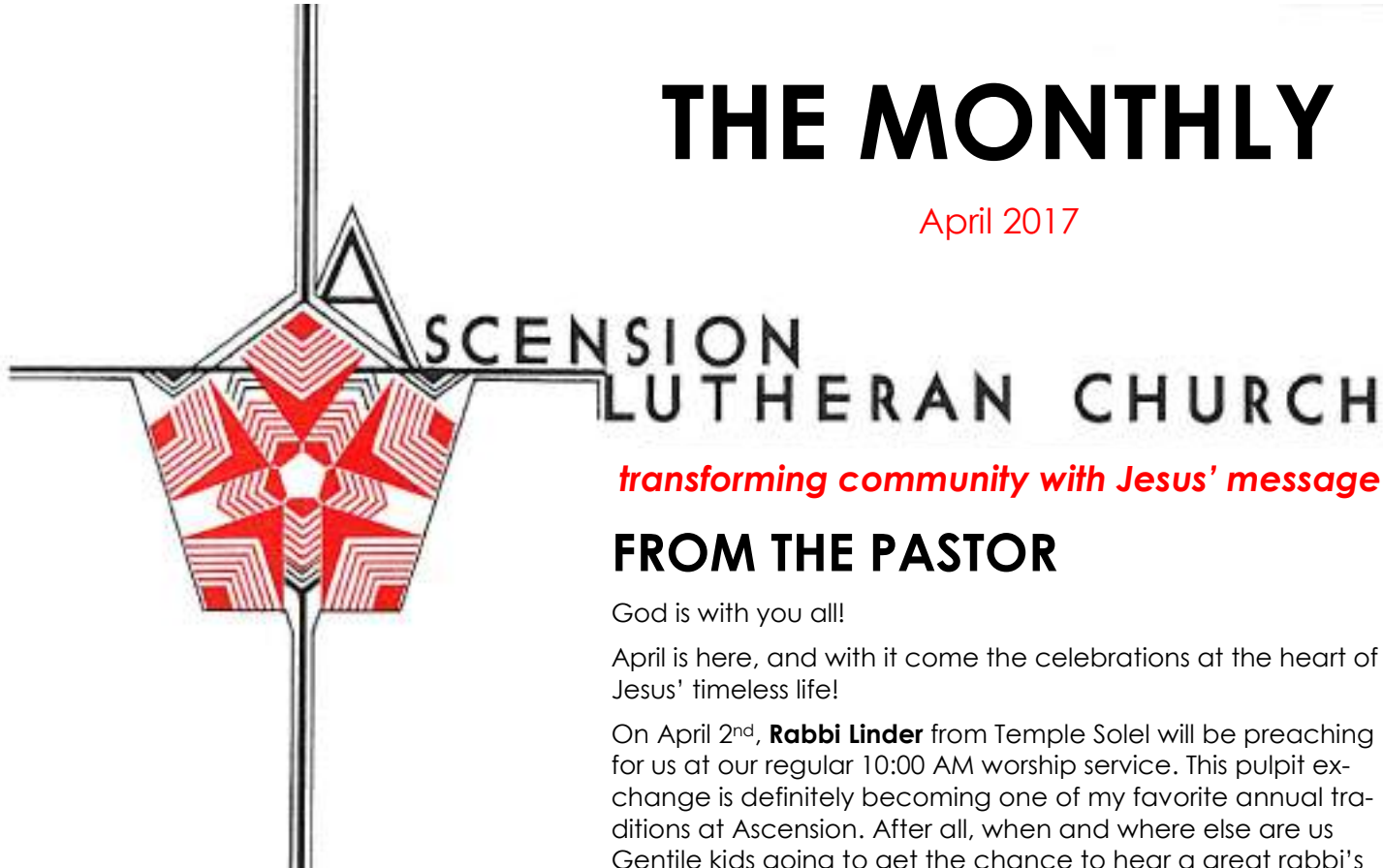


THE MONTHLY

April 2017



transforming community with Jesus' message

FROM THE PASTOR

God is with you all!

