

Ascension
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Journey to Hallelujah

We are on a journey. It seems that we are always on a journey of some sort. We travel on various Lenten journeys throughout our lives. The journey from Lent to Easter unfolds in our lives in various ways. For example, we journey from: illness to healing, job loss to security, addiction to wholeness, mourning to joy, or divorce to understanding. Life is complicated and often these journeys overlap. We may find ourselves confused or frustrated. Many of us might easily discover that we are on more than one journey at a time. Consequently, we may be forced to hold disparate experiences in tension. For some of us, it is not uncommon to navigate life's terrain with one foot in Easter and the other foot in Good Friday. We simultaneously survive while immersed in hope and disappointment. For example, a dear friend of mine was overjoyed about her recent dream-job-promotion, yet simultaneously devastated about her pending divorce. Luther proclaims, "We are always rising and we are always dying."

As Church, we experience this dichotomy no clearer than in Lent and Easter. As we near the end of our Lenten journey, we look forward to Easter with great anticipation, but first, we will endure the passion of Good Friday before we can embrace the glory of Easter morning. Yet, we can be encouraged because even though every step of our Lenten journey brings us closer to the cross, the cross is not our final destination. Thankfully, when we move closer to the crucifixion, we find ourselves closer to Easter. After all, there is no Easter without Good Friday, and there is no resurrection without death. Good Friday and Easter are tied together and, by extension, they are tied together within us because we are Resurrection people.

Like the narratives of Holy Week and Easter, each of our journeys tells a story. Our many and varied stories connect us to the broader Divine narrative. Thereby connecting us to every other child of God. So as we journey toward Easter, we do not walk alone. We are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses. We make our way to Easter in the footsteps of faithful saints who have gone before us and lived out the love of Christ. As Resurrection people, every journey that we embark upon – by definition- leans toward Easter. As Resurrection people, we know that what seems like the end, is often the beginning. As Resurrection people, we believe that death gives way to new life. As Resurrection people, we know that the light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it. Regardless of how desolate the terrain, regardless of how difficult the journey, we are Resurrection people and every step on our journey brings us closer to Easter, closer to hallelujah. The Holy Spirit equips us as Resurrection people to endure the Lenten struggle in order to reach Easter's freedom. This is our Good News! Easter is on the horizon, finally within view.

Look to Jesus. Jesus is our freedom and this freedom comes to us, faithfully. Jesus came to us 2,000 years ago as an infant in a manger. Jesus came to us on the cross where he became sin for all humanity. Jesus came to us on that Easter morning through the Resurrection, defeating death, hell, and the grave. And Jesus comes to us today and every day! Truly, I tell you, hallelujah is on the horizon!

Rev. Angela Khabeh



Prophets of a Future Not Our Own

We are knee deep in the season of Lent. We find ourselves caught halfway between the longing for earlier days of peace and light in Epiphany on one side and on the other the glory of Easter morning. Yet here in the middle of our journey, we are captured by moments of struggle – wanting to be obedient to our Savior's call to follow but finding it difficult to see his footsteps in the shadows of Lent.

We spend a good amount of time looking to the end of the journey of Lent. Just get us to Easter morning. In the dawn of the resurrection of Jesus, let us hear the cries of Alleluia! God promises that we will, indeed, find ourselves outside an empty tomb come Easter morning. Yet, I am convinced that the joy of Easter is often difficult for us to grasp in the midst of our journeys in this life. A couple of days ago, I was reminded of the hymn entitled, "Lord Jesus, You Shall Be My Song."

*Lord Jesus, you shall be my song as I journey.
I'll tell everybody about you wherever I go:
You alone are our life and our peace and our love.
Lord Jesus, you shall be my song as I journey.*

*As long as I live, Jesus make me your servant,
To carry your cross and to share all your burdens and tears.
For you saved me by giving your body and blood.
As long as I live, Jesus, make me your servant.*

*I fear in the dark and the doubt of my journey,
But courage will come with the sound of your steps by my side.
And with all of the family you saved by your love,
We'll sing to your dawn at the end of our journey.*

Our journey of faith is full of twists and turns, mountains and valleys, and often surprises that can be both unexpected moments of joy and shattering times of sadness. God allows all of it in this life. We live. We love. We learn. We walk this journey of faith without being able to see the outcome. Martin Luther King Jr. once said, "Faith is taking the first step, even when you don't see the whole staircase." I need that reminder in my life. I find myself needing to be reminded that God is the one leading this journey. God leads – I follow. The great challenge is in letting go of my own needs and want long enough to let God lead me where God invites me to go. This is my struggle and hope in this faith journey we call Lent.

Writes Bishop Ken Untener:

It helps, now and then, to step back and take a long view. The kingdom is not only beyond our efforts, it is even beyond our vision. We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work. Nothing we do is complete, which is a way of saying that the Kingdom always lies beyond us. No statement says all that could be said. No prayer fully expresses our faith. No confession brings perfection. No pastoral visit brings wholeness. No program accomplishes the Church's mission. No set of goals and objectives includes everything. This is what we are about. We plant the seeds that one day will grow. We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise. We lay foundations that will need further development. We provide yeast that produces far beyond our capabilities. We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that. This enables us to do something, and to do it very well. It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way, an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest. We may never see the end results, but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker. We are workers, not master builders; ministers, not messiahs. We are prophets of a future not our own.

May we find God in this journey of faith. May we trust in the hope that is within us that calls us and leads us to the hope of Easter morning and the risen face of our Savior, Jesus, the Christ. Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia! (If just a little bit early!) See you in church.

