



Ascension
LUTHERAN CHURCH
ELCA
September 2017

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1415 Dopp Street
Waukesha, WI 53188-4997

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PASTORS' PERSPECTIVES - PASTOR CHRIS



Here at Ascension, our entire journey of faith is shaped by four wings of a butterfly. Since the first days of the butterfly here at Ascension, God has breathed life into our ministries, thereby giving flight to the butterfly. We have flown with the wings of Joyful Worship, Spiritual Growth, Caring Relationships, and Mission Outreach for a long time. I wonder if it might be time to refresh the butterfly or maybe keep the butterfly wings just-as-they-are, and instead consider a new reality for our mission statement. The image is life-giving and symbolic of resurrection. Here at Ascension, we honor four dimensions in our journey of faith. We worship God. We grow in faith. We walk in relationship. We serve God by serving others.

What would it look like for members and visitors alike if we held the original names of our wings but streamlined the mission of Ascension to a more readily available sense of direction for this journey of faith? Is it possible to continue to walk with our four wings of ministry (Joyful Worship, Spiritual Growth, Caring Relationships, Mission Outreach) to the glory of God, while at the same time inviting our community of faith and those who are seeking a church home to find a more direct path reflecting our purpose as disciples of Jesus Christ in the world? I would love for you to consider what a new mission statement might look like for us. Of course - I wonder how many of you can name our current mission statement. (Inspired by Christ's love, we share God's life through Joyful Worship, Spiritual Growth, Caring Relationships, and Mission Outreach). Below are listed the four wings of ministry here at Ascension in their simplest form. Here is what I wonder about in the days ahead.

As followers of Jesus Christ we...

Worship God

- Psalms 150:6** Let everything that has breath praise the Lord!
- Hebrews 12:28-29** Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire.

Grow in Knowledge of God

- 2 Corinthians 5:17** So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!
- 1 Peter 1:3** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

Walk in Relationship

- John 13:34-35** I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.
- Hebrews 11:24-25** And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.
- James 5:16** Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective.

Serve God by Serving Others

- Mark 9:35** He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, "Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all."
- Galatians 5:13** For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another.

What does it look like for our community of faith and those who visit our church, if we live under a simpler banner to the glory of God? Instead of our current mission statement, Inspired by Christ's love, we share God's life through Joyful Worship, Spiritual Growth, Caring Relationships, and Mission Outreach, what would it look like if our mission statement offered a simpler expression of discipleship to the glory of God? What if our mission statement was this:

Worship. Grow. Walk. Serve.

Does it matter? It does to me. I wonder if it matters to you. If it does, let me know. I am happy to have some conversation as we look to the fall.

We are also preparing to "spotlight" the four wings of the Ascension butterfly as we enter into our fall programming. On **Sept. 24**, our Joyful Worship ministries will be on full display. Opportunities for your involvement and learning will be provided. And, of course, food will be a part of the morning between services and after the 10:45 service. On **Oct. 1**, Mission Outreach will take center stage. We will have representatives from the organizations we support to answer your questions and provide opportunities for you to get involved. **Oct. 8** will bring Spiritual Growth to the main stage. Our education ministries will be highlighted along with our prayer, stewardship, library, and youth ministries. Finally, on **Oct. 22**, Caring Relationships will complete the presentation of the butterfly with displays and conversations around our small groups, affinity groups, and care ministries. An incredible opportunity for learning and growing and finding new ways of serving – all culminating with a celebration of the Reformation at a concert and hymn sing on **Oct. 22** and the 500th anniversary celebration of the Reformation on **Oct. 29**. A couple of months this fall are not to be missed!

Dear friends – God is at work at Ascension and your presence helps the butterfly ascend to the glory of God. Is it time to get back in the routine of regular worship? Are you reading to grow in your spiritual journey? Do you miss walking with fellow believers? Is something missing in your life? Are you tired of just getting through the day? I wonder if you are needing to find a way to serve God and your neighbor – to be a part of something bigger than yourself?

You are always welcome at Ascension...Welcome to: Worship. Grow. Walk. Serve. To the great glory of God. See you in church,

Rev. Christian Marien



Closing Message of the ELCA Women's Triennial Gathering

I would like to share with you an abbreviated manuscript of my sermon from the closing worship service at the Women of the ELCA's Tenth Triennial Gathering on July 16, 2017.

Good morning, sisters and brothers! I am so excited to be here. This is my fourth triennial, and I love the energy that we have. Ain't no party like a Holy Ghost party because a Holy Ghost party don't stop! As you can imagine, I was eager to know what the Gospel passage would be for today. But I have to admit, I was less than enthusiastic to learn that it was The Sower and the Seeds. Boring! How could this be? All the miracles in the Bible and I get some crazy farmer? I mean, can a sister get a miracle? After an attitude adjustment, I made an intentional effort to embrace the theme of our Gathering, "All Anew." I prayed, "Lord, you must be trying to tell me something. God, give me new eyes, new ears so I can see what you are trying to say to your people." I had to take another look.

Ok. What do we have in this passage? We have a sower, seeds, soil, and a harvest. In my home congregation, I like to remind people that when Jesus is speaking or when Jesus is doing

something, it's very important that we look for the scandal. Let me tell you, we serve a scandalous God. Jesus did things that upended all of history. Our Jesus has changed the course of this world. You don't do that by keeping people happy. (And just so you know, you don't have to say *amen*. It's ok because you know how some people sing in the shower? I preach in the shower. Yep. Sure do. I preach right to myself. So you don't have to say *amen*).

