

THE MONTHLY

May 2017



transforming community with Jesus' message

FROM THE PASTOR

God is with you all!

Alleluia! Christ is risen, my friends!

Let me begin by saying **thank you!** Thank you for the time and energy you invested in Ascension's observance of Holy Week and Easter. Thank you to our administrator, Tom, and our office volunteers, Carol and Tina, for your hard work and attention to detail in preparing us for worship. Thank you to our choirmaster, Dr. Samuel, to our organist, Dale, and to our choir for adding so much beauty to our proclamation of the good news. Thank you to Karen Brown and her Easter bunnies for helping us to pull off our annual egg hunt. And thank you to all of you for participating the way you did and for inviting people to be a part of our Resurrection celebration.

I'd like to take some space here to bring you all up to date on the results of our **special congregational meeting** on Sunday, March 26.

You will remember that I had called the meeting in order for the congregation to give our Council some sense of the congregation's preference for the long-term stewardship of our facility and property. Last fall, **three options** were presented to the congregation. The first option was to make an initial investment of \$1 million in our current facility. The second option was to raise \$2 million to replace our facility with a new, right-sized facility on our property. The third option was to sell our property and build a new, right-sized facility in a new location. Over the course of the fall and winter, we hosted several formal listening posts so that members could weigh the options. We also had many less formal conversations.

At the meeting, I asked folks to rank the three options. 50 of the voting members present indicated that they preferred option one. 14 of the voting members preferred option two. 26 voting members preferred option three. When we looked at what the second choice was among the folks who had selected option two, option one got an additional 5 votes and option three got an additional 9 votes. That means that option one was the first or second choice of more than **60% of the voting members** present.

In accordance with the sense of our voting members, our Council will be assembling a special **task force** to oversee the execution of option one. As I mentioned at the meeting, if a significant, specific opportunity for one of the other options comes our way, then the congregation will still get the chance to consider that offer all on its own.

(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

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**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

FROM THE PASTOR *(continued)*

On a personal note, let me thank all of you for your willingness to have this conversation over the last three years. When I came to Ascension almost nine years ago, my job was to lead the congregation in discerning a configuration for mission that would give our ministry the best chance to thrive in the future. The majority of the voting members present at the meeting decisively indicated that they see our current facility as part of that configuration to thrive. I know God will guide us as we move forward in the adventure of transforming our community with Jesus' message!

Ryan+

FROM THE DEACON'S STUDY

STANDING FOR WELCOME: At the beginning of April, Connie Phillips (CEO, Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest) and Deacon Jayne went to the U.S. Capitol to visit our congress to support welcoming and compassionate refugee policies. We attended a Lutheran prayer breakfast in the famous Kennedy Caucus Room and met with the staffers of Senator McCain, Senator Flake, Representative Biggs and Representative Franks. Attending this Lutheran Hill visit were 90 Lutheran Bishops and our Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton.



Connie Phillips, Bishop Stephen Talmage, and Deacon Jayne Baker



Connie Phillips, Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, and Deacon Jayne Baker



I was honored to accompany Rabbi John Linder and six other members of Temple Solel to the **Kino Border Initiative** in Nogales, Mexico—a Jesuit led center of refuge and safety for deportees from the United States. Food, clothing, medical care and temporary shelter are provided for those dropped into Nogales by the U.S. Border Patrol. I was witness to the living Jesus among all who were present as bleeding feet were washed, wounds were bandaged, the horribly despondent were supported and the hungry were fed.

Of the many items needed for the people served at the Kino Boarder initiative, backpacks are of paramount so that the detainees can have something in which to carry their belongings that don't identify themselves as people deported from the U.S. (Carrying the clear plastic bags they are given at the detention centers put them at high risk as they are often held for ransom by the roaming gangs in Nogales)

I will be asking for **donations** of solid colored backpacks—dark blue or black in the coming weeks. I will be certain to get them where they are needed.



The first **Interfaith Seder** was held April 9 at Temple Solel with a good attendance from Ascension. A luncheon consisting of a huge table of kosher dishes and a separate dessert table was enjoyed by all—(especially the desserts!) We are so grateful for the partnership of Solel, as



they continue to bring diverse faith traditions together for greater understanding.

MAY SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

Hi Ascension Kids and Families,

On Easter Sunday, April 16th, we had a wonderful time celebrating Jesus' Resurrection with an "Easter Egg Hunt" following the 10:00 a.m. service. Thanks to everyone that participated and/or helped in making this a joyous Easter event for our children.