Rev. Christian Marien

JOYFUL WORSHIP



Worship is first and foremost for God's benefit, not ours, though it is marvelous to discover that in giving God pleasure, we ourselves enter into what can become our richest and most wholesome experience in life.
~ L. Boschman

Holy Week Happenings

Sometimes I think we forget that our coming to church is less about us and more about God. When we gather as people of faith, God is present in our midst. Worship is the most important work of the church. The people of God exist to serve God. No higher service to God is possible than the worship of God. We can often get caught up in the "ways" in which we serve God. All are important. Worship, study, prayer, serving others – each is essential in our faith life if we are to grow in our relationship with God. Yet, worship leads us to the presence of God above all else. Our worship provides opportunity for us to respond to all that God has done, is doing, and will do in our lives. Even in times when the flame of our faith flickers in the storm, almost to the point of being extinguished, worship provides us place – anchoring us to the promise of God's love never leaving us. Worship is first and foremost a gift from God and our gift to God. During the last days of Lent as Holy Week begins with the joyful entry of our Savior into the gates of Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, our journey of faith leads us head on into the mystery of God's great love for us.

Pastoral Acts

Baptisms

Jade Romme, March 19

Funerals

Tim Mathews, March 25

Palm Sunday, April 9

"Hosanna in the highest," will be our cry as we remember Jesus' triumphant entry into the gates of the holy city. We will celebrate the beginning of this holy week with the reminder that our expectations and God's expectations are not always exactly the same. Where the people want a powerful king, Jesus comes as a suffering servant riding a donkey.

Worship at our normal times at 8:30 and 10:45 a.m. with BLAST in –between services and First Communion celebrations and new members welcome at both services.

Maunder Thursday, April 13

We will gather in the upper room with Jesus and the disciples to celebrate the Last Supper. This year – the celebration of holy communion and the symbolism of foot washing will be central to our worship. As is tradition, we will honor the memory of Jesus' humiliation at the hands of those in power before he is led to the cross to be crucified by the stripping of the altar and our departure in silence.

Worship is at 7 p.m.

Good Friday, April 14

The ancient title for this day is "the Triumph of the Cross." A reminder for us that the church gathers not to mourn this day but to celebrate Christ's life-giving passion and to find strength and hope in the cross as a symbol of new life.

Worship is at noon when we will gather to remember the death of our Savior on the cross. Scripture, song, prayer, and silence will carry us through the holiness of this day as we enter into fully into the meaning of this day.

Presentation of the Passion of Jesus Christ is at 5 p.m. where our CRASH High School student ministry will continue the tradition of sharing the story of Jesus' last days through movement and music but without words.

Worship is at 7 p.m. where we will gather to bow before our God as God hangs on the cross. Our CRASH High School student ministry will present the passion of Jesus Christ and we will join those at the foot of the cross who know only an aching need to be present even as we are helpless to assist.



Easter Sunday, April 16

First we hear only hoped for whispers on the wind. Resurrection? Are you sure? We gather to celebrate the resurrection of our Savior, Jesus, the Christ. Holy Communion and the glorious Easter songs of our faith will shape our worship.

Worship is at 6 a.m. - A new opportunity this year. A true sunrise service beginning in darkness and candlelight. We will join in the last whispers of Good Friday and hear the first words of resurrection, "Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!" This service will be intimate and peaceful in its beginning and end in joyful celebration.

Worship is at 8:30 and 10:45 a.m. with choirs, brass, praise band, and all the moments of celebration that call us to rejoice in the Resurrection of Jesus.



Lake Country Ringers

The Lake Country Ringers present their spring concert on Sunday, April 30, at 4 p.m., here at Ascension. The Lake Country Ringers are a community-based handbell ensemble directed by Gerry Elliot and Jean Miller, which performs in the Lake Country area with music from Bach to Rock. This year begins their 20th year of providing handbell music for concerts, worship services, and special events. The upcoming concert celebrates the 25th anniversary of *Beauty and the Beast* with a medley of songs as well as arrangements of the Tennessee Waltz and the Bach Pastorale. Featured soloists are Ann Morrow and Laura Holveck. Suggested donation at the concert is \$10.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH



Then Jesus went back to his followers and found them asleep. He said to Peter, “Simon are you sleeping? Couldn’t you stay awake with me for one hour? Stay awake and pray for strength against temptation. The spirit wants to do what is right, but the body is weak.”

~ Mark 14:37-38

Easter Prayer Vigil

I. C.A.N. - Intentional Caring Acts Now!

Pray and Praise God from whom all blessings flow!

Once again Ascension will hold a prayer vigil commencing right after the Good Friday service until sunrise Easter morning. Please sign up to pray for an hour on the sign-up sheets located outside the sanctuary. Devotionals and other materials will be available to assist you, as you see necessary. Prayer is powerful!

Library Corner

Ascension’s library is a resource that can be utilized by all of us as a way to educate ourselves on many Christian topics. Are you looking for a better way to pray, how to deal with a difficult situation in your life, a daily devotion to connect with God every day, a study for your small group, to learn more about Jesus, or a book you can read to your children? New books are continually donated and purchased in all of these subjects. So if you think, “Oh, nothing has changed in the library, so why should I go in and take a look?,” that is not the case.

The library is part of the Spiritual Growth wing. Just like BLAST, JOLT, or Adult Education, we are a resource for Christian Education for you and your children. Check out the Children’s Library in the Hearth Room and the regular library in the Prayer Room and see what you can find.

