

CONNECTIONS

Ascension Lutheran Church
December, 2018

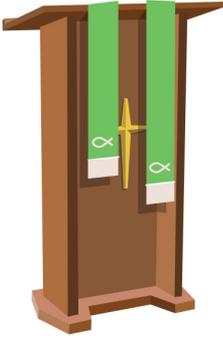


Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Dec 2nd	1st Sunday of Advent
Dec 6th	Joyful Noise performance at Brookdale in Ashland
Dec 8th	Scandinavian Bake Sale - 1pm to 4pm
Dec 9th	2nd Sunday of Advent
Dec 15th	Final Christmas Program Rehearsal 9am
Dec 15th	Girl Scouts host Sensory Santa Celebration
Dec 15th	Christmas Youth Celebration 6pm
Dec 16th	3rd Sunday of Advent / <i>Christmas Program</i>
Dec 21st	First Day of Winter
Dec 23rd	4th Sunday of Advent
Dec 24th/25th	Christmas Eve (6p/9:30p) and Christmas Day
Dec 31th	New Years Eve

Communion Worship every Sunday-9:30 AM.
Education—10:45
www.ascensionlutheran.com

Hearing Devices and Large Print Bulletins are available—ask an usher for assistance.



Seasons

Pastor Doug Vold

I'm not sure what marks the official beginning of our culture's Christmas season, (Halloween maybe) but here at the beginning of December we are surely in the midst of it. It is a time of year that is readily identifiable by its sounds and sights and events. We may love love love it, or merely put up with it. We may even dread certain aspects of it. But its presence is unmistakable.

The four seasons of the planet, officially beginning at an equinox or a solstice, likewise bring an experiential element to our lives. Depending on where we live these experiences are different, but living in the midst of them we know them. It's hot. It's rainy. The colors are beautiful. The pollen is making me sneeze. I have a coat for these occasions. I guess I'll wear shorts today. Etc. We live in and are influenced by seasons.

In addition to seasons we can track by the weather or by what's for sale at Fred Meyer, are other seasons that can affect and engage us. Sports have their seasons and many folks know the different ones. There are people who organize their fall around hunting season. Crabbing season has been put off until mid-December. The "school year" rules the rhythms for families with children, and educators, and others. Accountants have their tax season. And, of course, there are the phases of life we live through which are their own seasons.

Perhaps you also know that there are seasons in the church calendar. These holy days and periods of time are the source of some of our culture's seasons – Christmas and Easter anyway. Liturgical churches, such as ours, observe the church's seasons more closely than other Christians do. It is a spiritual practice for us, a way of learning and listening to God.

And this is the larger point that can be made here. It's true that sometimes our seasons are at odds with the world around us. Lent is not easy to market. Epiphany is mostly a head-scratcher. December is more Advent at Ascension. But our observance of these seasons has taught us something bigger that is worth noticing.

There is a way in which God's word to us is, itself, something seasonal.

There is the overall truth that God in Christ loves us and calls us to love one another. Yet within that there are variations of emphasis and more to be told about God's story. It is said, "The Holy Spirit comforts the afflicted but afflicts the comfortable." Sometimes we need the balm of Gilead. Sometimes we need motivation. Sometimes we need rest. Sometimes we need to get to work. Sometimes we need to be lifted up. Sometimes we need to be humbled.

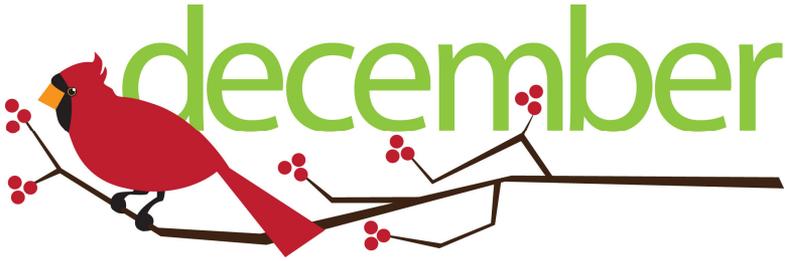
What we have learned in our journeys through the church's calendar of seasons is that God speaks in different ways in different seasons. The context of your life at any moment actually matters. We live in and are influenced by seasons. God comes to us in ways that are suited to the when's and where's of our lives. That's what the incarnation of the WORD (Christmas) is all about.