Theologians debate about what this harvest means, some say it's a bumper crop. Others say it was mediocre. But I don't think that's the point. I think the point was that there was a harvest at all. It's a miracle that a harvest takes place at all because of what God chooses to do. As the creator of the universe, God chooses to use the terrain of our hearts to be part of this new creation. Receive that for a minute because, sisters, I want to tell you something: Your heart is black... and beautiful. And it is in this black, beautiful earth that our God decided to plant something as powerful as God's holy Word. In so doing, God makes us co-creators.

Now, I am going to tip over to another Gospel. (In seminary, they tell you not to do that.) But let's go over to John's Gospel because in John's Gospel, Jesus tells us what? Unless a seed falls to the ground and dies - it will not bring forth fruit. What does it mean for God's Word to die inside of us? Could it mean that we must release the God that we have created? The God that we have fashioned in our own image? The God that we've manipulated and massaged so that our God just happens to hate the exact same people that we hate. Right? That God needs to die. The God that we've got all figured out, the God that votes like we do, the God that looks like we do, that talks like we do, the God that we've put in a box and placed on a shelf, that God needs to die inside of us so that we can bear fruit.

Listen, I understand that for some of us this has been a very challenging week. You've heard some hard truths. Be encouraged. You know, I read somewhere that the average person can only receive about 5% beyond what they already believe to be true. So if I give you a statistic and it sounds pretty close to what you *already* think, you'll receive that. But if I tell you something that's beyond your experience, just 10% in either direction, then you think I'm crazy. Think it's ludicrous, maybe evil, or maybe even fake news. But here's the Good News, the power of Jesus Christ and Jesus' teaching is the most impactful when it is destabilizing. Whenever we encounter Jesus in a way that we can't readily recognize him, there is potential for growth because when we have God all figured out, then God belongs to us and not the other way around. But when that seed dies in

your heart and begins to take root, then you belong to Jesus. Isn't that what it's all about? And if that seed does not die inside of us, it cannot bring forth fruit. But death hurts. It hurts when the Jesus that we thought was on our side has told us that now we are actually part of the problem and that we might have to actually do something. News flash: Christianity is not comfortable. No! If you are comfortable in Jesus, you are doing it wrong. (I hope we can still be friends).

You see, Jesus is not a pair of old slippers. The kind that are well worn and fit the contours of your feet. Or a pair of old jeans or your favorite sweater. Jesus did not come to keep you comfortable. See, if Jesus had come preaching, "This is the way we've always done it," he would have lived to be a ripe old age and died of natural causes in a nursing home facility. But our Jesus didn't come that way. That Jesus does not exist. You will not find a Jesus in the Bible who puts rich people above poor people. He ain't there. You will not find a Jesus that closes up the boundaries and leaves people out on the margins. We didn't hear all of Isaiah read, but at the beginning of Isaiah 55, the prophet said whoever -- whoever -- is thirsty, come on in here. Whoever is hungry, come on in here and get what you need! You don't need money, you don't need influence, you don't need to vote the right way, you don't need to do the right thing; you just need to come. God has done it all for us, in spite of us. Now, that's some good news right there. Sounds like a miracle to me; doesn't it?

Christianity is not comfortable.

Sisters and brothers, our God is big. Our God is The Alpha and The Omega, the beginning and the end. God's word teaches us that the clouds of the air are the dust of God's sandals. That's a big God. Our God is bigger than protests. Westboro Baptist Church. Bless your little hearts. Jesus loves you too, and so do we. Here's more Good News, our God has been too good for us to return insult for insult. Our God has been too good to us to not be gracious with people that hate us. Come on. That's Christianity 101. The God we serve, the God that lit the sun and fixed it in the sky. The God that flung the stars to the far-most corners of the night. This great, big God is worried about some protesters? You cannot limit this God. And it is this God who desires to reach into our black and beautiful hearts and work this work of salvation so that we can be co-creators with the God of the universe. That, sisters and brothers, is a miracle.

God does not give us what we deserve. Thank God! Instead, God gives us forgiveness. God gives us grace upon grace upon grace. Our extravagant God gives to all just like the farmer in our parable. Let's call this farmer Oprah; right? You get some seeds, you get some seeds, everybody gets some seeds! It's the extravagance of our God. That is what was so offensive. That was the scandal, when the original hearers heard this, they were like what? Those people over there? They get some too? Ewww! You mean, those liberal Democrats? Those nasty women? Those people over there in the LGBTQ community? Yeah, those people too. Because otherwise, God would be the God of just us and not the God of the universe. See how that works? God cannot be God of the universe if the seed does not fall on everybody. So yeah, you get some seeds, you get some seeds, you get some seeds, everybody gets some seeds! And then when we do this thing together, everybody gets blessed. That's how you know God is in it. Even people at Westboro Baptist Church, I wish I could have seen a couple of them. I would have just loved on them. I would put them in my microwave of love. And pressed defrost...

One final thought, sisters and brothers, my husband dropped us off at the airport and after my beautiful husband gave me a hug and kissed me on the cheek, he offered the following advice: He said, "Sweetheart, behave yourself." Now, that would be a miracle. Let the church say *amen*.

Pastoral Acts			
Baptisms		Weddings	
Linden McAllister-Viel	August 13	Melissa Janecke &	August 19
Plen McAllister-Viel	August 13	Matthew Raasch	

JOYFUL WORSHIP

Children's Music Ministry Updates

Children's choirs resume on Sept. 27 and 28. All children are warmly encouraged to participate! The Angel Choir, Joyful Sounds Choir, and Youth Bell Choir meet weekly beginning the last week in September and sing or ring in worship approximately once per month.

The Youth Bell Choir is moving to Wednesdays, 5:30-6 p.m. A meal will be served following bell choir to accommodate those students who will be attending JOLT at 6:30 (all ringers are welcome to the meal). The Angel Choir and Joyful Sounds Choir will continue to meet on Thursdays. Singers in grade 3 are invited to join either the Angel Choir or the Joyful Sounds Choir.