Linda Hansen, Ascension Librarian



First Communion

First Communion Stepping Stone classes with Pastor Chris continue on Sunday April 2, during BLAST from 9:45-10:35 a.m. in West Hall. The sacrament of Holy Communion is a tangible reminder of God’s great love for us, and these Stepping Stones classes are an important time of faith building and conversation on this journey. The Rite of First Communion will be celebrated at the 8:30 and 10:45 a.m. worship services on Palm Sunday, April 9, and Sunday, April 30. This year, we commune:

Josie Bangaoil	Brandi Mustapich
Madeline Binder	Jacob Niezwaag
Ryan Birner	Danny Ottesen
Abigal Burie	Lauren Pehl
Addison Durfee	Aidan Rapp
Marissa Eggert	Jack Reagles
Tristan Friedrichsohn	Kate Roeland
Abby Knopf	Ethan Vanden Heuvel
Braedon Metzger	Zackary Ward
Taylor Metzger	Adilyn Zwicky

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Family Movie Night

Join us on April 28 for Family Movie Night! The first one that took place in March was a great time for all who attended, so we’re doing this again! The featured film this month is *Sing*, and will be shown on the big screen in East Hall. Popcorn and beverages will be served, but consider bringing a snack to share. Invite your friends, wear your pj’s (yes, really), bring a pillow and blanket, and come to enjoy the movie! Doors open at 6:30p, and the movie begins promptly at 7pm. There is no cost for this event!



Schedules

BLAST

April 2	1st Communion Stepping Stone
April 9	1st Communion (<i>in worship</i>)
April 16	No BLAST
April 23	No BLAST
April 28	Family Movie Night
April 30	1st Communion (<i>in worship</i>)
April 30	Music with Vicki Taylor (<i>all classes</i>)

JOLT

Thursday evening JOLT classes resume on April 27. (*Please note this is different from the JOLT schedule handed out at the beginning of the year*).

CRASH/MIME

April 2	Mime Travel – St. Paul’s Lutheran, Random Lake
April 9	Mime Travel – Atonement Lutheran, Muskego
April 14	Good Friday Worship Services/Mime Performances, 5 & 7 p.m.
April 23	Youth Group, 6-8 p.m.
April 30	9 th Grade Confirmation Capture, 12:30–4:30 p.m.
April 30	Youth Group, 6–8 p.m.



GriefShare Wraps Up with HOPE

Ascension's GriefShare program was very successful this winter; we were able to help 14 participants within our congregation as well as our community grapple with loss and grief. As the program finished in March, many of the participants will continue with a new Care Ministry called HOPE (Healing Our Pain... Eventually). This ministry is filled with fellowship activities and service work. If you have suffered loss and are looking for a great group of friends to connect with, contact Brenda Lytle for the activities that will be planned in this new ministry this spring/summer, brenda@ascensionelca.org.

Care Ministries: Cancer Ministry Starting

All too often we hear that someone we know is facing cancer. Maybe it is a friend, relative, neighbor, colleague, church member, patient, or client. Everyone is aware of someone that has this diagnosis. When one hears the diagnosis of cancer, people say, "It feels as if you have been dropped in the middle of the ocean." During such a difficult time, we want to reach out with care and assistance.

This month Care Ministries is in the infancy stages of creating a new ministry at Ascension called "A Journey of Hope..." My goal for this ministry is to find cancer survivors within our congregation who can help "walk the walk" with newly diagnosed members.

If you are a cancer survivor and wish to help others by providing hope, or you have experienced cancer with a close relative and you are passionate about helping others, please contact Brenda Lytle, 262-547-8518 or brenda@ascensionelca.org. Care Ministries plans to offer six classes of cancer mentor training for people interested in this ministry.

Brenda Lytle RN, Director of Care Ministries

Breast Cancer Presentation

Brenda Lytle, RN, Director of Care Ministries, will be hosting a Wisconsin Woman's Health Foundation Grapevine presentation on breast cancer on April 30, between church services, in the sanctuary. Our learning objectives will be:

- What is breast cancer?
- What are the origins and stages of breast cancer?
- What are the signs and symptoms?
- How can we reduce our risk of developing the disease?

Breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in the United States. A woman's risk for developing breast cancer increases significantly as you age. Almost \$14 billion is spent in the United States each year on breast cancer treatment. The five year survival rate is now 98% for women with localized breast cancer. Early detection is the best protection against breast cancer. Join Brenda on April 30 to learn more.

Breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in the United States.

Let's Get Healthier in 2017!

A small commitment can make big changes for your health. It may take some small changes with your meals. Below are some tips and substitutions that can help you focus on better nutrition.

1. Eat healthy foods you enjoy
2. Practice cooking at home
3. Substitute healthier ingredients in recipes
4. Pay attention to your hunger cues
5. Find activities that you enjoy and be physically active most days of the week. A 20 minute walk or Yoga a couple of times a week can make a big difference.

<u>Original Food</u>	<u>Substitute</u>	<u>Why?</u>
Butter (in cooking)	Olive Oil	Healthy Fat Vitamin E
Butter (in baking)	Applesauce Mashed Bananas	Less Fat Lower Calories
Mayonnaise	Avocado	Healthy Fat Unique Flavor
Sour Cream	Plain Yogurt	Less Fat More Protein
Iceberg Lettuce	Spinach Watercress Kale	More Vitamins More Minerals
White Flour	Whole-Wheat Flour	More Fiber More Vitamins
Ground Beef	Lean Ground Turkey Cooked Lentils	Less Fat More Nutrients From Lentils

Memory Café

A memory café is a social gathering for people who are experiencing early stage dementia, mild memory loss, or mild cognitive impairment (MCI) and a family member or care partner. The café is a place to have fun, share experiences, and stay socially connected. Waukesha's meeting place The Spot on Broadway, 500 East Broadway St., on the fourth Wednesday of every month, from 10:30 a.m.-noon. First time attendees, please call the Alzheimer's Association at 1-800-272-3900. Local libraries and the Milwaukee Public Museum offer programs as well.

