

THE MONTHLY

January 2017



ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH

transforming community with Jesus' message

FROM THE PASTOR

The Lord be with you all!

And happy New Year!

It's always difficult for the church to get "business" done from Thanksgiving through New Year's Day. That means that January is usually a very busy month. That's certainly true for our spiritual village!

On the last Sunday of the month, January 29th, we will be gathering for our congregation's **annual meeting** following the 10:00 AM worship service. At this meeting, the main item of business will be the approval of a budget for the congregation's ministry and mission in 2017.

Late this fall, our Council formally recommended the adoption of a **\$490,000 budget**. Over the coming weeks, the Council will formally present the details of that budget during **temple talks** in worship. We've found this approach to be helpful for a few reasons. First, it gives the congregation time to consider the details of the proposed budget and ask any **questions** we may have. Second, it embodies our ministry's commitment to financial **transparency**. And finally, it usually helps to make the annual meeting itself run as smoothly as possible.

In addition to preparing ourselves for the annual meeting, we will also formally resume our conversation about the long-term stewardship of our facility and property. If you remember, the Council presented us with our **three basic facility/property options** just before Thanksgiving. They are as follows: (1) invest about \$1 million in our current facility, (2) raise about \$2 million to replace our facility with a new facility on our property, or (3) sell our facility and property in order to relocate and build new.

During the month of January, there will be **opportunities to gather** for further conversation about these options. Please pray for our congregation, that our gracious God would grant us wisdom in these conversations! And when the dates and times of these gatherings are announced in early January, please make attending at least one of them a high priority.

God bless you all for your partnership in Christ's gospel!

Ryan+

Rev. Stephen S. Talmage
bishop

Rev. Ryan M. Hersch
pastor

M. Jayne Baker
diaconal minister

Thomas Mueller
administrator

Tina Samuel
office support

Dale Niehaus
organist

Dr. Christopher Samuel
cantor/choirmaster

Judy Lenz
children's minister

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**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

FROM THE DEACON'S STUDY

Christmas One N Ten Tree:

Ascension's response for filling tag requests for **One N Ten** was —as always—amazing—all 40 tags removed, wishes filled and return in just two Sundays!!!

On December 21, Patti Worbs, Jeff Musfeldt and I played Santa and delivered all the gifts to the organization who got them to the "wishers". What a blessing to be able to do this for so many kids who have been thrown out of their homes for simply being who God made them.



Refugee Collaboration:

On December 19, I delivered Christmas gifts to our Syrian refugee family from our collaboration with Temple Solel and the Chandler Mosque. One of the gifts given was a picture collage of our family arriving in America, a picture of their greeting group from the collaboration and some pics of the family. When they opened that particular gift, both parents were almost jumping with excitement. Our young mother became teary eyed and both exclaimed their joy. Talk about the perfect gift!! So fun to see. A huge thank you to all who contributed.

Both Ahmad and Anoud are more settled, continue to learn English—albeit slowly— and the best news is that our young father found a job!! He is a builder and now gets to build furniture. They are well on the way to independence and integration. The picture here is one of our Temple Solel families visiting on a weekend.

JANUARY SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

Hi Ascension Kids and Families,

Happy New Year 2017! The Sunday school staff is very excited to begin the second year of our new children's program. We are so happy that families are pleased with the format. Many of you have indicated that because the Sunday gospel readings upstairs are now in sync with the same gospels read from the children's Bible downstairs, they are more able to engage in faith discussions with their children. This feedback is great to hear, and what we were hoping to accomplish by keeping everyone connected each week. Thanks to all of you who supported us and sent encouraging words our way. We are looking forward to another wonderful year developing and growing the children's ministry here at Ascension.

Sunday school will begin on Sunday, January 8th. During the next weeks of Epiphany, we will listen to some wondrous Bible stories of how we are to continue to share Jesus' love and be His light in the world. Remember, everyone is welcome. So feel free to bring your friends and join us for our faith-filled Sunday school program.

Sunday school meets each Sunday at the 10:00 a.m. Service. We look forward to seeing you! Blessings, Judy Lenz, Tammy Barks, Diane Ewell, and Vivian Mora

January Themes:

January 8 – GROWING IN FAITH – The baptism of Jesus

January 15– GOD'S EYE WITNESS NEWS- Sharing the Good News with others!

January 22 –FISHING FOR PEOPLE- The first Disciples are called.

January 29– The" BEE ATTITUDES"- Finding true happiness in Jesus



CHRISTMAS RECEPTION

A beautiful evening of fun, food, and fellowship!



