

THE MONTHLY

March 2018



transforming community with Jesus' message

FROM THE PASTOR

Lenten Greetings to you all!

You have heard me preach about focusing on God's Good News and God's love for all Creation, including you and me. The season of Lent is a perfect time to focus our thoughts, reflections and actions on God's call to love and serve others.

The Wednesday "Prayer Around the Cross" gives us time to pause and reflect on our journeys in the presence of the candles burning on the cross... a powerful visual reminder that the light of love shines bright, especially in the darkness.

There is currently an abundance of dark, negative energy in our nation and, in fact the world. The light that shines from God's love working through us is the positive force that continues to help us focus on our vocation... the call from God to love ourselves and others in spite of the evil and temptations that surround us daily.

Lent is a powerful time to reflect on our human sinful tendencies of selfishness, greed and the hardness of hearts. Lent is also the time to change directions (repent) and open our hearts because we know that each of us can celebrate what Martin Luther calls our daily baptism. Our daily reminder that God is with us, washing us clean and empowering us to live joyfully and with loving hearts.

The loving people of Ascension regularly serve breakfasts, help build houses, hand bags of food to the hungry on street corners, visit the sick and the lonely, sew quilts and donate back packs for foster children, and the list goes on. What more is God calling us to do and to be?

God's peace be with you all...

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

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



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

MARCH SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

Hi Ascension Kids and Families,

The Sunday school had a wonderful month in February learning about God's Love and how we, as young disciples, are to share this love with others.

During the month of March, will be journeying through the Lenten season and focusing on the amazing miracles and trials of Jesus' ministry. Our lessons will correlate with the gospel reading that will be read in Church and help children understand the significance of the events leading up to Easter.

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

MARCH Themes:

March 4 – Cleaning House

March 11– Measuring God's Love

March 18 –the Power of His Love

March 25– King for a Day – Palm Sunday

****Please mark your calendars for:**

SUNDAY, APRIL 15, 2018, at 11:00 a.m.

“CONFIRMATION INFORMATIONAL MEETING”



HIKE FOR THE HOMELESS Saturday, March 3, 2018 at 8:00 a.m.

Two locations: Fountain Hills and Glendale. Donate and/or register at HikefortheHomeless.org. Our team name is: Ascension Lutheran Paradise Valley. If you do not see our TEAM name on the drop-down menu, please enter it under "OTHER". Thank you for your giving heart for others!!

SHREDDING EVENT Wednesday, March 7 from 3:00—5:00 p.m.



Free to the community in Ascension's south lot. Freewill donations will support the "Flush Fund."

YES: Confidential Paper
Paper Clips
Paper products
Rubber Bands
File Folders
Staples
Cds/Dvds
Credit cards/bank card/ID cards

NO: Batteries
Plastic
Cardboard
General Waste
Xray Film (can be shred but has to be separate) (Add'l charge)
Hard Drives (can be shred but have to be separate; add'l charge \$10/each, removed from the computer)
Floppy Disks (can be shred but has to be separate)
3 Ring Binders
Ink Cartridges
Medical Waste
Binders Clips

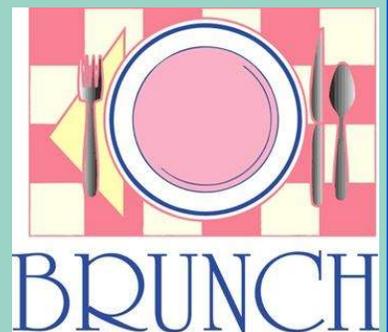
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Financial for Lutherans



BRUNCH FOR VISITORS AND GUESTS

Sunday, March 11 in fellowship hall immediately following the 10 A.M. worship service! This is your chance to learn more about Ascension and meet members of the Ascension Family. We look forward to spending time with you! RSVP REQUESTED BY **MARCH 4** Call or text Dawn Jeffers 480-824-8207 to reserve your seat at the table

For those interested, we will receive new members into the Ascension Family during worship on **Palm Sunday, March 25.**



MEET YOUR CHURCH COUNCIL



CJ Alseike joined the church in April of 2014 when she and David moved from Wichita, KS to be with David's folks; Daryl & Marga Alseike. CJ has always been active with her church and her community. Upon arriving in Phoenix, CJ and David created an outreach program for the Homeless providing food and clothing to those in need. They also participate in feeding the homeless serving breakfast with the partnership at Grace Lutheran Church, and also distribute food and clothing through Interfaith Cooperative Ministries (ICM). CJ is musically inclined and enjoys singing in the choir. CJ is the council contact for the Outreach ministry team.