Blood Pressure Checks

Free blood pressure checks will be done between church services in the Hearth Room once a month, April 2, and May 7, 2017. Care Ministries provides healthcare professionals for this free service for health promotion!

CARING RELATIONSHIPS



Christian Music Line Dancing is Back!

Care Ministries has a five-week session of Christian line dancing beginning on Mondays, April 24-May 22, from 6-7 p.m., in the East Hall. The cost is only \$12 for five weeks. The instructor is Ascension's own Linda Elder.

Young at Heart

We enjoyed a great meeting in March with Jo Buth presenting information about the Burmese Refugee Program. Our April meeting is April 19 in Ascension's East Hall. We will again enjoy a potluck luncheon. We start at noon and after lunch, we will play games. Come and join in with the group. If you have questions, contact Celeste Defenbaugh at 262-370-4522, Beth Hoffmann at 262-542-7447, or Arlene Davis at 262-542-9119.

Plant Sale Fundraiser for Care Ministries!

Do you have Cabin Fever? The Spring Plant Fundraiser is your cure! The sale dates are between services are April 23, April 30, and May 7. Plant sale pick-up is on Saturday, May 20. You can download a photo sheet and info sheet of available plants at ascensionelca.org/events/plant-sale.

Care Ministries' new coordinators are Marcy Schaefer and Erica Probst. Please contact them, if you are able to volunteer for the sale and/or pick-up day, marcyschaefer@yahoo.com and/or ericaprobst@hotmail.com.

Knit Wits: USO Baby Shower in May! Help Needed!

The Wisconsin USO Baby Shower has been scheduled. We expected it to be during the summer, but we just found out it will be May 12! The USO needs us to have everything delivered to them by May 4. With this shortened deadline, we could use your help.

So, if you love to make baby blankets or sweaters, now is your chance to help out. Any patterns can be used. Sizes for 3-18 months are ideal. Gender-neutral colors are preferred. Please drop off all items to Maddie Goetter.

This will be the second annual event for local military new moms. The Ascension Knit Wits are the only knitting/crocheting group asked to participate in this event. They really loved our blankets last year! For more info, contact Maddie at 262-527-4013.

Support Our Troops

Are you interested in supporting our troops during the upcoming Memorial Day holiday? Care Ministries needs help with holidays like this and coordinating care packages for our enlisted servicemembers. Ascension's Military Ministry has been an active and important ministry; it supports active military and veterans connected to our church and provides outreach to servicemen and women in our community. Please contact Brenda Lytle at 547-8518 or brenda@ascensionelca.org if interested.

The Daniel Plan: Chocolate

Chocolate: The "forbidden fruit" some people might say. But is it? So many people have commented to us that they would really like to lead a healthier lifestyle but then finish their statement in a whisper, "But I can't give up my chocolate!" Well friends, you can dry your tears because we're here to tell you that chocolate is actually an amazingly good food for you...or at least until Hershey or Ghirardelli got a hold of it.

It is important to note when we talk about nutritious and beneficial chocolate, we are talking about chocolate that contains a minimum of 70% cacao, preferably "raw," and should be organic. When chocolate gets processed, it becomes laden with sugar and is stripped of most of the beneficial antioxidants. High quality chocolate will taste notably different from what you are probably used to. Once you adjust your taste buds, you will find this high quality chocolate very satisfying for your cravings and beneficial for your health.

So what makes high quality chocolate so good for you? Well, first of all, it is loaded with essential minerals including iron, magnesium, copper, manganese as well as others. It is also high in fiber and features an amazing fatty acid profile. These fatty acids are the "good fats" you may have heard about that can improve brain functioning and keep your body running efficiently.

Chocolate is loaded with antioxidants, which rid your body of free radicals and keep it running efficiently. (Free radicals are all the bad stuff floating around in your body that causes harm and causes it to age.) The antioxidants that are found in chocolate have been found to lower the risks of cardiovascular disease, raise HDL and lower the oxidation of LDL, improve blood flow, lower blood pressure and even protect your skin from the sun! In fact, raw unprocessed cacao beans are among the highest antioxidant scoring foods on the planet eclipsing blueberries, pomegranates, and acai berries.

High-quality chocolate used to be difficult to find for purchase. Thanks to Woodman's, there is now a plethora of high quality chocolate products readily available in their natural/organic baking aisle. There you will find an assortment of organic cacao powder, raw cacao nibs and chocolate chips (ranging from 70%-100% cacao) perfect for healthy baking or homemade trail mixes.

The Daniel Plan will not suggest you deprive yourself of chocolate or anything else for that matter. In fact it is a lifestyle of abundance and that's why it is transformative and sustainable.



A new Daniel Plan group is starting at Ascension on Sunday, April 23. The study runs for six consecutive weeks from 6-8 p.m. in room 107. Please contact us if you are interested in joining. In the meantime, go to <http://danielplan.com/healthyhabits/chocolate-go-go-balls/> to check out our suggested recipe for this month.

Outreach for Hope Lenten Devotions

Lent is a season when we focus more on wanting to walk with Jesus. In Outreach for Hope's first devotion in this series, Bishop Erickson states:

Jesus has indeed promised to walk with all of us, just as God has walked with His people throughout the history of our faith. From the pillar of fire by night and then pillar of cloud by day in the wilderness on the way to the Promised Land, to the birth of Jesus, Immanuel, God-with-us, to Jesus' promise to be with all his disciples through the presence of the Holy Spirit, we belong to a God who walks with us. Jesus also invites us to walk with each other, accompanying our neighbors, near and far, entering into the joys and struggles of life together side by side as companions on the journey.