April is here, and with it come the celebrations at the heart of Jesus' timeless life!

On April 2nd, **Rabbi Linder** from Temple Solel will be preaching for us at our regular 10:00 AM worship service. This pulpit exchange is definitely becoming one of my favorite annual traditions at Ascension. After all, when and where else are us Gentile kids going to get the chance to hear a great rabbi's teaching? At that same service, we will be talking about **Arizona Gives Day**, which is an important opportunity for us to support Lutheran Social Services. Following worship that day, we will be gathering downstairs in the fellowship hall for our annual **winter residents send-off potluck**.

April 9th is **Palm Sunday** this year. Normally, our Ascension tradition is that Palm Sunday is a non-Communion Sunday. Because the service the week before with Rabbi Linder will be a non-Communion service, however, we *will* be celebrating Communion on Palm Sunday this time around. At 1:00 PM on Palm Sunday, you are also invited to gather at Temple Solel here in Paradise Valley for a **Gentile-friendly community Seder potluck**. Instructions on how to RSVP for the Seder and how to observe Kosher when preparing your potluck goodies will be included in the weekly announcements. And don't be intimidated—it's definitely Kosher for dummies!

Our services on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, April 13th and 14th respectively, will be at **7:30 PM**. One of the benefits to beginning these services at 7:30 PM instead of 7:00 PM is that those thirty minutes allow the choir the time they need to prepare for the services. There's nothing like evening worship with the choir!

There will be **two services on Easter Sunday**, April 16th. The 10:00 AM service will be our regular, festive celebration of Holy Communion with the choir. It will be followed at about 11:15 AM by an egg hunt in the garden for the children. The **Garden Service** will take place at **7:30 AM** in our beautiful memorial garden. The Garden Service is earlier than usual so that it can come to a conclusion before it gets too hot and too sunny. Been there, done that!

(Continued)

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

7100 N. Mockingbird Ln. ♦ Paradise Valley, AZ ♦ 85253
www.ascensionparadisevalley.org ♦ 480-948-6050



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

FROM THE PASTOR *(continued)*

Finally, let me remind you that the congregation **office will be closed** during the week that follows Easter. In case of pastoral emergency, please contact Deacon Jayne and/or me by cell phone or e-mail.

Thank you for the parts you will play in Ascension's observance of the high holy days of spring. We couldn't do it without you!

Ryan+

FROM THE DEACON'S STUDY

NEEDS AND UPDATE on our Syrian family from Ascension's collaboration partner, Erin Scharff of Temple Solel. Erin writes that she stopped by our family's case worker at Refugee Focus. She was told that Ahmed would love to have English lessons on Sundays, since he is working the other six days of the week and can't go to the lessons at the local church anymore.

Erin stopped by to talk to the ESL coordinator and picked up some materials to share with others who would help with lessons for him.

We are looking for a few others who could take some alternating Sundays to teach some English. **Please contact** Erin with availability and interest at: erin.scharff@gmail.com This would make a huge difference to this family. The quicker the English proficiency, the better—in many ways.

Ahmed is also working on getting his driver's license, but will likely need a translation service to help him with the test. There is a service in town that will do this. Is there anyone will to help sponsor him for that? Again, please contact Erin.

Here is a picture of the recent outing with Erin's son and our family



Please check out the website for purchasing Syrian sweets. Get in line early as they sell out quickly. The next sale is March 26 at St. Bernard's on 124 Street between Shea and Via Linda—10:00am-1:00 pm. Help refugees earn a little money and enjoy wonderful sweets. This article in the Az Republic tells the story.