POCKET PAL MINISTRY UPDATE

As we come to the close of another year, our quilters have been busy in 2016 looking for bargains on material, designing, and sewing 185 quilts for foster children in Maricopa County.

With the help from the quilters at King of Glory Lutheran Church, Lord of Life Lutheran Church and Carol Nelles at Christ the Lord Lutheran Church, we have now donated, since May 2012, a total of 2,213 quilts to Child Protective Services. We greatly appreciate your contributions to help defray the expense of material for this ministry.



SANTA'S VISIT

Ascension had a special visit from Santa at the 10 AM worship service on Sunday, December 4 when Santa delivered the Children's Sermon on the meaning of giving gifts at Christmas. Click here for more pictures with Santa! <http://www.ascensionparadisevalley.org/gallery3/index.php/Special-Events/Saint-Nicholas-visits-to-Ascension/Santa-Visit-12-4-16#>



COFFEE CONNECTION



**FEATURING IN JANUARY –
ORGANIC WHOLE BEAN COFFEES –**

French Roast & Breakfast Blend

ORGANIC DRIP GRIND COFFEES -

French Roast, Breakfast Blend & Decaf

2nd and 3rd Sundays – January 8th and 15th



Ascension is "connecting" in ministry globally and locally by selling Fair Trade coffee. GLOBALLY, we are connecting with Lutheran World Relief Fair Trade Coffee Project. Your purchase



Lutheran World Relief
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT. LASTING PROMISE.

of Fair Trade coffee will help support small farmers to feed their families, educate their children, get medical care and improve their communities. LOCALLY, we are connecting with Mission of Mercy Mobile Medical Clinic. Mission of Mercy provides primary medical care through its six mobile clinics to the uninsured, working poor and those unable to qualify for state or federal medical plans. It is 100%

funded by private donations and is the only free mobile primary care clinic in Maricopa County. Three dollars of every coffee purchase will help to provide glucose test strips for diabetic patients (an essential need to help them manage their disease) – normally an out-of-pocket cost of \$100 per month. Through your coffee purchases, you will be supporting TWO ministries for the price of one! Check out the Fair Trade coffee display at the back of the sanctuary. Also available by order, with the same global and local impact: baking cocoa, Fair Trade Equal Exchange chocolate and all occasion artisan gift items.

For more information about LWR Fair Trade, click below:

http://lwr.org/site/c.dmJXKiOYJgl6G/b.7521971/k.C73D/Support_Fair_Trade.htm

NEWS FROM DUET



Make this a Fulfilling New Year

Isolated elders living in their own homes throughout our community have wonderful stories to share, and often yearn for visitors. Duet volunteers provide the gift of lifting spirits while also gaining the joy of meeting very special people. Ascension Lutheran encourages our members to volunteer through Duet, a vibrant interfaith network of care. Other service options include grocery shopping, offering rides to appointments and more. Call Duet at 602-274-5022 to register for a volunteer orientation set for Saturday, January 16, from 9:00 AM – 11:30 AM at Dove of the Desert Church, 7201 W Beardsley, Phoenix, 85308 OR Saturday, February 20, from 9:00 AM – 11:30 AM at La Casa De Cristo Church, 6300 E Bell Rd. Visit www.duetaz.org to see other dates. Members who no longer are able to drive are welcome to request free-of-charge volunteer assistance. Thank you!

ASCENSION RECYCLING FOR CASH

Donations of used **printer cartridges, cell phones, digital cameras, GPS devices, iPods** and **laptops** not only earns money for Ascension but keeps our environment clean.

Collect items from home, businesses, family, and friends and bring them in to the church office. Help teach our children how to become a hero and **Reduce, Reuse and Recycle.**



CHURCH DE-GREENING

Saturday, January 7 at 9:00 AM

At 9:00 AM on Saturday, **January 7**, we will gather to take down the Christmas decorations and place them in storage.

Lest you imagine that this is merely an occasion for hard labor, you should know that there will be good food, holiday drink, music, and (undoubtedly) much laughter!



WINTER POTLUCK

Sunday, January 15



Our winter potluck will be held on Sunday, **January 15** following worship. Bring an appetizer, salad, main dish, or dessert to share as we have fun and fellowship together!

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Sunday, January 29

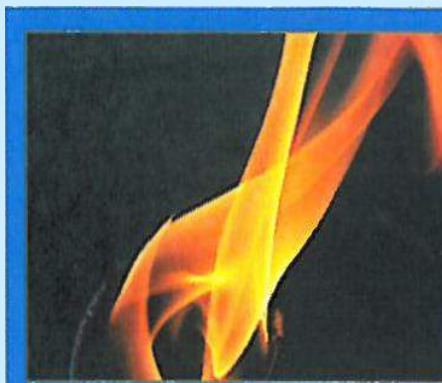
Congregational Meeting



The annual congregational meeting will be held on Sunday, **January 29** following worship.