Accompaniment is the guiding principle of our global mission relationships. We seek to avoid the paternalistic patterns of the past, in which relationships were defined by what we could give to or do for others. Instead we are encouraged to focus on the relationships we have with each other, relationships in which we both give and receive, speak and listen, and to share our lives in a spirit of mutual love and respect.

At Ascension, we talk about accompaniment in how we do mission work. It is the guiding force in how we define what we do and how we work together. If you would like more information on accompaniment and its base in Scripture, it isn't too late to go to Outreach for Hope's website and read the devotions for this Lenten season. You will be blessed by each day's thoughts on how we can truly walk with Jesus by walking with our neighbors both near and far. If you find the devotions a blessing, please consider making a donation to Outreach for Hope to help in the ministries they do within the Greater Milwaukee Synod to walk with those who are most vulnerable.



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Refugee Resettlement

On April 8, Jo Buth (pictured above) and Kris Desmond from St. Bartholomew's Catholic Church in Pewaukee will head to Washington DC with nine middle and high school Burmese students for an educational spring break trip. They will be able to learn about the US government in a very concrete way and will have experiences that will last a lifetime. Seeing our country through the eyes of eager teens who have moved here from another part of the world will be an amazing experience for the leaders also. Jo will have a lot to share when she returns. Please pray for them as they make this trip. When you see her, thank Jo for all she does for refugees.

Tutoring

Tutoring will take a break on April 8 and April 16 due to the El Salvador and Refugee Ministry trips and Easter. Many of our participants will be part of one of these two trips. Classes resume at 10 a.m. on April 23.

Are you aware that we now have 30 students and 29 tutors? Tutors come from three other congregations in addition to Ascension. We are so thankful for all of the tutors and their willingness to serve in this ministry.

Waukesha County Food Pantry

The Waukesha Food Pantry is at a low time of the year for donations. Hunger knows no season. An emergency can happen to anyone. Illness, loss of job, reduction in work hours, or a disability can all lead to the need to use the Food Pantry. There is often the feeling that the Food Pantry is used by those who are too lazy to work. That could not be farther from the truth. Many of the participants are working one or even two jobs but the pay does not meet all of their expenses. The Food Pantry can be the difference between providing healthy food for their families or going hungry. Please add a couple of items of non-perishable food, baby needs, cleaning supplies or grooming supplies the next time you are at the store. Monetary donations are also appreciated to purchase fresh items. Donations can be taken directly to the Food Pantry, or bring the donations to Ascension's West Hall Donation Center.

Hope Center Heroes

On Sunday, March 12, Dick and Kathy Williams told the congregation about the need for bottled water at Hope Center. Hope Center likes to have two bottles per participant in their day program each day. A special offering was collected. \$566 was collected that day! Dick and Kathy delivered 90 cases of water (24 bottles per case) or 2160 bottles to Hope Center. There is money left to purchase another 1.5 pallets when Hope Center has a need. This should get them well into the summer depending on the weather. Kathy states: "We are so blessed by so many to partner with Hope Center." I would add: Ascension is so blessed to have Dick and Kathy to step forward when they hear about a need and do something about it! They bless us by blessing others.

Small Groups: Service Projects

Is your small group looking for a way to serve? Mission Outreach keeps in touch with both the local and synod/global mission needs and would be happy to help you select a way to serve. Contact Shirley Wehmeier for ideas on things to donate or volunteer needs.



Peacebuilder Award

The Plowshare Peacebuilder Award was presented to Ascension's own Iva Richards on March 8. Iva selflessly serves in so many ways and is well deserving of this honor. During her acceptance speech, she talked about how our Mission Outreach ministries and her work with SOPHIA have provided her a place to serve and grow. Thank you, Iva for all you do. You are an example to all of us about the joy of serving Christ by serving others.

SOPHIA

Mark your calendars for April 22 at 8:30 a.m. for the annual SOPHIA Prayer Breakfast. It will be held at La Casa de Esperanza, 410 Arcadian Ave, Waukesha. Please contact Bob Stoll for more information or go to their website at www.sophiawaukesha.org/Members. They are also in need of items for the silent auction. Please let Bob Stoll know if you can help, and he will send you the form.

MISSION OUTREACH: PARTNERSHIPS



Cross Partnership

We thank Dave Hammer for his many years of leading our partnership with Cross and the Bread of Healing Empowerment Ministry. Dave has worked tirelessly in our partnership to make it successful. We have a strong group of volunteers who purchase the food, prepare the food, and serve the food once a month at Cross' Meal Program. Ascension members work side by side with Cross members to minister to the neighborhood around Cross. This ministry is a true example of accompaniment in mission. Thank you, Dave for all you have done.

We now welcome Arlene Davis to assume this role. Arlene has been active in the BOHEM ministry for many years and is a familiar face at Cross. Please continue to support this mission and Arlene as she steps forward in leadership.



Souper Bowl Campaign

This year's Souper Bowl Campaign was a grand success! We broke our previous record of 600 cans from 2015 and collected 774 cans this year! Thank you to all who participated.

The team winner is Donna Savin and Nancy Link team with 257 cans. They will be awarded a home-made soup dinner with fresh baked bread and a special dessert. Great job, Nancy and Donna!