<http://www.azcentral.com/story/news/local/phoenix/2017/02/17/syrian-sweets-exchange-gives-refugees-chance-thrive-phoenix/97875742/>

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN LEADERS' INITIATIVE



Did you know that more than 70% of the world's population living in poverty is women? The ELCA International Women's Initiative is trying to change that through education. Women from around the world gain access to education at a Lutheran college in the US through scholarships provided by the ELCA. Last November, a group of women from around the country were invited to meet in Austin with Bishop Eaton and some of the scholarship recipients to explore ways we could share the word about this exciting opportunity with our congregations and help even more women afford education. It was a blessing to hear these

women speak. They are working hard, far from home, not to escape personal poverty, but to equip themselves to return to their home countries to transform poverty into hope in their communities.

It takes \$20,000 to cover the costs for one year of college. What if 100 of us could give \$200? We could do it! We could make one year of college possible for a young woman and support her as she prepares to change her part of the world. If you'd like to be 1 of the 100 improving the odds for a better world, please look for the 100 to 1 ELCA info sheets on the Welcome table or contact Jen at smithres1@aol.com or 480 518 7241.

WINTER RESIDENT SEND-OFF POTLUCK LUNCHEON April 2

Join us as we say good-bye to our winter residents in a tradition here at Ascension— a send-off potluck picnic following worship on Sunday, April 2! Bring your favorite dish to share as we enjoy fellowship and food in this beautiful Arizona weather! Coffee and lemonade will be provided.



INVITATION TO INTERFAITH SEDER

The Seder meal will include members from Ascension Lutheran Church, the Islamic Center of the East Valley and our adopted refugee family Ahmad, Anoud and the kids joining Rabbi Linder, Todd Herzog, Alissa Zuchman and Temple Solel members.

Interfaith Seder

Sunday, April 9
1:00 pm – 2:30 pm
Dairy Potluck*



Passover is the Jewish holiday that celebrates our freedom. Along with a ritual meal, we tell each other the dramatic story of our slavery in Egypt and our escape to become a people.

We would love to share this tradition with our friends in the Christian and Muslim communities at an Interfaith Seder.

* Passover Potluck Instructions:

1. We don't mix meat and dairy at the synagogue we are asking for dairy (eggs and fish are OK) or vegetarian food only.
2. No food made with regular flour

Please bring one of the following, enough to feed 10 people:

Appetizer

Salad- including fruit, egg, tuna salads

Dessert- this one is tricky, remember no flour

Temple Solel

6805 E. McDonald Drive, Paradise Valley, Arizona 85253

Please RSVP to Lauren Kaiser lkaiser@templesolel.org or 480-991-7414 ext. 121

APRIL SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

Hi Ascension Kids and Families,

The Sunday school had a wonderful March learning about Jesus being the Light of the World and how we, as young disciples, are called to be His light to others.

April 2nd will be the 4th Sunday of the Lenten Season. This month, Sunday school will focus on the amazing miracles and trials of Jesus leading up to his death and resurrection. On Easter Sunday, April 16th, we will celebrate Jesus Resurrection with an "Easter Egg Hunt" following the 10:00 a.m. service. So come and join us as we will listen to some wondrous Bible stories and learn about how we can trust in Jesus, 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 Barks

APRIL Themes:

April 2 – That's What Friends Are For! - The Raising of Lazarus

April 9– Lay your Cloak Down before Him – Palm Sunday

April 16 – EASTER SUNDAY & CHILDREN'S "EASTER EGG HUNT"

April 23– Check the Roll – Doubting Thomas



HOLY WEEK



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

PALM SUNDAY April 9, 2017

10:00 a.m. Traditional Worship

MAUNDY THURSDAY April 13, 2017

7:30 p.m. Worship and Stripping of the Altar

GOOD FRIDAY April 14, 2017

7:30 p.m. Traditional Worship

EASTER SUNDAY April 16, 2017

7:30 AM Traditional Worship in the garden

10:00 AM Family Worship in the sanctuary

11:15 AM Easter Egg Hunt in the garden

Alleluia!
HE IS ALIVE!

