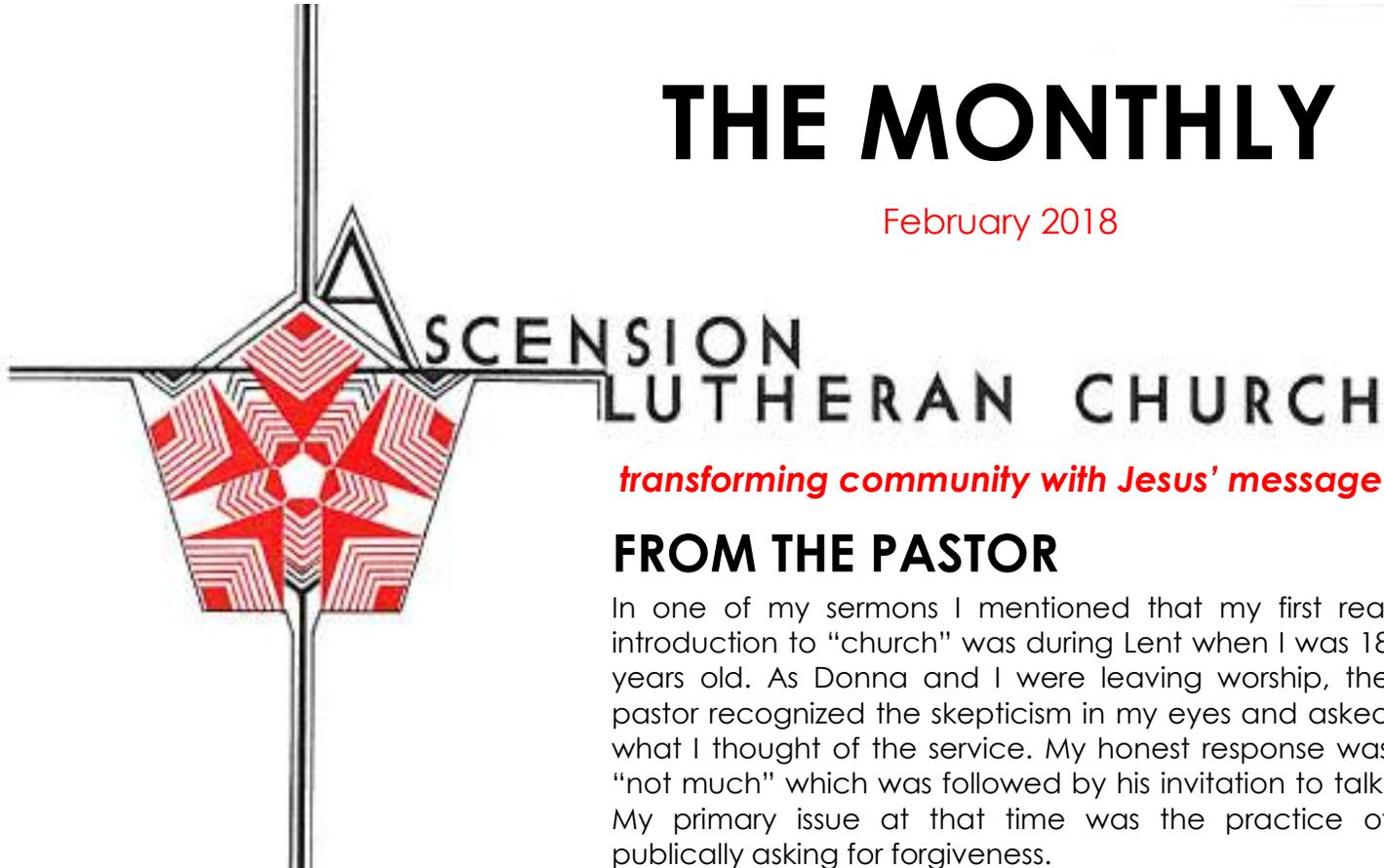


THE MONTHLY

February 2018



transforming community with Jesus' message

FROM THE PASTOR

In one of my sermons I mentioned that my first real introduction to "church" was during Lent when I was 18 years old. As Donna and I were leaving worship, the pastor recognized the skepticism in my eyes and asked what I thought of the service. My honest response was "not much" which was followed by his invitation to talk. My primary issue at that time was the practice of publically asking for forgiveness.