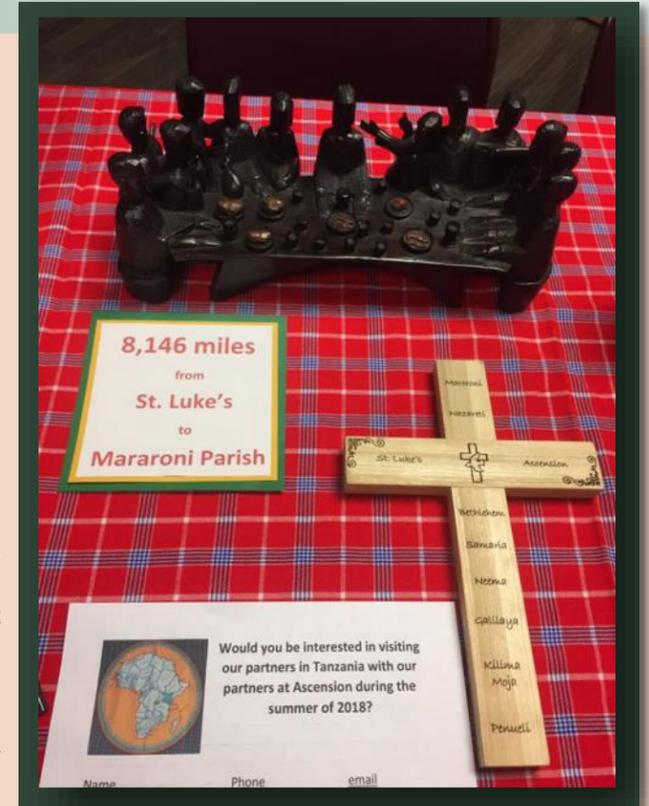
Gene Niebrugge and Paul Wehmeier filled a van and delivered the soup cans to Cross Lutheran Church in Milwaukee for their Food Pantry in the Bread of Healing Empowerment Ministry. Thanks again to all!

Tanzania

Ascension is beginning to plan a 2018 trip to Tanzania with St. Luke's Lutheran Church, Waukesha. The trip will include time with our partner parishes and a chance to visit the coffee farmers in the Meru Dioceses. This will be Ascension's first partnership trip to Tanzania. If you are interested in traveling next summer, please contact Shirley Wehmeier or Sarah Aparicio.

We also need people to help plan fundraisers to assist with the cost of this trip. If you can't go on the trip but have a passion for the ministry, consider helping in this essential capacity!

We want to thank Dave and Barb Hammer for their years of coordinating the Meru Coffee Project. They have served countless hours in this work over the years both at Ascension and as a part of the Greater Milwaukee Synod Meru Coffee Project. Their leadership has helped Ascension walk in partnership with the farmers in the Meru Diocese to have family-supporting coffee sales in a country ridden with poverty. All of this came from a coffee farmer saying: "We grow coffee and you (GMS members) drink coffee, let's work together." Every cup purchased on a Sunday morning or bag taken for home use, provides life supporting money to the farmers in our partnership. Providing a fair price for the coffee makes the difference in the lives of the farmers. Doing justice never tasted so good.



El Salvador

On April 8, the day before Palm Sunday, eight delegates from Ascension will travel to El Salvador to spend Holy Week with our brothers and sisters at the Lutheran Church of the Miracle of God in San Jorge. They will worship together on some of the holiest days of the church year. They will work side by side at the church building and will plant a fruit bearing tree at each home in the congregation as a gift and blessing from Ascension. There will also be opportunities to visit the Agroferreteria (hardware store) built by Ascension to see how it has grown both in products and services-offered but also in size and scope. All of the activities have been planned by Edwin and Sarah Aparicio together with Pr. Blanca and Pr. Julio. Thank you to Edwin and Sarah for all the work that goes into making the trip successful. In true accompaniment, the members of the Salvadoran church will participate in activities alongside Ascension's delegates. True partnerships are based on relationships and these trips are the best way to build relationships and grow in faith together.

Our delegates will return the day before Easter and will be able to celebrate the risen Savior back at Ascension. Please pray for the safety of our travelers and for blessings on this very important ministry.

From Ascension's Office

Thank you for all your donations during *Love Your Church, Love Your World* month. Your contributions make a substantial difference to the office, church facilities, and budget throughout the year.

We also would like to thank Arlene Davis and Sara Doyle for volunteering their time in the church office during our staff transition.

In Christ,

Amy Gilgenbach,
Director of Administration

Thankfulness for Love Your Church, Love Your World Donations

From Hebron House of Hospitality

Every donation we receive helps us to provide emergency housing for men, women, and children every night of the year. Guests entering any one of our three facilities receive a warm meal, a clean bed, shower, and laundry facilities, and the opportunity to take control of their future. Your donations make sure that happens, and we are grateful.

The person living homeless on the street is somebody's dad, son or daughter, wife, or friend. They have a name and they've clearly faced hardship. Meeting their basic needs is an ongoing challenge that could not be met without your investment in their future.

Thank you for providing *Home, Help and Hope* throughout the community. Your generous gift of \$113.64 provides safe and stable shelter, food, and supportive services to those in crisis. On behalf of those who receive these services, our volunteers, and staff, you have our sincerest appreciation and gratitude.

Thank you for your faithfulness, *Kris Androsky*, Executive Director

From the Women's Center

Thank you for your gift of bath and body products, hygiene products, pajamas, and fabric softener. As we recognize our 40th Anniversary this year, we are especially grateful for the continued support of our community.

In 1977, we opened our doors as the only agency in Waukesha County providing holistic support for survivors of domestic and sexual violence. We remain true to our original mission, building from our initial program offering of counseling, family support, legal advocacy, and life-skills to now include emergency shelter, 24-Hour Hotline, violence prevention, and transitional living -- all at no cost our our clients.

It is because of compassionate friends like you that we celebrate a to-year legacy of transforming lives and providing hope for hundreds throughout our community. On behalf of those we serve, thank you for becoming involved.

Gratefully yours, *Angela Mancuso*, Executive Director

From Healing Hearts

We would like to extend our thanks to the members of Ascension who donated supplies to Healing Hearts. I assure you they will ALL be put to good use. We sincerely appreciate the sponsorship of Ascension.