COME JOIN US FOR ASCENSION'S ANNUAL

EASTER EGG HUNT

**EASTER MORNING, APRIL 16, 2017
FOLLOWING THE 10:00 A.M. SERVICE**

**ALL ASCENSION CHILDREN,
VISITORS AND FRIENDS
ARE WELCOME!**



FUN FRIDAY FOOD TRUCK NIGHT RETURNS

Friday, April 7 from 5:30-8:00

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 game, Wii and the playground. BYOB or purchase drinks from the food trucks. Mark your calendars and don't miss it!



COFFEE CONNECTION



FEATURING IN APRIL—

ORGANIC DARK CHOCOLATE EASTER EGGS

ORGANIC WHOLE BEAN COFFEES – Fr. Roast & Breakfast Blend

ORGANIC DRIP GRIND COFFEES - Fr. Roast, Breakfast Blend & Decaf

1st and 2nd Sundays - April 2nd and 9th



Remember special people in your life for Easter with festively boxed ORGANIC DARK CHOCOLATE EASTER EGGS and EASTER GIFT BAGS. Also available, packaged organic coffees. Fair Trade sales help support LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF COFFEE AND CHOCOLATE PROJECT farmers globally and \$3 of every purchase helps support LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES AGING AND DISABILITY SERVICES locally. GIFT BAG sales help support Ascension's POCKET PAL ministry for AZ foster care children. Stop by the display at the

back of the sanctuary on April 2nd and 9th to make your purchase(s).

For more information about LWR Fair Trade, click

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



Lutheran World Relief
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT. LASTING PROMISE.



Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest



NEWS FROM DUET



Help Duet Win – and Enjoy an Open House

Duet is one of four finalists for the IMPACTful Nonprofit Award! Please help our shared cause win so that free-of-charge health and aging services will increase. Vote by April 10th at this link: [help Duet win](#). Thank you! Also – we're invited to Duet's AZ Gives Day Open House on April 4th from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Enjoy food, fun and a chance to mingle with Kathy and Bill Tabinsky (challenge gift donors), Tom Leander (sports broadcaster), and Carmela Ramirez (musician). Duet's office is located at Church of the Beatitudes, 555 W Glendale Ave, Phoenix, 85021. All who stop by and donate will receive a Duet t-shirt and AZ Gives Day sticker.

Fast Forward... Then Look Back

Imagine yourself 10 years into the future. As your future self, imagine yourself looking back to the previous decade. You can recall happy visits with an isolated elder, or perhaps fulfilling times grocery shopping with a middle-age person who can no longer see. You realize that your service as a Duet volunteer has led to some of the most enriching times of your life. Now – come back to the present. Please make these "memories" a reality by becoming a Duet volunteer! Call 602-274-5022 or visit www.duetaz.org to RSVP for an upcoming volunteer orientation or to request help. Thank you!

We're Invited to Duet Cabaret

Duet, our congregation's partner in service, presents Duet Cabaret on Sunday, April 30th at 1:30 pm at Montelucia Resort & Spa - Omni. Enjoy a delicious meal, silent and live auctions, the fun music of the Swingtips, plus dancing for those who wish. Proceeds will support Duet's free-of-charge health and aging services. Make your reservations at www.duetaz.org or 602-274-5022. Thank you!

MOUNT OF OLIVES FOOD CLOSET NEEDS

Canned vegetables

Canned cranberry sauce

Boxes of stuffing mix (In preparation for the annual Meatsgiving event)

Pop top cans of chunky soup and 15 oz jars of peanut butter

Checks and cash may be placed in the offering plate marked for Mount of Olives. Any food items and diapers can be left at the church in the manger at any time. Many thanks for your participation in this very important ministry. Questions? Call Jan Peterson 480-659-7328.



PART-TIME POSITION AVAILABLE

Ascension has a position available for a part-time Assistant Administrator. The assistant administrator will provide redundancy in knowledge and execution of office functions, finance, facility operations, and campus maintenance. The assistant administrator helps to create an open, accepting atmosphere for all who interact with the office; works closely with members to keep lines of communication open between office and congregation; teams with Parish Administrator to help ensure situations and tasks are handled promptly and effectively. A complete job description is available by request.