Registration can be found online at tinyurl.com/AscensionMusic2017.

The complete schedule is as follows:

Youth Handbells

- Wednesdays, 5:30-6:00, Sanctuary; **begin Sept 27** (dinner served at 6:00)
- Grades 4-8
- No previous experience necessary
- Acquire/improve music reading skills
- Ring in worship at various times throughout the school year
- Have fun with others and "make a joyful noise to the Lord!"

Joyful Sounds Choir

- Thursdays, 5:30-6:00, Sanctuary; **begin Sept. 28**
- Grades 3-8
- Sing in worship approximately once each month
- Reinforce faith learning through song
- Grow in music reading skills and use of singing voice
- Experience the joy of singing together

Angel Choir

- Thursdays, 5:00-5:30, Music Room; **begin Sept. 28**
- Grades K-3
- Sing in worship approximately every 4-6 weeks
- Reinforce faith learning through song
- Learn to ring handchimes
- Experience the joy of making music together

Please contact vicki@ascensionelca.org with questions. I'm looking forward to meeting with the children and hearing them sing and ring once again!

Adult Music Ministry Updates

Ascension's Music Ministry offers many opportunities for individuals to express and share the gift of music that God has given to each one of us. Making music offers refreshment for the spirit, especially in the midst of busy lives and challenging days. All are warmly invited and encouraged to participate! Email vicki@ascensionelca.org with questions or to join.

Ascension Choir

- Lift voices of praise and thanksgiving in worship and lead the congregation in song
- Sing and lead music in worship at the 8:30 service approximately three Sundays each month and for festival/special worship services
- Enjoy fellowship with other choir members
- Wednesdays, 7:30-8:45 p.m., Sanctuary; **begin Sept. 6**
- Grade 9-adult



Ascension Ringers (Handbell Choir)

- Share beautiful and uplifting music with all who come to worship
- Ring in worship approximately once each month and for festival/special worship
- Ability to follow a musical score is necessary (I can teach you if interested)
- No previous ringing experience is required
- Enjoy fellowship with other ringers
- Wednesdays, 6:15-7:25 p.m., Sanctuary; **begin Sept. 6**
- Grade 9-adult

Handbell Workshop

- Learn how to follow a musical score and understand music notation
- Learn basic handbell ringing technique
- No prior experience in reading music or ringing handbells--whether your goal is to join the Ascension Ringers or simply to see what bell ringing is all about, you are warmly invited to come and give it a try!
- Thursdays (3 sessions), 6:30-7:15 p.m., Sanctuary; **Sept. 21, 28, Oct. 5**
- Intergenerational--ages 10-adult

Ascension Praise Band

- One Sunday afternoon per month, 12:00-1:30 p.m.
- Lead worship at 10:45 service
- Singers and instrumentalists
- Praise and Worship songs
- Contact Ben Janzow, Ben_Janzow@yahoo.com, for more information

Instruments in Worship

- Instrumentalists of all types and levels are invited to offer their musical gifts for use in worship
- Contact Vicki Taylor, vicki@ascensionelca.org, to arrange

SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Prayer Group - I. C.A.N.

Intentional Caring Acts Now

It seems too early to start thinking about Advent, but a couple of weeks ago, I walked into a store and over the PA system Christmas music was playing! Later that same day, I picked up our five-year-old grandson from pre-school and he was humming his favorite Christmas song -“Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer!”

I guess it is never too early to think about preparing for Advent and how God’s great gift of Jesus has transformed and changed so many lives. Maybe you have been a recipient of some act of love and kindness from a changed life. Maybe that act of kindness made a change to your life as well.

Our lives are filled with special times and special blessings that have come from a loving Lord - hidden in plain sight in the beauty of nature; wonderful caring friends; inspiring music; family; and our church family. The list is unending!

The Prayer Team would like to compile an Advent devotional filled with your memories of these special encounters. Please keep your written reflection to one page, and please include a favorite Bible verse and prayer if you wish. E-mail your memory to the church office, tamie@acensionelca.org. Make sure you mark it *Advent Devotional*, so it doesn’t get lost.

Peace & joy, love & faith in Christ!

Bonnie Thiesenhusen, Prayer Team



Ascension participants in the 2015 ELCA Youth Gathering

2018 ELCA Youth Gathering: *This Changes Everything*

The ELCA Youth Gathering will be happening in Houston, June 27-July 1, 2018. The Gathering theme, *This Changes Everything*, is centered in Ephesians 2:8, “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God.” Together, youth and adults will discuss grace and how this gift changes lives and perspectives.

The primary focus of the Gathering is faith formation of young people. Through days spent together in interactive learning, Bible study, worship, service, and fellowship, young people grow in faith - challenged and inspired to live their faith in daily life.

As young people desire and struggle to find someone to become, somewhere to belong, and something to do, the Gathering seeks to be a ministry that helps define some of that or at least open pathways of discovery. Ultimately, the vision is for youth to understand the fierce love that God has for them, just as they are, and that by grace, through faith, they have been saved. When a young person - or anyone - claims this reality, it changes everything.

Congregational registration opens Sept. 15, 2017, and will close on May 15, 2018. For more information on the Gathering, visit ELCA.org/gathering. Please contact Tony, tony@acensionelca.org, for information about registration.

(From “Seeds for the Parish,” Summer 2017, pg. 3)

BLAST

9/10 Rally Day – Children three-years-old—fifth grade are invited to Rally Day from 9:45–10:35 a.m. Students and parents will find their classrooms and meet teachers and superintendents. There will be sharing time about the amazing things to come in our BLAST ministry. Online registration (*preferred*) is available at tinyurl.com/BLASTRegistrationALC or register at the narthex table on Sunday mornings. Registration: \$30/child or \$50/family.