So it is worth some prayerful pondering. What seasons are you living in right now? What seasons are impacting and influencing your life? What might God be saying to you in this season you are in?

Noisy Offering

Hooray! Ascension has funded a simple well. In 2018 the spare change collected by our children was sent to ELCA Good Gifts to support the purchase of a well. By the end of October, we met the goal. The lack of access to clean water is one of the biggest challenges to overcoming poverty. With the purchase of a \$2500 well as many as 500 families gain access to clean, safe water. (ELCA.org/goodgifts)

Our donations to ELCA Good Gifts support work in 83 countries including several projects in the United States. Over 90% of donations received directly support the programs. Beginning with the Noisy Offering at the end of November and through 2019, we will respond to the devastation people have experienced by donating the money to Lutheran Disaster Response, which is active in the United State and Caribbean. If you would like to make your own contributions to ELCA Good Gifts or get more information, go to elca.org/goodgifts.



Age 5-5th grade:

December 2 – Family Sunday School

December 9 – Workshop

December 16 – Workshop

December 23 & 30 – No Sunday School

Middle School:

December 2 – Service Hour

December 9 – Homebound Communion

December 16 – Bible Study with Pastor Doug

December 23 & 30 – No Sunday School

High School:

December 2 – Service Hour

December 9 – Starbucks and Bible Study with Tara

December 16 – Blessing Bags

December 23 & 30 – No Sunday School

Baby Class:

December 9



2-5 year old Class: December 9 & 12

**HELP
WANTED**

We Need Your Help!

Since Sunday School is in need of some people willing to help with teaching or co-teaching classes! We will need help with age 5-5th grade, Middle School, and High School! Anyone willing to help please talk to Tara at church or email at tara@ascensionlutheran.com!



The Christmas Program is December 16th! If your Child still wants to participate let Tara Williams (tara@ascensionlutheran.com) or Lauren White know at church as soon as possible! Christmas will be the Nativity Story this year! Hope to see you for this fun and joyous program!

We are still in need of Advent Families to light the Advent Candle! If you would be interested please contact Tara Williams at tara@ascensionlutheran.com or Paul Kimberly at secretary@ascensionlutheran.com as soon as possible so that we can have enough families! Those days are Dec. 2, 9, 16, & 23! Please let us know which day your Family



Christmas Youth Celebration!!!!

December 15th from 6pm to 9pm Both Middle School and High School Youth are invited to the Christmas Youth Celebration! We will be wrapping pajamas for the kids across the street, doing fun games and watching a Christmas Movie! It will be a fun and festive time!

ALCW NEWS



ALCW Board Meeting, Thursday

Dec 6th, 2018, 9:30 a.m.

Sarah Circle, *No Meeting this Month*

Martha Circle, *No Meeting this Month*

Coming Attractions:

Our congratulations to Don Bruland who won the drawing of the Quilt Raffle!

The **Holiday Bake Sale** will be on December 8th (Saturday) from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., or until the sale is over. There will also be apple pies for sale. Remember, the Lefse goes first, and is usually gone within 20 minutes of opening . Nuf said!



ALCW wishes all a very peaceful and joyous Christmas!



Bell Fundraiser a Success!

The Grace Note's would like to thank all the members of the congregation that gave a donation to help us purchase the Upper 5th Octave of bells—7 small high notes that will allow us to add color and sparkle to many arrangements and original compositions for handbells.

Thank You to:

Mae Anderson

Diane Barnes

Joan and Roland Buck

Judy and Mike Dahl

Bruce and Jeanett Eliason

Barbara Formanek

Lance and Joyce Grace

Barb and Sam Guisler

Paula and Lee Hill

Robert and Lorraine

Lofgren

Judy and John Maas

Wendell and Dale Mattson

Corrine McHugh

Marlan and Barbara Morse

John and Marcia Polacek

Bob and Vickie Risner

Tim and Lynn Rupp

Debbie Sumption

Cara and DJ Taylor

Nancy and John Thiebes

Maria Trumbauer

Brandon and Lauren White

Specialty Baked Goods Sale - Volunteers Wanted!

This year the Bake Sale will be held on Dec 8th from 1-5pm. On sale will be traditional Scandinavian Baked Goods, European Christmas Favorites and Home Grown Goodies we love to share for the holidays. The sale is also open to the public—there are throngs in the Valley counting on Ascension bakers to supply their Lefse, Krumkake, Rosetts and other specialty baked goods for the Holidays. Everything that was baked last year sold—particularly the Lefse in record time!