Karen Brown is a native Arizonan. She has belonged to the Ascension for 15 years along with her husband Paul, three adult children, and her Sophie. Karen has served on church council for most of her years at Ascension, and is the current Vice President of Church Council. She has served in the areas of Outreach (Mount of Olives Lutheran Church Food Closet and Helping Hands for Hopeful Hearts), Hospitality, and Oktoberfest. Karen is the council contact for the Fellowship ministry team.



Jim Geldien has been a Lutheran all his life, except for the seven years they attended Valley Presbyterian. The good news is, we brought with us some wonderful Presbyterians to Ascension upon our return. Mark Ficklin and Jim feel blessed to be part of such a great congregation. The future will be even brighter at our beloved church. Jim is the council contact for the Caring ministry team.



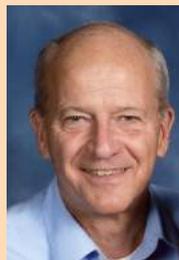
Dawn Jeffers has been attending Ascension for eight years. She is the founder and organizer of Ascension Boomer Women. You may see her at the Welcome Desk, as an Assisting Minister or with the newly formed Evangelism Ministry Team. She was a member of the Transition Team and now sits as your Council President. She works as a Sales Manager for WorldatWork in Scottsdale. She loves to golf, hike and spend time with her daughter Erin who is also a member of Ascension. Dawn is the council contact for the Property ministry team.



Mary Newton arrived in Phoenix from Michigan in 2005. She brings experience to Ascension in the area of service as a leader in Stephen Ministry, a commissioned Deacon. She worked on Ascension's audit committee in 2017 and looks forward to serving the congregation on the church council. Mary is the council contact for the Evangelism ministry team.



Jan Peterson is a life-long Lutheran who spent her life in Minnesota. After her husband Gordie retired they moved to Arizona and have been members of Ascension Church family for the past several years. Jan is Ascension's liaison for the Mount of Olives Food Pantry and she and Gordie are active in their food drives. Jan is the council contact for the Education ministry team.



Floyd Shewmake is originally from the Chicago area. After completing medical school and post-graduate training at Rush University in Chicago he moved to Kenosha, WI. There he established a medical practice specializing in gastroenterology and internal medicine. After 25 years he retired from seeing patients and moved to Scottsdale, AZ. where he was employed as a medical director for a medical insurance company. This led to a position as senior medical director at Blue Cross Blue Shield of AZ in 2010. He retired from that position at the end of 2017 and now does volunteer work for Mission of Mercy in Phoenix providing medical care for the homeless and uninsured. Floyd enjoys physical fitness, golf, and reading in his free time. Floyd is the council contact for the Stewardship ministry team.

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
March 7, 14, 21
5:30 pm Soup Supper
6:00 pm Worship



NEW MEMBER RECEPTION

New Members will be received on Sunday, March 25. If you would like to join the Ascension family, please contact Pastor Paul at pastorpaul@ascensionparadisevalley.org. You may also consider joining as an associate member if Ascension is your home during the winter and you would like to maintain your membership at your home church.



HOLY WEEK



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

PALM SUNDAY March 25, 2018

10:00 a.m. Traditional Worship

MAUNDY THURSDAY March 29, 2018

7:00 p.m. Worship and Stripping of the Altar

GOOD FRIDAY March 30, 2018

7:00 p.m. Traditional Worship

EASTER SUNDAY April 1, 2018

8:00 AM Traditional Worship in the garden

10:00 AM Family Worship in the sanctuary

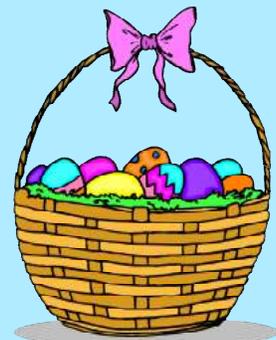
11:15 AM Easter Egg Hunt in the garden

Alleluia!
HE IS ALIVE!

COME JOIN US FOR ASCENSION'S ANNUAL EASTER EGG HUNT

EASTER MORNING, APRIL 1, 2018
FOLLOWING THE 10:00 A.M. SERVICE

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



NEWS FROM DUET



Arizona Gives Day

Invest in AZ! We are excited to announce that Duet is again joining this year's Arizona Gives Day, a statewide, 24-hour online giving campaign. Last year, your #AZGivesDay donations helped Duet raise \$21,466. Please consider giving on April 3, or scheduling your gift in advance at www.azgives.org/duetaz. And — your #AZGivesDay 2018 donation to Duet may qualify for a 2017 charitable tax credit if you've not yet reached your Arizona Charitable Tax Credit limit. For more information, please contact Duet at 602-274-5022.