9/22 Family Movie Night – Don’t miss this monthly *FUN FAMILY FRIENDLY* event! The featured film for September is **Boss Baby**. We encourage you to wear your pajamas and bring a pillow and blanket or your favorite comfy chair. Popcorn and beverages will be served, but consider bringing a snack to share. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. and the movie begins promptly at 7 p.m.

9/24 Kindergarten Bibles Stepping Stone – Kindergarten students and parents/grandparents will gather to learn about the Bible. This is a great experience for parents/grandparents to learn how to share God’s love with their children/grandchildren through some of the most well known stories of the Bible.



Looking Ahead: **10/1 Green Meadows Petting Farm** – BLAST takes place off-site for a thrilling day exploring the wonders of God’s creation (\$10/person – includes farm, hay ride, pumpkin, lunch, and for those 2-yrs. and under a pony ride too). Our time together will begin at 11 a.m. with an energetic family worship service in the barn followed by lunch at 11:30 a.m. Then families will be free to explore the farm for the remainder of the day. All ages are invited!

CRASH

9/10 Kickoff & Potluck Lunch – Students entering grades 9-12 and their parents are invited to our annual orientation event. We gather over lunch as soon as the second service ends, and during our time together we distribute information packets, collect registration forms, review the 2017-2018 calendar, as well as allow time to sign up for retreats, mission trips, and other events, and meet the CRASH leadership team. Beverages will be provided, but each family is asked to bring a dish to pass.

9/17 Sunday Morning Conversation – This exciting new opportunity invites high school students into a deeper exploration of God’s Word and how their lives are connected to current events in their own communities and throughout the world. We’ll meet from 9:45 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. in the Youth Room (doughnuts, coffee, and juice will be provided).

9/17 & 9/24 Youth Group – Sunday evenings, from 6–8 p.m., we gather together for ridiculous fun and games, food, reconnecting, and diving into God’s call in our lives. Friends are always welcome.



JOLT

Journey of a Life Time

JOLT is crazy, fun, small groups, learning, large groups, games, worship, sharing, trusting, exploring, growing, honest, surprising, unexpected!

Ascension welcomes 6th-8th graders to the JOLT class of 2017-2018.

At your baptism, your parents and sponsors made a promise to God: to bring you to worship, teach you the Lord’s Prayer, the Apostles’ Creed, and the Ten Commandments. Your parents and sponsors promised to place in your hands a Bible and provide you with ways to grow your faith. Through JOLT, they make good on that promise!

JOLT is Wednesdays, starting Sept. 13, 6:30 p.m.

CARING RELATIONSHIPS

Summer Conferences for the Director of Care Ministries

I was privileged to attend two conferences this summer. The first one was in July by ProHealth Care. It focused on Spirituality and Grief. The speaker was a famous author, Harold I. Smith, PhD. His sessions focused on walking through the valleys together. He reminded us that we are members of a species that has a one hundred percent mortality rate. Someday, we will all expire, depart, ascend, vanish, or exit from this earth. We are members of a species of which 6,500 die every hour, two per second. When asked about the death rate in Ireland (where he practiced) he replied, "Same as everywhere else, one per person." His conclusion to the conference was that the Church must say to the dying: "You WILL NOT go through this alone. There will be times when we will not know what to say or do or think or pray...but we will show up! And we will keep on showing up." Another component to the conference was to embrace hospice. Part of the session included information about our local county hospice programs. I will plan to invite a hospice program to Ascension to make a presentation the coming year.

The second conference was by the Wisconsin Health Organization (Grapevine series). They helped to prepare medically evidence-based materials for me to present this fall. I will be presenting on the topic "The Importance for Self-Care, Awareness, Acknowledgement, and Action" on Nov. 19. This topic is a result of the community's requests. Mindfulness and a holistic approach to health has become more of a focus in today's fast-paced society. We will discuss today's society related to mental, physical, and spiritual health elements.

Brenda Lytle, Director of Care Ministries

New GriefShare Session Sept. 12-Nov. 28

GriefShare begins Sept. 12, from 6-8 p.m., in the Youth Room. It will be a 12-week session facilitated by Pastor Angela. If you know someone or have suffered the loss of a loved one and are stuck in grief...this may be a great program for you! If you or a family member or friend would like to join this program please contact Brenda Lytle at 262-547-8518 or brenda@ascensionelca.org.

Meals for GriefShare

Are you looking for some service work within our church? You or your ministry group may like to provide a meal for our GriefShare participants beginning Sept. 12. Supper is provided from 5:15-6 p.m., in West Hall. The meals are greatly appreciated! If you are interested to make a meal for this group, please sign up on the Care Ministries bulletin board or contact Brenda Lytle at 547-8518 or brenda@ascensionelca.org. You can also sign up online at tinyurl.com/GriefMealsFall2017. Thanks!

Back to School Celebration for Moms/Ladies

Let's celebrate the end of summer and another successful start to school. This will be your chance to get to know other ladies and enjoy a peaceful night out. Please bring an appetizer to share if you are able.

Place: Ileen Marien's house (3852 Crystal Lane, Waukesha)

Time: 6 p.m.-8 p.m.

When: Sunday, Sept. 17

RSVP: Ileen Marien, ileenmarien@gmail.com or 262-422-5232



H.O.P.E. Ministry

Healing Our Pain Eventually

We had a fabulous time at our Texas Roadhouse/Mini Golf event this summer. It was great to connect, visit, and laugh with friends. Often, loss means that you are suddenly alone, and connecting with friends that understand your loss can help you heal. It doesn't replace your loss; it just prevents some of the times you may feel isolated and alone. If you are struggling with loss and would like to connect with some new friends that have similar experiences, you are welcome to attend our HOPE Ministry events. Stay tuned to dates and times on our Care Ministries bulletin board.

