



ACT



Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Ascension Church Today Summer, 2009

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From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Fellow Disciples,

If you have not been able to worship with us you have lost out on much of the news about our ministry and our life at Ascension Lutheran Church. Let me take a moments and help you catch up on some of the events and ministries of our congregation.

We celebrated Ascension Day, May 21st, by lifting the roof with powerful music and worship celebration with our partners throughout the city. May 31st was a wonderful Pentecost Celebration and the confirmation of five of our 8th graders. Mother's day, Father's day were observed with special programs throughout the different cultures of our congregation. July 19th was "Kathryn Sommer Day" at Ascension which gave us an opportunity to lift up the many gifts of ministry Kathryn has shared with this congregation as a faithful disciple, parish worker and historian.

We voted as a congregation to make another improvement in our facility. We are making the basement habitable for a day school. The Hmong American Peace Academy will be leasing the basement as this partnership continues to grow. We are required to put in a sprinkler (fire repression) system, fire and safety doors, a better air handling system and an updated fire alarm. Then....the basement was flooded out by the storm of June 18th. Yikes...what a mess! With the hard work of our property team and the construction firms hired, we just might make our August 15th completion deadline.

It is with deep concern that I share the news about Pastor Youa Kao Vang. Pastor Vang was diagnosed with Acute Myelogenous Leukemia on June 6. This is a very serious form of cancer and Pr. Vang is presently receiving his 2nd round of chemotherapy. Pr. Vang in all probability will require a bone marrow transplant. Pr. Vang will be on medical disability for the period of time required to treat the cancer. We are hopeful, as always, that health and good days will return to Pastor Vang. He appreciates your cards and prayers.

Not as frightening, but of concern, is the economy and how it seems to be affecting our offerings. **Folks, we are struggling!** I know that some of you have lost your jobs, some of you have had hours cut back, etc. This is a very tough time and our support and concern for each other is the gift of this community.

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**"One Church, One Body,
One Spirit,
Serving All People."**

**"Una Iglesia, Un Cuerpo,
Un Espiritu,
Sirviendo a todos los
pueblos."**

**"Koom ib Lub Tuamtsev,
Koom ib Lub Cev,
Koom ib Tug Ntsujplig,
Ua Num Rua Txhuas
Tug Tuabneeg."**





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However, our giving is way down. As of today we have received \$41,000 less than what we had hoped at the beginning of the year. We are not going to make it all back at once. We do believe that we can make up some of this deficit. We need to make some severe adjustments in our budget and we need to ask those of you who are able to not only continue your offerings but to dig a little deeper. The Ascension Endowment has helped us not only by giving budget support but also by allowing us to suspend payments on loans. For this we are grateful. It is still not enough. We will either increase our giving or we will have to begin the process of looking at changes in our staffing. This is drastic and would certainly affect the strength of our ministry here at Ascension.

We find our hope and strength in the times in which we can worship together, pray together and support each other as we extend the ministry of this congregation. We are a vital witness to the grace of God through Jesus Christ. *We pray that we are always faithful to that call of God and that we might always be blessed to be a blessing.*

We will hold our summer congregational meeting the evening of Wednesday, August 26th Refreshments (an Ice-cream Social) will be provided while we meet in the dining room. We will receive the reports of them pastors and the Leadership Council and various ministry teams. We will consider the recommendation for pastoral leadership as we move to 2010 and we will have the opportunity to review the plans and recommendations for the front court yard.

There you have it. There is so much more. Our church is filled with campers (Camp Hope), elders (senior meal site), care providers (Foster Care Parent training), Youth activities (retreats and summer youth gatherings) and construction workers!

See you in church!

Pastor Jon

**PS Joanie and I are grandparents!
Oden Nicholas Petty was born July 19th
What a blessing!**



Statement of Mission

Ascension Lutheran Church is a community of disciples of Christ who proclaim and witness God's love. We seek to include and to invite all to participate in our ministry to anticipate God's kingdom of justice.



SACRED PLACES --

What is the buzz about “Sacred Places”?

We thought you might like to learn more about Partners for Sacred Places and how Ascension Lutheran Church is involved and will be a part of this important effort going on in Milwaukee. We hope that you will read this entire article. We also hope that if you have questions about Partners for SACRED PLACES that you will ask them. And, we hope that you might find this so interesting an undertaking that you like to volunteer to help.

Sacred Places is a training program for churches and synagogues, mosques and meetinghouses that has been developed by the Sacred Places Foundation, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Partners for Sacred Places was in part a response to the need to rebuild a number of churches destroyed or badly damaged in the San Francisco Earthquake.

Pastor Jon, Greg Joers, Lor Lorjxeng and Marilyn Lange have made the commitment to participate in this training program, which is being provided in Milwaukee for a number of Lutheran churches. The training will last over a year and is very extensive.