Friendly Phoning - An Unsung Service

Our partner in service, Duet, offers free services for homebound adults including a little-known but impactful service called friendly phoning. It's a lovely service to help people feel less isolated. Two to three times a week, volunteers provide a friendly 10-15 minute phone call with an isolated homebound elder that often blossoms into a meaningful friendship. A daughter, Linda, recently described the benefit that friendly phoning provided to her mother who was matched for 5 years with the same volunteer (until her mother passed away). They grew to be fast friends and her mother so greatly enjoyed having her OWN friend to share whatever was on her mind. The impact on her mother's life was huge. To request a friendly phoner, or to volunteer, contact Duet at 602-274-5022.

Good News in Alzheimer's Prevention

The **Banner Alzheimer's Institute** invites you to come learn more about current research efforts to improve health and reduce risk for Alzheimer's disease. Join them on Wednesday, March 21, 2018 from 3 – 4 PM as Dr. William Burke discusses the latest research on Alzheimer's treatment and prevention. Dr. Burke will examine what we know about Alzheimer's disease, including the role of genes. He'll also talk about risk factors, important new studies that are currently enrolling participants, and more. Location: Banner Alzheimer's Institute, 901 E. Willetta Street, Phoenix, AZ 85006. To RSVP for this free program, call 602-839-6500.

NEW FELLOWSHIP GROUP- WORDS WITH FRIENDS



Calling all those who love and enjoy word games and puzzles! We will be meeting in fellowship hall on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month. We ask that if you have a Scrabble board and/or dictionary please bring it with you. Please contact Sue Brandt at bsimplyne@aol.com to join this fun fellowship!

THRIVENT SCHOLARSHIPS

Thrivent is giving away eight (8) \$5000 College Scholarships (18 and over). Below is the link to apply – it's a very short entry with no obligation. You do not need to be a Thrivent Member to be eligible. If you know of families with college age children or grandchildren or friends, click the link for more information.

<http://offer.thriventstudentresources.com/scholarship>



HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Ascension Lutheran Church is a part of the Northeast Lutheran Coalition helping to bring families together in service and stewardship. Share your treasures and talents by being a volunteer, bringing lunch for the volunteers, or making a donation! This year's build dates are March 10th, April 21st, and May 12th. Contact Erin LaHaye with any questions at erin.lahaye@hotmail.com.



SERVING BREAKFAST TO THE HUNGRY

We regularly partner with Grace Lutheran and Trinity Episcopal Cathedral to help serve breakfast to 300-400 homeless people in downtown Phoenix at Grace Lutheran Church. Contact Erin LaHaye at erin.lahaye@hotmail.com or (480)824-8207 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 to take part in this needed mission in our own back yard.



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.



SAFETY REMINDER

The Paradise Valley Police Department reminds us to be sure to keep vehicles locked and avoid leaving valuables in your car during worship. Place any bags or containers in your trunk out of view. There have been a few break-ins at Paradise Valley churches recently. We have met with the Town of Paradise Valley Police and they will be doing drive-by checks of our parking lots hourly.



ASCENSION RECYCLING FOR CASH

Donations of used **printer cartridges** and **cell phones** 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**.



LENTEN SUPPER PHOTOS

Enjoying simple soup suppers before our weekly Lenten Prayer Around the Cross worship!



FIELD TRIP Sunday, March 18

Remember the fun **Field Trips** when we were in school? On **Sunday, March 18** we're getting on the bus after worship and going to Carefree for lunch at [Spirit in the Desert Retreat Center](#) and strolling to the town center to experience the amazing [Thunderbird Art Festival](#). Put it on your calendar and [click here](#) to sign up. \$20 for the bus and breakfast. \$3 for the Art Festival.



THRIVENT FINANCIAL

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, a fraternal insurance company which provides financial products to many Lutherans throughout the United States, distributes funds to Lutheran agencies, organizations, and congregations through a program called Thrivent Choice.

Thrivent members who own various products such as life insurance, annuities, term insurance and a host of other financial products can now designate how charitable funds that their products earn can be directed. You are able to direct these special charitable funds as you see fit.

We hope that you will keep Ascension Lutheran Church in mind when you make your selections. Previously these funds were directed through regional chapters, but now you as a Thrivent product owner can direct these funds yourself. It also means that Thrivent product owners throughout the world can direct these funds also to our ministry here at Ascension.



Thrivent Financial for Lutherans®
Let's thrive.®

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



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!