Chris Beck, Executive Director of Healing Hearts of Waukesha County

From Hope Center

Thank you very much for the donation. Today, we have seen an ever increasing need to help prevent homelessness. As the number of clients we serve increases, the valuable gift you have given Hope Center will help prevent homelessness. With your continued support, Hope Center is making a difference.

Sincerely, *Ralph Zick*, Executive Director

Your Council at Work

Our council has welcomed our new members and they are all jumping in quickly to their new roles. We are excited for the year and have begun our work on the 2025 Vision goals. Each council member has joined a wing and they are working closely with the wing leaders. This additional wing support will help the council respond to the needs of each wing. Watch the bulletin boards for Vision updates. We will be listing completed goals as well as the items we will focus on this year.

In addition to working with the wings, each council member will take a turn joining the counting teams. This will help us to better understand the process from beginning to end and will be beneficial when going through the budget process.

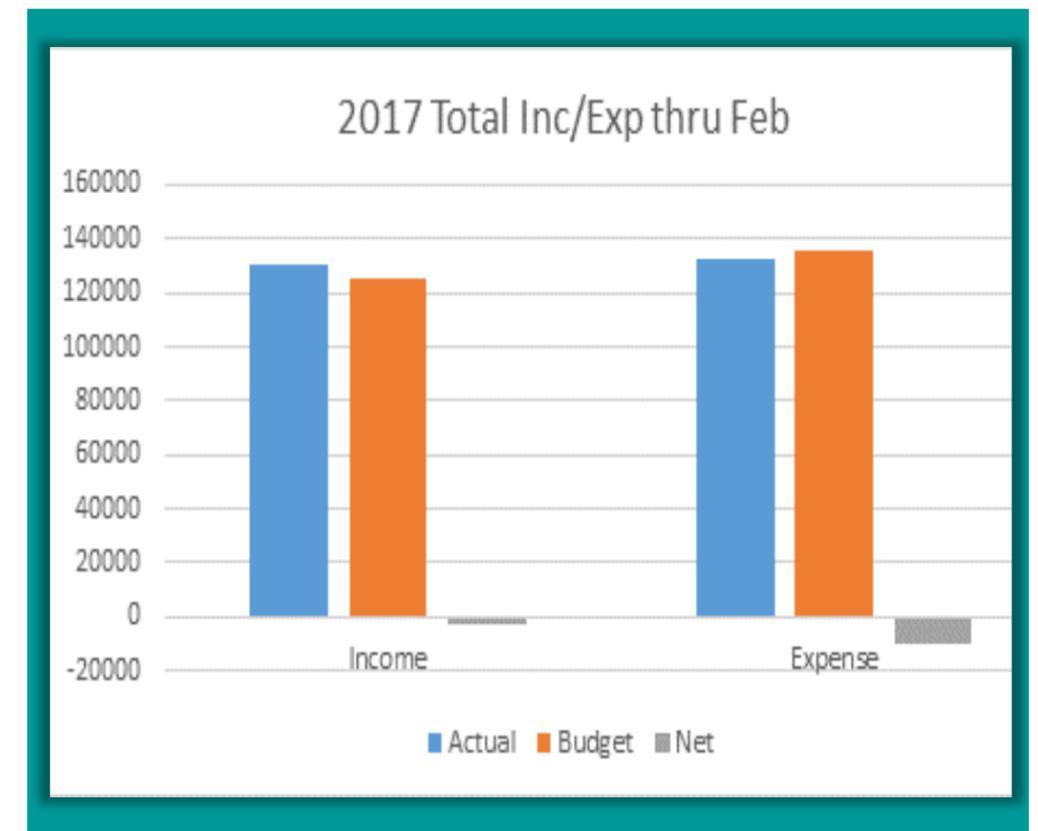
As in years past we will once again have a council member in the welcome center on the second Sunday of each month. This is an opportunity to meet your council members and ask questions. Please feel free to contact your council with any questions or concerns.

Cynthia Carlson, Council President

Treasurer's Report

2017 has gotten off to a very good start. Through February, the year's contributions are \$6700 above our plan and \$9100 above last year. And expenses are running below plan. All a good thing. In addition we have received over \$17,700 in Dedicated Funds for Ascension Arise and other missions and programs. Thank you for all our gifts.