Recognizing God's forgiveness is an integral part of our journey through life. Sometimes we forget to ask, sometimes we don't think we deserve it, and sometimes we question its real-life impact. Yet, God keeps on forgiving and we keep on trying to love ourselves and our fellow sojourners. The Spirit of God is alive in us regardless of our human struggles and keeps pulling us back into a spirit of love and service.

The Season of Lent is that powerful time when our focus zeros in our human condition and the need for God and for each other. Beginning with Ash Wednesday, we will all gather for a simple meal and worship service.

The point of coming together for a **soup supper** in Lent is to remind us that we are in community with each other and the simplicity is an encouragement to clear the clutter out of our heads and hearts and remember that we are chosen by God to love and forgive.

The worship on Ash Wednesday will be traditional. The following five Wednesdays will introduce the congregation to the **Prayer Around the Cross**. These 30-minute liturgies, held in our darkened sanctuary, include scripture and poetry, simple sung chants and songs, the lighting of candles and opportunities for quiet reflection— a respite in our busy lives.

Please open yourself to these powerful opportunities and journey through this season with heart-felt gratitude and a spirit of forgiveness.

Pastor Paul

Rev. Lowell G. Almen
Interim bishop

Rev. Paul L. Campbell
Interim pastor

Thomas Mueller
administrator

Mary Norris
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.

FEBRUARY SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

Hi Ascension Kids and Families,

The Sunday school staff was very excited to see our children's program off to such a great start in January. We are so happy that families are pleased with the format, and we are looking forward to another wonderful year serving and growing the children's ministry here at Ascension.

In February, Sunday school will continue with the gospel stories of the Epiphany season, and end the month with the beginning of the Lenten season. So come and join us as we will listen to some wondrous Bible stories and learn about how we can 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

February Themes:

February 5 – Let Your Light Shine

February 12– Forgiving and Forgiven

February 19 –Love Your Enemies

February 26– On the Mountain Top with Jesus



PHOENIX ARTISTS GUILD EXHIBIT

FINE ART EXHIBIT AT ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH IN PARADISE VALLEY

The Phoenix Artists Guild is presenting a wide array of beautiful original fine artwork in the sanctuary of Ascension Lutheran Church through February 4. 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.

Among the artists exhibiting: Jo Allebach, Cynthia Chambers, and John Mansour.



FUN FRIDAY FOOD TRUCKS ARE BACK

Friday, February 9 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. We will feature two trucks for delicious dining!

Bistro on Wheels and United Lunchadores Return



Chef Wade's **Bistro on Wheels** focuses on French- and American-style bistro cuisine in an 18-foot-long trailer. The food from this truck only uses Arizona-grown produce, meats and cheeses. Try the truck's truffle and mushroom entree, black forest ham and brie or even its apple beignets dessert. New this year are mac and cheese to please!

United Lunchadores

Funky food truck with creative quesadillas and street tacos, plus fruit juices served in mason jar!

Call Suzanne Farmer at (480)948-4033 if you have questions and invite your friends..... kids will have a great time!



MOUNT OF OLIVES NEWS

The "Food Closet" at Mount of Olives Lutheran Church in Phoenix has helped to feed over 20,000 people yearly. Their shelves are filled through an affiliation with several local food banks, donations from friends and members of Ascension, other churches, and their Thrift Store. Ascension is collecting items that may be placed in the manger located in the narthex. List of items include: 16 oz. peanut butter, pop top cans of chunky soup, pop top cans of vegetables and saltine crackers. Call Jan Peterson for more information at 480-659-7328

HELP FOR THE HUNGRY



ASH WEDNESDAY February 14

Join us for a Soup Supper at 5:30 pm
followed by worship at 6:00 pm



LENTEN MID-WEEK WORSHIP

Wednesday mid-week worship will include a soup supper, which reminds us that the Season of Lent is a more simple time that allows the heart and head to be centered on God's love.

A blend of meditative contemporary and traditional worship and music will enrich and deepen your Lenten journey.

