. Another source of natural sweetness is from fruit. We were elated this year when we came up with our own recipe for rhubarb crisp using only Granny Smith apples and a small amount of stevia for sweetness.

We encourage you to really start reading the ingredient lists on every product you buy. Do not focus on the calories and fat content. The Daniel Plan will help you learn how to decipher those labels so you really know what all of those 15 letter ingredients really are. We are confident that when you know, you will choose NOT to eat them!

### GRILLED FRUIT KABOBS

#### Ingredients: Fruit Kabobs

1 cup 1-inch pineapple chunks  
1 cup 1-inch mango chunks  
1 cup 1-inch peaches  
1 cup 1-inch banana chunks  
1/4 tsp. cinnamon

#### Ingredients: Dip

6 oz. fat-free plain Greek Yogurt (Fage is my favorite)  
Sprinkle of stevia  
1/8 tsp. cinnamon  
1/8 tsp. vanilla extract

#### Preparation:

If using wooden skewers, soak them in water for about 20 minutes to prevent burning. (You'll need 4 of them.) Combine dip ingredients in a bowl and mix until creamy and smooth. Refrigerate for at least one hour so flavors come together.

Skewer the fruit chunks alternately onto the skewers, packing the pieces together tightly. Sprinkle with cinnamon.

Bring a grill sprayed with nonstick spray to medium heat. Add skewers, cover, and cook until fruit is slightly blackened and caramelized, about 2 minutes per side. You can also make them in a grill pan. Serve grilled fruit with dip and enjoy.

## AUGUST 2015

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
<b>Room Key</b> EH = East Hall HR = Hearth Room K = Kitchen N = Narthex PL = Parking Lot PR = Prayer Room S = Sanctuary WH = West Hall YR = Youth Room						<b>1</b>
<b>2</b> 9am Worship 10:45am Outdoor Worship 12pm AMEN BBQ CY 6pm AA mtg WH 7pm AA closed mtg WH	<b>3</b> 9:45am AI Anon WH 5pm Special Friends Schroeder's House 6pm Prayer Group PR 6:30pm AMEN 107 6:30pm Knit Wits WH	<b>4</b> 6:30am AMEN 107 9:30am TGIT 107 9:30am Women's Bible Study HR 6:30pm Mission Outreach 107 7pm Mutual Ministry PR	<b>5</b> 9am Young at Heart, Denny's 9:30am Cross Meal 9:30am Staff 12:30pm Women's Nurture PR 7pm Wisdom Grp WH HR	<b>6</b> 10am AI Anon WH 1pm TGBG PR 6pm Quilting, Bissett's House 7pm Ballantyne 107 7pm Care Ministries 106	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>9</b> 9am Worship 10:45am Worship 6pm AA mtg WH 7pm AA closed mtg WH	<b>10</b> 9:45am AI Anon WH 12pm Lunch & Knit, Au Bon Pain 1pm Living Letters 106 6:30pm AMEN 107	<b>11</b> 6:30am AMEN 107 9:30am Women's Bible Study HR	<b>12</b> 9am Staff, Offsite 11:45am Men's Nurture Grp 106 6:30pm AMEN Leadership 107 6:30pm SOPHIA EH 7pm Wisdom Grp WH HR	<b>13</b> 10am AI Anon WH 6pm Quilting, Bissett's House 7pm Ballantyne 107	<b>14</b> 5pm Wedding Rehearsal <b>Newsletter Deadline</b>	<b>15</b> 10:30am Folk Choir S 1pm Wedding
					AMEN Camping Trip	
<b>16</b> 9am Worship 10:45am Worship 6pm AA mtg WH 7pm AA closed mtg WH  AMEN Camping Trip	<b>17</b> 8:30am Babysitting Training EH 9:45am AI Anon WH 6pm Prayer Group PR 6:30pm AMEN 107 6:30pm Knit Wits WH	<b>18</b> 6:30am AMEN 107 9:30am TGIT 107 9:30am Women's Bible Study HR 1pm Pastoral Assistants 7pm Council 107	<b>19</b> 8:30am Babysitting Training WH 12pm Young at Heart EH, K 12:30pm Women's Nurture PR 7pm Wisdom Grp WH HR	<b>20</b> 1pm TGBG PR 10am AI Anon WH 6pm Quilting, Bissett's House 7pm Ballantyne 107	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>23</b> 9am Worship 10:45am Worship 6pm AA mtg WH 7pm AA closed mtg WH	<b>24</b> 9:45am AI Anon WH 6:30pm AMEN 107	<b>25</b> 6:30am AMEN 107 9:30am Women's Bible Study HR	<b>26</b> 7pm Wisdom Grp WH HR	<b>27</b> 10am AI Anon WH 6pm Quilting, Bissett's House 7pm Ballantyne 107	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> 5pm Supermoms Groovin' in the Garden WH, CY, K, Pavilion
<b>30</b> 9am Worship 10:45am Worship 12pm Celebration Band S 6pm AA mtg WH 7pm AA closed mtg WH	<b>31</b> 9:45am AI Anon WH					