Upcoming events are listed below. More dates and times will be announced as they are planned.

September

Join us for the NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) Walk at Frame Park, on Sept. 16, in the morning. More info about NAMI on pg. 16.

October

Pizza and movie night

November

- ♦ Holiday Service project: Gift wrapping at Brookfield Mall
- ♦ Plan and prepare a GriefShare meal for our program
- ♦ December 17 Longest Night Grief Service, 7 p.m., at Ascension

Young at Heart

We were blessed last month with a presentation of pictures, music, and stories from Pastor Angela, Benhi, Konami, Khenna, and Khonni from their trip to Africa to visit Benhi's family. It was great; I feel closer to his family now!

Our YAH group will meet at Christina's Restaurant for breakfast on Wednesday, Sept. 13, at 9 a.m. Please join us.

If you are looking for an afternoon of food, fun, and music, join us for our YAH potluck luncheon on Wednesday, Sept. 20, from 12-3 p.m., in East Hall. We will be entertained by a family providing Irish music. Hope to see you!



CARING RELATIONSHIPS

Cancer...Now What?

Cancer changes your life, without a doubt; however, you don't have to let it control your life. It can sometimes be hard to keep cancer from consuming every waking thought, especially soon after the diagnosis. At times, it may be the only thing on your mind. Doctor appointments, lab tests, treatments, side effects...everything seems to revolve around cancer.

But in spite of all of this, you are still you. Cancer hasn't changed that. It's just one part of your life right now, not the whole of it. Even though it greatly affects you, it doesn't have to define you. You define you..

Many people dealing with cancer have discovered the benefits of spiritual community, of interacting with others who share similar beliefs. Often by relating with people of faith, cancer patients can experience a closer connection with God and receive comfort, strength, and encouragement.

Some cancer survivors, as well as loved ones, make advocacy a part of their lives. The feeling of being a part of something bigger than yourself can be extremely gratifying and provides a sense of community, accomplishment, and hope.

Ascension Care Ministries would like to host an Our Journey Of Hope leadership training for people from our congregation to walk along side of a newly or recurring diagnosed cancer member. The training is Sept. 11, from 6:30-8:30 p.m., on consecutive Monday nights for six weeks. If interested, please contact Brenda Lytle at Brenda@ascensionelca.org.

You are still you. Cancer hasn't changed that. It's just one part of your life right now, not the whole of it. Even though it greatly affects you, it doesn't have to define you. You define you..

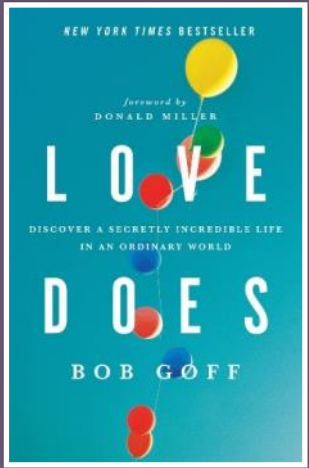
What is the Purpose of Yoga?

The original context of yoga was spiritual development practices to train the body and mind to self-observe and become aware of their own nature. The purposes of yoga were to cultivate awareness, self-regulation, and higher consciousness in the individual. Yoga builds muscle strength. Strong muscles do more than look good. They also protect us from conditions like arthritis and back pain and help prevent falls in elderly people. Plus, when you build strength through yoga, you balance it with flexibility. Aside from the physical benefits, one of the best benefits of yoga is how it helps a person manage stress, which is known to have devastating effects on the body and mind. Yoga's incorporation of meditation and breathing can help improve a person's mental well-being.

Workout fads come and go, but virtually no other exercise program is as enduring as yoga. It's been around for more than 5,000 years. Yoga does more than burn calories and tone muscles. It's a total mind-body workout that combines strengthening and

stretching poses with deep breathing and meditation or relaxation. There are more than 100 different forms of yoga. Some are fast-paced and intense. Others are gentle and relaxing. Yoga is a great activity for you if you have diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, or heart disease. It gives you strength, flexibility, and mind-body awareness. Do you have arthritis? Yoga can help you stay flexible and strong without putting added stress on your joints. You get the added benefit of a mind-body approach that can help you relax and energize. If you're pregnant, yoga can help keep you relaxed, strong, and in shape. People of all ages and fitness levels can do the most basic yoga poses and stretches.

Yoga classes at Ascension begin Sept. 11 and run for eight weeks this fall. Classes will be held in East Hall, from 6-7 p.m. and the cost is \$20 for the full eight weeks! (Only \$2.50/class). Our great instructor is Jessica Popp from HumanKind Yoga. Bring your water bottle, mat, and fee to the first class.



Church-wide Fall Bible Study

One of our core beliefs as Lutherans is *the priesthood of all believers*. Luther encouraged people to embrace the concept that every Christian is called to the priesthood through the waters of baptism. Luther contended that the plowboy and the milkmaid could do priestly work. In fact, their plowing and milking was priestly work. Luther maintained, "This word *priest* should become as common as the word *Christian*." This concept of *the priesthood of all believers* is present in both the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament. My favorite

biblical reference is found in 1 Peter 2:9: "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."

Inspired by the call of the priesthood of all believers, the small group coordinators are eager to engage the *Love Does* video series this Fall. This is an inspiring opportunity. Our small group kick-off will begin the week of September 17. Our *Love Does* Bible study will culminate with a special worship service on Reformation Sunday, October 15.