RALLY IN THE VALLEY

It's time for Rally in the Valley 2017 the premier Lutheran Seniors Gathering in the ELCA. The theme is "**By Grace - Through Faith - A Gift of God — What Does This Mean Today?**" It all begins Monday morning, February 20, 2017 and continues until Tuesday afternoon February



By Grace - Through Faith

A Gift of God

What does this mean Today?

Rally in the Valley 2017

21, 2017, at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Phoenix. **The Rev. Dr. David Lose**, President of Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia and **Dr. Martha Stortz**, Bernhard M. Christensen Professor of Religion and Vocation, Augsburg College, Minneapolis. Joining them will be **Dr. Michael Burkhardt**, Cantor and Director of Musical Arts at Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Livonia, Michigan. Together they will weave the great themes of scripture and history as we celebrate the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation 1517-2017. We are inviting seniors to bring their Bibles and be prepared to engage in conversation, prayer, worship, and discernment. Registration forms and group rate information is available in the church office or online at www.rallyinthevalleyaz.org.

PHOENIX ARTISTS GUILD EXHIBIT

FINE ART EXHIBIT AT ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH IN PARADISE VALLEY

The Phoenix Artists Guild will present a wide array of beautiful original fine artwork in the sanctuary of Ascension Lutheran Church from January 22 through February 5. The Phoenix Artists Guild is a member of the Arizona Art Alliance; most of the guild members are juried members of the Alliance. The 68 Guild members display their original fine art works in exhibits, galleries, and other venues throughout the Valley. For more information about the Phoenix Artists Guild, visit www.phoenixartistsguild.com.

Ascension Lutheran Church is located at 7100 N. Mockingbird Lane in Paradise Valley, ½ mile north of Lincoln Drive and ½ mile west of Scottsdale Road. For more information about the location, call 480-948-6050 or visit ascensionparadisevalley.org.

Among the artists exhibiting: Dr. Carl Hoelle, Jeannette Sprague, and Elaine Waters.



FUN FRIDAY FOOD TRUCKS ARE BACK

Friday, February 10 from 5:30-8:30

Fun for the whole community!!! Bring your friends, family and neighbors!! Dine in our garden or playground. Grab a table or bring a picnic blanket. Kids will enjoy Angry Bird, Wii and Playground.

BYOB or drinks for purchase from the food trucks. Bistro on Wheels is back and we will have more new trucks for delicious dining!

Mark your calendars and don't miss it! Watch for more information soon!



FRY'S COMMUNITY REWARDS

If you shop at Fry's, be sure to enroll in Fry's Community Rewards program! By registering your Fry's V.I.P. Cards online at Fry's secure web site www.FrysCommunityRewards.com. Once registered, every time an enrolled participant shops at Fry's using his or her Fry's V.I.P. Card, Ascension will earn rewards. In addition, once a household member enrolls his or her card, all linked Fry's V.I.P. Cards within that household will begin earning funds for Ascension. If you would like assistance in enrolling your V.I.P. card, please call the church office.



How to Re-Enroll for the Fry's Community Rewards Program

*Go to www.FrysCommunityRewards.com

*Click on 'Sign-In.'

*Enter your email and password then click on 'sign in.'

*Click on your name (top right hand corner), under 'Account Summary' scroll down to Community Rewards.

*Under Find Your Organization: Enter **Ascension Lutheran Church** then select 'search'.

*Under Select Your Organization: Click on the circle next to your organization.

*Click on 'Enroll'

*If you have re-enrolled correctly, you should see a green box with 'Your enrollment in the Community Rewards Program has been updated. Thank you for participating!' You will also see the information listed under 'Community Rewards' on your Account Summary page.

GOODSEARCH

Use Goodsearch to search the web and earn money for Ascension with every search! The

GoodSearch toolbar makes it so easy to use– it also links your rebate to Ascension whenever you shop on the web at a participating retailer!

Click <http://www.goodsearch.com/toolbar/ascension-lutheran-church-paradise-valley> to download this quick utility.



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eSCRIP DINING REWARDS



Register your credit and debit cards with the church office! Ascension Lutheran Church earns corporate donations each and every time you shop at an eScrip merchant or dine at a Rewards Network restaurant– automatically!