It is hard to believe that we are already beginning May and our fifth month of Sunday school for 2017. This month we will be learning about the promises of Jesus and how much he loves us.

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

MAY Themes:

May 7 – He Knows My Name - The Good Shepherd

May 14– Finding the Way – God's House (Mother's Day)

May 21 –The Comforter- Promise of the Holy Spirit (last Sunday school)

*Sunday School will resume again in August.
Have a wonderful summer!



CAROLYN EYNON SINGERS

Sunday, May 7 at 3:00 pm

The Carolyn Eynon Singers present a concert featuring; "MUSICAL LANDSCAPES" on Sunday, May 7 at 3:00 pm in the Sanctuary.

All are invited to hear music by North American composers from Broadway, to newly composed music by Scottsdale composer, Jill Andrea Higgins, as well as gospel, spiritual, and folk accompanied by string quartet.

- Composers featured are; Randall Stroope, Ola Gjeilo, Jon Quick, Wildhorn, Ticheli, Craig Hella Johnson, and Luboff.
- We are looking forward to hosting a beautiful visual exhibit by Cyndy Carstens, our local Old Town gallery of her Arizona Landscapes in the foyer.
- Light refreshments will follow.
- CDs available at intermission.
- Carolyn Eynon Singers are singing at Carnegie Hall on June 16, 2017

fix; www.carolyneynonsingers.com or call Pat Stump at 480-948-7585

Adult \$15, at door \$18; Student; \$10, 18 and under



VALLEY CHAMBER CHORALE CONCERTS

The Valley Chamber Chorale, conducted by Dr. Christopher Samuel, will present concerts on the following dates: Saturday, May 6 at 2.45 p.m. at Lord of Life Lutheran Church, 13724 Meeker Blvd Sun City West; and Sunday, May 7 at 4 p.m. at First United Methodist Church, 5510 North Central Ave, Phoenix.

The program will include works by: Malcolm Archer, Andriano Banchieri, Thomas Campion, Alfred Fedak, Blake Henson, Jacob Gallus, Warren Martin, Francis Pilkington, and Antonion Salieri. The group, which is celebrating its 29th season, will offer the programs free of charge. However, free-will donations will be cheerfully accepted. Further information about the Chorale and its mission in the wider Valley may be found at: www.valleychamberchorale.com.

COFFEE CONNECTION



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

Fr. Roast & Breakfast Blend

ORGANIC DRIP GRIND COFFEES -

Fr. Roast, Breakfast Blend & Decaf

1st Sunday only – MAY 7th



Fair Trade sales help support LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF COFFEE PROJECT farmers globally and \$3 of every purchase helps support LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES AGING AND DISABILITY SERVICES locally. . Stop by the display at the back of the sanctuary on MAY 7th to make your purchase(s)



Lutheran World Relief
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT. LASTING PROMISE.



For more information about LWR Fair Trade, click

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

NEWS FROM DUET



We are delighted that Duet was selected to receive the IMPACTful Nonprofit Award by the Greater Phoenix Chamber of Commerce. Duet's Executive Director, Elizabeth Banta offered this note of thanks: "We are tremendously grateful to Ascension Lutheran Church and all partners in service. Our interfaith nonprofit exists due to caring congregations, volunteers and donors. Together we ARE Duet – a vibrant network of care. We hope you feel proud that our shared cause has been recognized for providing compassionate, free services to isolated elders, family caregivers, grandparents raising grandchildren, and congregational health programs. Thank you for bringing help and hope to people in need!"

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.



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.**



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 May 15, 2017.

SUMMER ART CAMP

In June and July Ascension Lutheran Church is hosting exciting summer camps for kids 3-13 years old. Children will be grouped with similar ages. Learning about international countries, kids will make and eat delicious foods such as pastas, mud pie, pizzas, tacos, pies, cookies, breads, and cakes. They will also create art projects like bird houses, paintings, sculpture, and jewelry.

Instructor Jana Peterson received her Master's Degree in Art Education at Arizona State University and is a professional artist and certified art teacher who has taught elementary, high school, and college students for 20 years.

Classes will run from 9:00 AM-12:00 PM at Ascension Lutheran Church June 5-9, June 12-16, June 19-23, June 26-June 30, July 3-7, July 10-14, and July 17-21. Five art and cooking classes cost \$150. Sign up for one or more weeks!

For more information please call Jana Peterson at 480-326-2927.



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.



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!