In *Love Does*, a five-session, video-based small group study, we will discover the insights of *New York Times* best-selling author Bob Goff through sometimes-humorous, thought-provoking, meaningful lessons that make faith in God simple and real.

We will explore paradigm shifts, musings, and stories from one of the world's most delightfully engaging and winsome people. One thing fuels Goff's impact - LOVE. But it's not the kind of love that stops at thoughts and feelings. Goff believes that love takes action, just like Jesus did. Goff believes *love does*.

We will experience that when love does, life gets interesting. This series is light and fun - unique and profound. It is our hope that the lessons drawn from Goff's life and attitude just might inspire you to be secretly incredible too. Following is an overview of the sessions' themes:

1. I'm With You
2. Not Defined by Our Failures
3. God's Audacious Love
4. The Story
5. That's What Love Does

Current small group leaders and those interested in leading a new group should contact Arlene Kelsey, live2sew37@yahoo.com, (262) 939-0740; Carolyn Inglefield carolyn.inglefield@gmail.com, (262) 751-6778; or Bonnie Siegel bonnie.lynn.siegel@gmail.com. Materials for your group will be available in early September.

New leaders, please contact Pr. Angela, pa@ascensionelca.org, if you would like to participate in a small group leader training session!

Rev. Angela E. Khabek

CARING RELATIONSHIPS

A Taste of The Daniel Plan: Why Not?

Often when speaking about making lasting change we will ask, “What is your why?” That “why” is often what is needed to motivate people to make the change and, more importantly, stick to it! Recently the topic of “why” came up. One of us said, probably in jest, “Why NOT?” That got us thinking...

The Daniel Plan sometimes refers to the Bible as an owner’s manual for your body. In Deuteronomy 32:47, God says, “If you do what I tell you to do with your health, you will enjoy a long life.” Why NOT want to live a long life? Think about it: How do you keep your car running for a long time....? ‘Nuf said!

Sadly, whenever we see people sucking a beverage out of a throw disposable cup or eating out of a paper or Styrofoam container, we have to hold ourselves back from grabbing it out of their hands. Our reaction is much like the one most people would have seeing a pregnant woman puffing on a cigarette. If you’re going to eat something, why NOT put in something worthwhile? Good quality, nutrient dense food will give you more energy, make you feel more satisfied, and won’t contribute to your expanding waistline. Think about this: If you were having guests for dinner, wouldn’t you put out the best food? The Holy Spirit is a guest within you. Why NOT do the same for Him?

New Study Starting October 29



Doesn’t everyone like to feel tired, worn out, and unmotivated? Let’s hope not! Study after study shows the importance of being active. Even moderate activity can make you feel more energetic, flexible, and happy. Why NOT get out of that chair and take a walk, do some stretches, or lift some weights? You will feel better and more motivated to do even more.

If you want to change your life, you have to change the way you think. Have you ever heard that? A recent Daniel Plan Facebook post stated, “Stop focusing on how stressed you are and focus on how blessed you are.” Where you bring your attention determines how you feel. Why NOT focus on God and all the blessings he provides you every day and you will see a difference in how you feel.

Many people take their health for granted until they lose it. Anyone that has had a family member or friend become ill, think how that changed your relationship. More than likely, your focus went away from having fun to that of stress and anxiety. Why NOT take steps today to avoid losing your health tomorrow?

These points should sound familiar. They are the 5 essentials of the Daniel Plan: Faith, Food, Fitness, Focus and Friends. Think about each of these points and ask yourself, “Why NOT join the next six week Daniel Plan study starting October 29, 6-8 p.m., in room 107?”

Carol & Steve Spieker, The Daniel Plan leaders

Knit Wits

The Knit Wits have found another service project! We will be making Twiddle Muffs for Alzheimer's' patients. Twiddle Muffs, or sensory bands, are knitted or crocheted hand muffs decorated with interesting things like ribbons, fringe, pompoms, etc.... designed to provide people with dementia something to “twiddle” with and soothe restless hands, minimize agitation, and promote brain stimulation.

For this new project, we are working with the ADRC of Waukesha. They will identify stay-at-home patients who could use a muff and distribute the muffs to them individually.

Right now, we have lots of textured yarns, fuzzy yarns, ribbon yarns, etc., and this will be a great use for these materials. But if you happen to have some of these artsy or “odd” yarns at home, and don’t know what to do with them, let us know! And if you’d like to help make or decorate a muff, just contact me.

Our other big push is for hats (or mittens or scarves if you prefer) for the Waukesha Christmas Clearing Council (due in November), Cross Lutheran, and the Salvation Army. I also want to thank Fashion Angels (of Milwaukee) for their recent yarn donation.

Anyone can join us! For more information, just call or email me. Our purpose is to foster fellowship and friendship among our members. Our mission is to help keep the less-fortunate warm, one stitch at a time.

Maddie Goetter, Knit Wits Coordinator

MISSION OUTREACH: TANZANIA PARTNERSHIP



sure that we are ethical with our spending. We do not work with cut-rate safari companies that cause damage to the environment. We make sure that everyone we hire is paid a living wage. Because Tanzania is a very popular tourist destination, there are numerous tour operators that offer discount trips. They are able to offer these cheaper prices by exploiting the local Tanzanians that are desperate for work. Edwin and I hosted a student from Tanzania for the Youth Gathering in 2015, and when he left, he told me, “My entire life, I have been surrounded by white people that have come to my country that exploit us with everything they do. White people that come to my country have made us suffer for generations. I didn't know what to expect when I came to be a guest of white people in this country.” The price of a discounted trip is too high if it causes our Tanzanian brothers and sisters to be exploited.