Peter Laper, Interim Treasurer





Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2 Mime Travel 8:30am Worship 9:30am Puppets WH 9:45am Adult Ed PR 9:45 am TEA Time YR 9:45am BLAST 9:45am Communion Class EH 10:45 Worship 12pm Egg Hunt EH, WH, CY 2pm Private, WH 6pm Pr. Angela's Group, Offsite 6pm AA Beginner WH 7pm AA closed WH	3 9:45am Al-Anon WH 5:30pm Prayer Group PR 6pm Yoga EH 6:30pm AMEN 107	4 6:30am AMEN 107 9:30 am TGIT 107 9:30am Women's Bible Study HR 6pm Handbells S 6pm Cloverleaf EH 7pm Mutual Ministry PR 7:30 pm Choir S	5 8am Private PR 9am Private Group NR 9am YAH Breakfast @ Denny's 9:30am Cross Meal 12:30pm Women's Nurture Group PR 2pm Staff Mtg. PR 4pm Tutoring 106, 107 6pm Soup Supper EH, WH 7pm Worship 7pm AA Wisdom WH, HR 7:45pm TNT EH	6 10am Al-Anon WH 5pm Angel Choir MR 5:30pm Joyful Sounds S 6pm Youth Bells S 6pm Wing Leader Mtg. 106 7pm Ballantyne Sm Grp 107 7pm Mikecz Grp PR	7 9am Private NR	1 9am Choir S 1pm Handbells S 4pm Special Friends, Offsite 8 9am Knit Fest EH
9 Palm Sunday Mime Travel 8:30am Worship 9:45am BLAST 9:45am Adult Ed PR 10:45 Worship 6pm AA Beginner WH 7pm AA closed WH	10 Holy Week 9:45am Al-Anon WH 1pm Living Letters 106 6:30pm AMEN 107	11 Holy Week 6:30am AMEN 107 9:30am Women's Bible Study HR 7pm Holloway 107	12 Holy Week 8am Private PR 9am Private Group NR 11:45am Men's Grp 106 4pm Tutoring 106, 107 6pm Handbells S 6:30pm TNT EH 7pm AA Wisdom WH, HR 7:30pm Choir S	13 Maundy Thursday 10am Al-Anon WH 10am TGBG PR 7pm Worship S 7pm Ballantyne Sm Grp 107	14 Good Friday 12pm Worship S 5pm Mime S 7pm Worship S	15 Newsletter Deadline 8:30am Organ/ Brass Prep S
16 Easter Sunday 6am Worship 8:30am Worship 10:45am Worship 6pm AA Beginner WH 7pm AA closed WH	17 Office Closed 9:45am Al-Anon WH 5:30pm Prayer Group PR 6:30pm AMEN 107	18 6:30am AMEN 107 9:30am TGIT 107 9:30am Women's Bible Study HR 7pm Council 107	19 8am Private PR 9am Private Group NR 12pm YAH Potluck EH, WH 12:30pm Women's Nurture Grp PR 4pm Tutoring 106, 107 7pm AA Wisdom, WH HR	20 10am Al-Anon WH 5pm Angel Choir MR 5:30pm Joyful Sounds S 6pm Youth Bells S 7pm Ballantyne Sm Grp 107	21 9am Private NR	22
23 8:30am Worship 9:30am Blood Pressure Checks HR 10:45 Worship 6pm CRASH YH, S, EH 6pm The Daniel Plan 107 6pm AA Beginner WH 7pm AA closed WH	24 9:45am Al-Anon WH 12pm Knit Wits EH 6pm Line Dancing EH 6:30pm AMEN 107	25 6:30am AMEN 107 9:30am Women's Bible Study HR 7pm Holloway Group 106	26 8am Private PR 9am Private Group NR 4pm Tutoring 106, 107 6pm Handbells S 6:30pm TNT EH 7pm AA Wisdom, WH 7:30pm Choir S	27 10am Al-Anon WH 10am TGBG PR 5pm Angel Choir MR 5:30pm Joyful Sounds S 6pm Youth Bells S 6:45pm JOLT EH, WH, S 7pm Ballantyne Sm Grp 107	28 9am Private NR	29 9am Lake Country Ringers S
30 8:30am Worship 9:45am BLAST 10:45 Worship 12pm Confirmation Capture EH 12:30pm Lake Country Ringers S 4pm Concert S 6pm CRASH YH, S, EH 6pm The Daniel Plan 107 6pm AA Beginner WH 7pm AA closed WH						

KEY
 EH East Hall PR Prayer Room
 HR Hearth Room S Sanctuary
 N Narthex WH West Hall
 NR Nursery YR Youth Room

Executive Staff

- Lead Pastor**
 Rev. Christian W. Marien
PC@ascensionelca.org
- Pastor**
 Rev. Angela T. Khabeb
PA@ascensionelca.org
- Director of Administration**
 Amy Gilgenbach
Admin@ascensionelca.org
- Director of Care Ministries**
 Brenda Lytle, RN
Brenda@ascensionelca.org
- Director of Faith Formation**
 Tony Acompanado
Tony@ascensionelca.org
- Director of Music Ministries**
 Vicki Taylor
Vicki@ascensionelca.org

Support Staff

- Administrator - Caring Relationships & Mission Outreach**
 Kate Mattson
Kate@ascensionelca.org
- Praise Band Leader**
 Ben Janzow
Ben_janzow@yahoo.com
- Nursery Staff**
 Victoria Kirk
 Becca Tenwinkel

Ministry/Operations

- Director of Ministries**
 Kelly Hoeg
kelly.hoeg@gmail.com
- Director of Operations**
 Peter Laper
Peterlaper@gmail.com

Church Council

- President**
 Cynthia Carlson
Cynthiacarlsonalc@gmail.com
- First Vice President**
 Craig Greenwood
Ctgreenwood1@att.net
- Second Vice President**
 Jay O'Grady
Jayograd@wi.rr.com
- Secretary**
 Linda Hansen
Lindahansen@wi.rr.com
- Treasurer, Interim**
 Peter Laper
Peterlaper@gmail.com
- Council Members-at-Large**
 Chris Holloway
Christine.holloway@cdw.com
- Bryn Kirk
Brynkirk@gmail.com
- Becky Klotz
Becky.klotz23@yahoo.com
- Aaron Niezwaag
theniezwaag@gmail.com
- Roger Nordberg
Rbnordberg@gmail.com
- Cathy Rapp
Catherinerapp@sbcglobal.net

Wing Leaders

- Joyful Worship**
 Amy James
Jamesgang247@yahoo.com
- Spiritual Growth**
 Sheri Greger
Sheri_frogs@yahoo.com
- Caring Relationships**
 Cheryl Anspach
cherylylnnaa@yahoo.com
- Mission Outreach**
 Shirley Wehmeier
pwehmeier@wi.rr.com



Ascension LUTHERAN CHURCH ELCA

1415 Dopp St.
 Waukesha, WI 53188
 262-547-8518
www.ascensionelca.org
Facebook.com/ascensionlutheran

OFFICE HOURS

MONDAY-THURSDAY
 9 a.m.—5 p.m.
 FRIDAY
 9 a.m.—12 p.m.