There are two major goals for the training:

- 1) To identify for our congregation and for the surrounding community the enormous value of our sacred place as a community asset and
- 2) To use that understanding to attract new partners and resources to help us maintain our church and the buildings that make up Ascension

We believe that this training will help us to be able to broaden our base of support. To do this, we are gathering information on our rich heritage at Ascension and we are calculating the value of our facilities to the community while inventorying all of the many ways in which we contribute to the good of the community.

Once we have gathered all of this information, it will be important for us to be able to tell our story to others.

The Ascension Sacred Places team is working closely with the Building and Property Team to establish the priorities for maintaining our Sacred Place as well as the costs to undertake a plan to address the priorities.

You might be saying or thinking, but we have a 3-year Building Improvement Campaign that was launched in Fall 2008 for the purpose of raising funds for our buildings. Indeed we do and that campaign will continue through 2009, 2010 and 2011. It is directed to you – the disciples of Ascension – in which we have asked for your support through a weekly, monthly or annual contribution for needed building improvements. It is our internal campaign. SACRED PLACES will enable us to look beyond the congregation and the congregation’s resources for help in funding the work needed to maintain and improve our physical plant so that it will continue to be a blessing to and for our community in the years to come.

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How Can You Get Involved?

Ascension disciples may volunteer to serve in a variety of ways. We need people to make sure that the rich heritage and history of Ascension is captured and committed to a written record. We need people who enjoy writing to help with preparing written presentations, articles for publication in the newspaper and other places. We also need people who can help tell our story verbally, based on the information being assembled. In other words, we need a Communication Work Group. If you would like to help, please contact the church office at 645-2933 or you may contact Marilyn Lange, (414) 525-1425.

We also need people who will help identify outside individuals, groups, foundations or organizations that may be interested in hearing the Ascension story. If you know someone or even if you want to suggest a possible contact, please call Marilyn Lange at (414) 525-1425 or speak with her at church.

The Sacred Places Team

Pastor Jon Jacobs, Greg Joers, Lor Lorjxeng, Marilyn Lange

LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF

Update on 2009 LWR Health and School Kits

After doing an inventory on 8/5/09 of items already donated...

We DO NOT NEED any more wash cloths, soap, toothbrushes, crayons, pencils, erasers or Colored paper. (Remember LWR no longer accepts toothpaste.)

1.) For completing at least 25 Health Kits we do need:

3 hand towels

7 nail clippers

10 wide-tooth combs

54 ½-3/4' band aids

2.) To complete at least 25 School Kits we still need:

2 spiral notebooks (150-200 pages)

6 rulers

9 pencil sharpeners

25 school bags

Place your contributions in the LWR (Lutheran World Relief) box on the church entry table. *Thank you* from WELCA. We give so others might live!



The following young adults were confirmed on Pentecost, May 31, 2009

Steven Reuter
Isabella Vang
Ricky Vang
Wendy Vue
Jonathan Yang

Children and Adults Baptized Year to Date

Muachee Valin Thao
Ryder Txuci Vang
Ashley Seng Her
Nathaniel Nyias Xiong
Shellia Kab Blia Xiong
Trinity Mai See Chang
Carol Her
Benjamin Jon Zuehlke
Olivia Mai Zuehlke
Rylan McKinley Driesen
Valentina Rose Tanzilo

The Offerings from Ascension's Sunday School and Vacation Bible School have now enabled us to send \$220 to the ELCA World Hunger Goat Fund. The money will be used to provide goats to needy families who use the profits from new goats to feed their families, send their children to school, and share with others.

How can a goat change a life? Zipporah, a widowed mother of seven children, lives on a one acre farm in Kenya. Hunger, made worse by drought, threatened her family. **ELCA World Hunger** and partner the Lutheran World Federation support a program that provided Zipporah with a breeding goat and trained her to care for it. As one goat became many, Zipporah is able to provide for her family. Goats are a helpful part of God's global barnyard because they are hardy, multiply rapidly, are easy to care for, and produce nutritious milk. Goats can survive in drought-stricken areas by eating drought-resistant shrubs and grass. Children can care for goats, which is especially helpful when families are dealing with a serious illness like HIV/AIDS.

CAMP HOPE IS UP AND RUNNING!

40 CAMPERS WERE REGISTERED FOR THE FIRST WEEK. LOOKS LIKE ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL SUMMER PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN IS UNDERWAY!

Day Camp is for youth who are at least 5 years old and will attend kindergarten in the fall, through 4th grade. The action packed day includes Bible stories, crafts, games, songs and more. The day starts with opening worship and continues with active Bible study. Lunch is provided daily. Campers are cared for by small group leaders and support staff throughout the day.