Wednesdays

February 21, 28, March 7, 14, 21

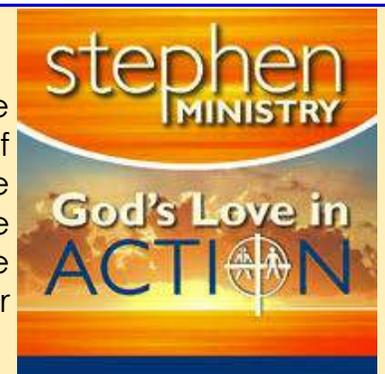
5:30 pm Soup Supper

6:00 pm Worship



STEPHEN MINISTRY

Are you, a friend or family member going through a "rough spot" on the road of life? Are you feeling lost, lonely, or overwhelmed and in need of a good Christian friend to walk along beside you? The good news is, we here at Ascension are blessed with five Stephen Ministers, who are trained and willing to share their love of Christ. These members will be discreet, confidential and caring. Please call Pastor Paul and he will pair you with the perfect Stephen Minister.



FINANCE UPDATE

2018 Budget Income	\$495,000.
YTD Actual Undesignated	\$54,799.
YTD Actual	\$66,388.
Over (Short)	\$11,589
	2.3% over goal

BOX TOPS FOR EDUCATION PROGRAM



Although the Campbell's Soup Label Program has been discontinued, the "Box Tops for Education" program from General Mills is still valid, so please continue to bring those in and place them in the large BoxTops can on the



Welcome Table! They continue to provide valuable resources for the Navajo Evangelical Lutheran Mission and School.

NEWS FROM DUET



Open House

Our congregation is part of Duet - a nonprofit that offers a wide range of free-of-charge help for homebound adults, family caregivers, faith communities and grandparents raising grandchildren. Duet has recently moved to a brand new office space located at 10000 North 31st Avenue, Suite D200, Phoenix, AZ 85051. An open house and ribbon cutting ceremony at Duet's new office is being planned for March 1, 2018, at 3:00-6:00 p.m. Duet invites you to stop in to see their new space that showcases all of the collaborative and caring services they offer. Please RSVP by calling (602) 274-5022.

Congregational Health Free Informational Session

Health and wellness are key in helping congregations flourish. Duet is a resource for faith communities and nurses who want to create health programs that help the "whole person" – in mind, body, and spirit. If you want to explore how to start and maintain a nurse or lay led congregational health program, join Duet at one of these FREE informational sessions:

Tuesday, February 13

10:00-11:30 a.m.

Duet

10000 N. 31st Avenue, Ste. D200

Phoenix, AZ 85051

Thursday, February 15

4:30-6:00 p.m.

Madison Baptist church

6202 N. 12th Street

Phoenix, AZ 85014

Please RSVP: Email Lori at applebyhoke@duetaz.org indicating your name, contact information, and which session you will attend. Call (602) 274-5022 x 132 for additional information or visit www.duetaz.org to learn more.

Unlock Your Giving Heart-Volunteers Needed

Is your giving heart looking for a way to serve? Duet shows love to the community through the efforts of hundreds of individuals that volunteer their time. Please consider becoming a Duet volunteer. You will be matched with an isolated elder or adult with disabilities who longs for a visitor, or become a volunteer to help with grocery shopping or another simple task. Your servant heart can make a difference! Call (602) 274-5022 or visit www.duetaz.org to RSVP for an upcoming volunteer orientation or to request help. Thank you!

CHURCH CLEAN UP DAY



Mark your calendars for Sunday, March 18. It's time to clean up decades of dust and grime and throw away a dumpster of "stuff." Everything we can haul to the dumpster has been marked with pink tape. Simultaneously, we need to vacuum, dust, sweep, and generally clean up the entire church. So, on March 18, starting at 12:30, we need a small army of members to help with this chore.

The idea is to show up at 12:30 (time to go home and put on some work clothes), come back to the church, grab a bite of lunch (probably Pizza) and get started. We need members to bring vacuum cleaners with hose attachments, ShopVacs, brooms, dustpans, old rags and anything else suitable for cleaning floors, chairs, tables and all other kinds of items throughout the church. The big challenge is the items to throw away. Many are bulky and are either downstairs or upstairs and must be hauled to the dumpster. We therefore need members who can pick up and carry heavier items. It is really time to "spiff" up the church. Please sign up to help on the sign up sheet in the narthex.

P.S. If you see an item with a strip of pink tape on it, don't feel you have to get started early cleaning the church. PLEASE DO NOT remove any pink tape on an item. There is also green tape on items marked to take to Goodwill so please do not remove green tape either.

ASCENSION RECYCLING FOR CASH

Donations of used **printer cartridges** and **cell phones** not only earns money for Ascension but also 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.**



FRY'S COMMUNITY REWARDS

If you shop at Fry's, be sure to enroll in Fry's Community Rewards program! Register 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!