Weekly schedule: Part-time; 20 hours per week, flexible shifts Monday through Friday between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. (five 4-hour shifts or four 5-hour shifts.) Two weeks unpaid vacation is available annually.

Compensation: Starting wage is \$16.00 - \$18.00 hourly, depending on experience. (\$16,000 to \$18,000 annually).

Please send applications and/or resumes to ascensionoffice@aol.com. Applications will be accepted until April 15, 2017.

POCKET PAL MINISTRY

Ascension's quilting ladies continue to be busy beavers sewing quilts for the Foster Children in Maricopa County and so have Donna and Cathy Graff with crocheting those beautiful colorful baby afghans. Jon Loomis, our representative for Arizona Department of Child Safety, picked up 48 quilts and 27 afghans in February. This brings ALC Pocket Pal Ministry donation to 795 quilts and 35 afghans. In total with the four other church groups, we have donated 2,376 quilts since 2012. The quilts are truly a comfort and blessing for the children who are in such dire need of love.

If you or you know of anyone who owns a sewing machine and enjoys hearing the humming sound of the needle and thread creating a piece of art and would be interested in joining the Pocket Pal Ministry, you can come see what these women are doing on Thursdays from about 11 am to 2 pm or drop a note in the offering plate with your name and phone number and one of the quilters will contact you. The quilts are prepared for sewing on Thursdays and taken home to be sewn.

Many THANKS to the people who have helped this ministry financially, your contributions are much appreciated.



SERVING BREAKFAST TO THE HUNGRY

On the first and second Sundays of each month, we partner with Grace Lutheran and New Covenant Lutheran to help serve breakfast to 300-400 homeless people in downtown Phoenix at Grace Lutheran Church. Email deandurkee@cox.net to join us. You will need to arrive at Grace by 6:15 AM; we are finished by 8:30 AM in time to come to worship at Ascension. Training will be provided. All ages from tweens to adults are encouraged take part in this needed mission in our own back yard.



BISHOP TALMAGE RESIGNS



Grand Canyon Synod Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

Office of the Bishop
Stephen S. Talmage

March 15, 2017

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

"It is the Lord who goes before you. The Lord will be with you; the Lord will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed." Deuteronomy 31:8

On Sunday, March 12, 2017 the members of Love of Christ Lutheran Church, Mesa, AZ voted to extend me the call to serve as their next Sr. Pastor. After a period of prayer and discernment I am accepting this new call and will be resigning my call as bishop of the Grand Canyon Synod effective July 31, 2017. As communicated in my earlier letter to leaders in the synod, the Synod Council agreed to request an interim bishop be appointed by our Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton. Anticipating this pending change and seeking someone who has the respect and knowledge of our synod, Bishop Eaton is appointing the Rev. Dr. Lowell Almen as interim bishop to begin serving after I leave this office. I am confident that his vast experience as a leader in the ELCA and overseeing numerous bishop elections, he will be a tremendous asset to our Council, our Conference Deans, and our synod staff as preparations are made to elect a new bishop at the Synod Assembly in 2018.

I am thankful for the trust put in me, and the privilege to serve as bishop of the Grand Canyon Synod. I have been with many of you in times of celebration, times of sorrow, and times of significant change. Throughout this journey, I have held on to the verse above with great confidence that it is the Lord who called me into this office, and now is calling me to a new opportunity to use my gifts to accompany and strengthen fellow disciples of Jesus. I ask for your prayers for all who are impacted by this change. I ask for your participation in the process that will be forthcoming that will lead to God providing a new bishop.

With Much Gratitude,

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.



AMAZON SMILE REWARDS

Please support Ascension when you shop Amazon! Amazon Smile is the same Amazon you know; same products, same prices,

same service. Amazon Smile will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible Amazon Smile purchases to Ascension Lutheran Church whenever you shop on Amazon Smile. Support Ascension by starting your shopping at:

<http://smile.amazon.com/ch/86-0148330>



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!