Not only will our delegates be representing all of Ascension as we begin to build our sister parish relationship, but we will be doing our own small part of supporting the local economy. I hope this helps to better explain the cost of the trip. Please reach out to me if you have other questions.

Sarah Aparicio, Ascension Trip Coordinator

Back to School in Mt. Meru

Last year, Ascension raised funds to send 105 students to school in our sister parishes in Tanzania. We hope we are able to send all of those kids to school again this coming year. Please make checks out to Ascension with “Meru Back To School” on the memo line.

Tanzania Trip: A Conscientious Cost

Although our trip to Tanzania is just under a year away, our potential delegates are preparing to make their down payments. There have been a lot of questions about the cost of the trip. Is it possible to find cheaper packages on Groupon, etc.? Absolutely. Why does our trip cost more? There are several reasons:

- 1) August is the best month to see wildlife on safari. That is great news for our experience, but it makes things like the flight and safari cost more.
- 2) Our trip is truly all inclusive, there are no hidden costs. When we share meals with our Tanzanian hosts, we do not eat in front of them, leaving them without food, but we also purchase food for them to eat with us. Food scarcity is a serious issue in Tanzania, so we do not want our hosts to go without as they give us their best.
- 3) This is the biggie: We are the church, so we make

BACK TO SCHOOL IN MOUNT MERU

Sponsor a student from our sister parish in Tanzania for a year of school.



\$7 = School Uniform



\$11 = School Supplies



\$42 = Maize & Beans



\$60 = Entire cost of a school year

MISSION OUTREACH: IN OUR OWN BACKYARD



Tutoring

At Ascension, we tutor adults and children in reading, writing and math. Tutors help English language learners with listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Tutoring is Saturday, 10 a.m.-12 p.m., beginning on Sept. 9. Parents must be present for children to attend. This ministry is a collaboration between Ascension and Greater Waukesha Literacy. Contact Barb Nordberg if you want to help or know someone who would benefit from tutoring.

NAMI Event

One in every five Americans experience a mental health concern in any given year. The need for education, advocacy, and support is a major challenge to helping those affected to get the help that will enable them to lead full lives.

Join us on Sept. 16 at 9:30 a.m. for the NAMI Walk. Help us change minds about mental health and raise awareness and funds to support the work of NAMI. The walk is at Frame Park. Contact Peggy Thrasher, letstalksoon@hotmail.com,

to join the Ascension team. If you can't participate, please consider sponsoring a walker on the Ascension team. Help NAMI change minds one step at a time!



Every journey begins with one step! Through NAMIWalks public display of support for people with mental health challenges, we are taking that first step in changing how Americans view mental illness. All proceeds raised by NAMIWalks Waukesha benefit NAMI Waukesha's support, education, and advocacy programs that are offered free of charge for individuals impacted by mental health conditions and their loved ones. Your support stays in our

community to help local families find the hope of recovery and improve the understanding of mental health conditions for the community at large.

Little Free Library

Ascension's Little Free Library has been a big success in our neighborhood. Because it is successful, there is an ongoing need for book donations. We have heard from neighbors that they regularly stop by to see if there is anything new in the little library and return books they have read. Children's books almost never are returned. That means, some children who may not have their own books, now have books to read! As you do your fall cleaning or shopping, please consider dropping off your extra books that are in good shape to share with the neighborhood. Either put them in the bin in the Donation Center or if the little library has room, you can just put them in there.



Neighborhood Block Party Successful

Our first ever community outreach event was a success! We had 40 Ascension volunteers and a total of 122 Ascension members in attendance. We welcomed 72 guests for all or part of the party. We want to thank all of the volunteers, those who helped with an activity, those who donated gifts for the door prizes, and those who attended to share the friendly and welcoming spirit of Ascension.

We had wonderful feed-back from our guests and are pleased that we already have had a new tutor volunteer and possible tutor students. Several families have shown an interest in BLAST children's ministry for their children. One family attended the outdoor service the next day! Thanks to you, we are showing the neighborhood that Ascension is a warm and welcoming place. We are grateful to Thrivent Action Teams and the Ascension Endowment Fund that helped sponsor this event. It made all the difference in what we were able to do!

The big question we hear is: What is next? Mission Outreach has already set the date for next summer's event and has begun to develop ways to welcome the community in new ways in the coming months. If you are interested in helping in this ministry, contact Shirley Wehmeier or stop by our Neighborhood Ministry table during the **Mission Outreach Wing Spotlight Sunday on Oct 1.**



CHURCH COUNCIL

Your Council at Work

It has been a great summer at Ascension. I have noticed that so many of you have been taking advantage of the time between services. It's always so nice to see everyone, laughing, and mingling as I come in the door. With no Spiritual Growth programming, it is important for Ascension's children and youth to witness our church as a community. This builds a sense of family they will grow up to appreciate. As you come and go from your service, take the time to catch up with your church family. It is totally worth your time.

Speaking of time, do you have a special talent you would like to share? This fall, each one of our wings will be spotlighted on a different Sunday. This is a great opportunity to learn more about where your talents fit in. Come see all the great ministries Ascension has available.

As a council, we are pleased to welcome Darwin Moore to the position of Treasurer. Darwin will complete the remainder of Patti Mueller's term. During our annual meeting, the Treasurer will be one of the positions that will be voted on. Our annual meeting date has been set. Please plan to attend Nov. 5, 2017, immediately following the 10:45 service. The annual meeting will be a potluck and is a great way to learn more about the workings of the church.

Please feel free to contact your council members for more information or to voice any concerns.

Cynthia Carlson, Council President

Treasurer's Report

In July, we incurred a large expense of over \$19,000 to replace the HVAC system in the church. An appeal for funds was responded to admirably and Ascension was able to pay for the installation. Thank you. Work also started on next year's budget.