Disciple Camp is for youth who have attended 5th & 6th grade. Pre-teens learn to serve God by helping others. Bible study and crafts connect faith to their daily life.



Ascension Lutheran Church Today - ACT Thank You Pages



To the Staff and Parishioners of Ascension Lutheran Church

Dear Friends,

I want to thank you so very much for your thoughtful and generous gift - the gift card for the American Club in Kohler, Wis. John and I will be going there for a weekend in April to celebrate our 5th wedding anniversary. We are looking forward to this get away weekend. Thank you for the Marge Hendrickson Day plaque. It is such a special remembrance of my 10 years of parish nurse ministry in the parish. I have it on the wall of my new office. Thank you also for the lovely farewell reception on February 8th, the food, the decorations, the fellowship - everything was so wonderful! Thank you for the many cards and good wishes. I feel very much a part of the Ascension community - it is my church family. John and I will continue to worship with you. Again, thank you for the privilege of serving as your parish nurse for the past 10 years. It has been a blessing and an honor for me to work with all of you in parish health ministry.

I really like my new position - I am still working with seniors in the community. However, I miss all of you very much! Thank you again! Peace and Blessings, Marge Hendrickson



Dear Ascension Lutheran Mission Partners,

Thank you for the most beautiful Ascension Day I have ever experienced. All of your services have been wonderful over the years, but this one was over the top! I felt sorry for those who missed the service! The musical witness that was shared was beautiful. Having the honor of blessing the bread and cup with the other pastors so that three languages were spoken and heard at holy communion was a particular blessing for me. I am so grateful that you have included us in this beautiful Ascension Day worship tradition, a tradition which surely changes from year to year yet always gives witness to the powerful presence of God in Christ in our midst through the gift of the Holy Spirit. It was so meaningful to Hephatha to have Repairers of the breach and the MPS alumni choirs singing in the service. We are partners with Repairers of the Breach and are always pleased and thankful when they are included.

You have a particular witness to Christ to make through your three language groups/one family of God's ministry. I thank God for you and for your witness and partnership, and I pray for your work for the Gospel, work which benefits me and Hephatha in our faith and in our serving.

With thanks, Mary Martha Kannass, Pastor, Hephatha Lutheran Church



Correspondence from Lt. Adam Kessler, "Adopt A Platoon" program:

"..yes we got the packages, thanks so much. The guys are using the cool collars. Sorry for taking so long to write back, we are doing a different mission now, where we stay at an Iraqi base for like 3 days a week and train them. So we are a lot busier now, plus its a lot hotter now. It is over 115 every day now. If you could send any Wisconsin cheese and crackers. If not that's ok, just a request they wanted me to ask."

Thanks again, Adam



Kathryn Sommer has been the Ascension Historian for many years. She has been a faithful disciple of Ascension since December 25, 1945, On Sunday, July 19 Kathryn Sommer was honored for her many years of service to Ascension at a special unified service that was very well attended by all three language groups. Kathryn was very surprised and happy as she received congratulatory letters from Bishop Paul Stumme-Diers and Reverend Hoover Grimsby. She also received letters from the President of Ascension, Roger Rustad, and from her good friend Gloria Zepherin. Kathryn's family was all in attendance. Her son Harold and her daughter in law Denise gave wonderful testimonies about Kathryn. Many people contributed to the delicious pot luck.

Everyone had a wonderful Sunday in celebration of Kathryn's loyalty and dedication.

Dear Pastor Jon:

Thank you so much for the special recognition. It was over whelming - Sunday, July 19 - when I was met at the door with a beautiful corsage! Having had no inkling or reason, it didn't take long to see smiles on familiar faces and to know it was something special!

Thank you so much! My memories have been special - thank the Lord for giving me the pleasure of serving at Ascension. I shall continue to treasure the memories.

Sincerely, Kathryn Sommer.



Thank you, Ascension for making our trip to the ELCA Youth Gathering in New Orleans possible

To Pastor Jacobs and Congregation of Ascension:

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

On behalf of Pastor Jones, Sister Dove and the GSL Church family, we want to send a sincere thank you for your recent donation, although it was neither expected nor necessary ---it was greatly appreciated. Thank you!
Pastor Jones

Ascension Lutheran Church, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Ministry Staff

Reverend Jonathan F. Jacobs, Reverend Walter Baires
Reverend Youa Kao Vang

Senior Ministry Pastor Elizabeth Baires

Choir Director Cynthia Bettine

Bell Choir Director Roxanne Carloni

Choir Director Emeritus Ray Dietrich

Organist Leonhard Rose

Office Staff

Office Manager/Admin Gloria Jiménez

Business Office Heidi Barrett, Greg Joers

Food Ministry Linda Estes

Maintenance Carlos Ruiz, Mike Witters

Outreach Worker Bonny Lopez

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