General giving for the year continues to lag budget totals by \$4,265. However, this shows a slight improvement from last month's totals. YTD Income – Expense = \$3,883.

Darwin Moore, Treasurer



Gratitude

From Carolyn Inglefield

A grateful thank you to Ascension for your prayers for my daughter Jennifer's pregnancy and delivery. Nora Elizabeth was successfully delivered on July 6 at 3:25 a.m. Mother, baby, and family are all doing well.

From Hope Center

Thank you for your gracious donation of \$273. Hope Center is dedicated to preventing homelessness by providing basic needs - food, clothing, shelter. With your continued support, we are making a difference. Sincerely, Ralph Zick, Executive Director

From Hebron House of Hospitality

Dear Ascension Lutheran Church,

In these warm summer months, we remain grateful for supporters like you who understand that homelessness exists all year. Heat advisories and the end of the school year often add to shelter occupancy and expenses. Your continued support is essential and appreciated..

Your donation of \$113.64 allows Hebron House of Hospitality to offer shelter, food, and care to hundreds of women, children, and men throughout Waukesha County each year. Your support provides the strength needed to overcome their homelessness. Thank you for your generosity and faithfulness!

Kris Androsky, Executive Director

Executive Staff

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Pastor

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OFFICE HOURS

MONDAY-THURSDAY

9 a.m.—5 p.m.

FRIDAY

9 a.m.—12 p.m.

						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
KEY EH East Hall HR Hearth Rm. N Narthex NR Nursery PL Parking Lot PR Prayer Rm. S Sanctuary WH West Hall YR Youth Rm.					1	2
3 9am Worship 10am Fellowship 10:45am Worship, Outdoors 11:45am BBQ, CY 6pm AA Beginner WH 7pm AA closed WH	4 Labor Day Office Closed 9:45am Al-Anon WH	5 6:30am AMEN 107 9:30am TGIT 107 9:30am Women's Bible Study HR 7pm Mutual Ministry PR	6 8am Private PR 9:30am Cross Meal, Offsite 12:30pm Women's Nurture Grp PR 6:15pm Handbells S 7pm AA Wisdom WH HR 7:30pm Choir S	7 10am Al-Anon WH 12:30pm OFH WH 7pm Ballantyne Sm Grp 107	8	9 Outreach for Hope Bike Ride, <i>Offsite</i> 9am Tutoring 106, 107, HR, PR, WH
10 8:30am Worship 9:45am BLAST EH 10:45am Worship 12pm CRASH EH 6pm AA Beginner WH 7pm AA closed WH	11 9:45am Al-Anon WH 1pm Living Letters 106 6pm Yoga EH 6:30pm AMEN 107	12 6:30am AMEN 107 9:30am Women's Bible Study HR 5:30pm GriefShare Meal WH 6pm GriefShare YR 7pm Holloway Grp 107	13 8am Private PR 9am YAH, Offsite 11:45am Men's Nuture Grp 106 5:30pm Yth Ringers S 6:15pm Handbells S 6:30pm JOLT EH 7pm AA Wisdom WH, HR 7:30pm Choir S	14 10am Al-Anon WH 10am TGBG PR 5pm Angel Choir 5:30pm Joyful Sounds 7pm Ballantyne Sm Grp 107	15 Newsletter Deadline	16 9am Tutoring 106, 107, HR, PR, WH 9am Knit Fest EH
17 Fall Churchwide Bible Study Begins 8:30am Worship 9:45am BLAST EH 10:45am Worship 5:30pm PA Small Grp, Offsite 6pm CRASH YR, EH 6pm AA Beginner WH 7pm AA closed WH	18 9:45am Al-Anon WH 5:30pm Prayer Group 6pm Yoga EH 6:30pm AMEN 107 6:30pm Cancer Care Training PR	19 6:30am AMEN 107 9:30am TGIT 107 9:30am Women's Bible Study HR 1pm Pastoral Asst PR 5:30pm GriefShare Meal WH 6pm GriefShare YR 7pm Council 107	20 8am Private PR 12pm YAH Potluck EH, WH 12:30pm Women's Nurture Grp PR 5:30pm Yth Ringers S 6pm JOLT Dinner WH 6:15pm Handbells S 6:30pm JOLT EH 7pm AA Wisdom WH, HR 7:30pm Choir S	21 10am Al-Anon WH 5pm Angel Choir 5:30pm Joyful Sounds 7pm Ballantyne Sm Grp 107 7pm Care Ministries 106	22 6:30pm Family Movie Night EH	23 9am Tutoring 106, 107, HR, PR, WH
24 Wing Spotlight: Joyful Worship N 8:30 Worship 9:45am BLAST 9:45am 5K Stepping Stone EH 10:45am Worship 12pm Praise Band S 5:30pm PA Small Grp, Offsite 6pm CRASH YR, EH 6pm AA Beginner WH 7pm AA closed WH	25 9:45am Al-Anon WH 12pm Knit Wits EH 6pm Yoga EH 6:30pm AMEN 107 6:30pm Cancer Care Training PR	26 6:30am AMEN 107 9:30am Women's Bible Study HR 5:30pm GriefShare Meal WH 6pm GriefShare YR 7pm Holloway Grp 107	27 8am Private PR 5:30pm Yth Ringers S 6pm JOLT Dinner WH 6:15pm Handbells S 6:30pm JOLT EH 7pm Mikecz Grp PR 7pm AA Wisdom WH, HR 7:30pm Choir S	28 10am Al-Anon WH 10am TGBG PR 5pm Angel Choir 5:30pm Joyful Sounds 7pm Ballantyne Sm Grp 107	29	30 9am Tutoring 106, 107, HR, PR, WH