Are you in need of a new or replacement name tag? Let Paul know so that he can make one! Contact him at the Church phone number 541-773-3594 or email secretary@ascensionlutheran.com



Looking for a way to be more active or participate in Worship? We are always on the look out for folks who maybe interested in Ushering, Serving, Bearing Communion or reading the lessons as Lector. We have simple instructions in needed. Let the office know if your interested. Thanks!



The Blessing Bags need your help!



We're looking to stock up on cold weather items like: - hand warmers, white socks, men's hats and gloves. In addition we are looking for toothpaste, water and granola bars.

As always, unused fast food condiments packets are welcome. Financial donations are also welcome. Questions? - ask Tara Williams.

2020 Decennial (every ten-year) Census Jobs with the U.S. Census Bureau.

Recruiting for various positions across the entire state of Oregon from now, well into mid-late 2020 when the Decennial Census wraps up... the Census Bureau offers competitively paid part-time/flexible employment; jobs range from \$14.50-16/hour (Douglas County) depending on position and county, and all jobs with the Decennial Census are temporary by nature of our operations... Interested in how to apply?

Visit: www.2020census.gov/jobs

Ascension's Finance Update

By Marsha Bones, Finance Chair



Thanksgiving is now behind us and Advent is looming in the near future. Advent begins new church year. It is a time of preparation for Christmas where we celebrate Jesus's birth. It is a season not only of preparation but also anticipation for Christ's arrival into our world and the fulfillment of God's promise.

Preparation and anticipation, also describes the current feelings and activities of the Finance Committee. The committee is busy preparing the 2019 Proposed Budget. In reaching our Estimate of Giving and 2018 Budget Coverage in October, which means all of the offering for November and December will be abundance. This abundance will go towards the 2019 Budget process and fronting the budget for 2019, just like what we have done the last several years. It also, gives us the opportunity to consider boosting our Mission Endowment Fund, that we started a year ago on All Saints Day, to explore needed building improvements and fund some badly needed repairs to our building. It opens the doors of new possibilities, of doing the Lord's work here locally, regionally, nationally, and around the world. What a jubilant place to be when preparing for the future of Ascension's ministry. What a wonderful joyful way to begin this Advent season with the anticipation of our 2019 ministry.

Thanks be to God, for all we have received.

Ringling In Christmas

December 16th, 7pm
First Presbyterian Church, Medford
8th and Holly

This annual Handbell concert features the handbell choirs from the Rogue Valley including Ascension's own Grace Notes. Along with the handbell performances the audience will be invited to sing Christmas Carols between the handbell choir musical sets with a cookie reception following the concert. The concert is free; donations will be accepted to help support the food bank at First Presbyterian Church.

EMPTY NESTER'S Present ~

Potluck Christmas Dinner & Gift Exchange

Held on Thursday December 6th at

Sun Oaks Clubhouse

Social time begins at 5:30

with meal and gifts to follow.

Tickets are \$5.00 each. RSVP via the Sign-up sheet under the Monitor. Ham provided, bring a side dish or dessert. One gift per attendee, limit \$10 per gift. (used okay in good condition).

PRAYER CHAIN

Ascension has an active prayer chain waiting to meet your needs. If you or a loved one has a need or is in crisis and in need of support and prayer please call Jeanette Eliason at 779-2912 or bandjeliason@hotmail.com or the church office. Our prayer chain is generally an email chain, but some phone calls can be made. ~Jeanette



Grave Plots for Sale

Ascension has a double lawn crypt with Hillcrest Memorial Gardens for sale of \$6,500. The price might be somewhat negotiable.

The grave plot details were printed in November's Newsletter and the November email. We would like to get the plots sold soon, so if interested please contact Eddie Adamson at 541-773-2792 or email eddie.adamson@carestream.com. If no one here at Ascension is interested, the sale of the grave plots will soon be open up to the community. The hope is to have them sold before the end of the year.

Crypt information:

- Value: Today's price \$7,746
- Lawn Crypt (2 caskets) - Stacked (No Caskets in plain)
- Total occupancy of Lawn Crypt is as follows: 2 bodies, 1 body and 3 cremations, or 4 cremations
- New owner is responsible for own caskets

and headstone

If a deed is wanted (optional), additional \$500

CHRISTMAS



Make this fun decoration as a reminder of the joy Jesus brings.



What you need:

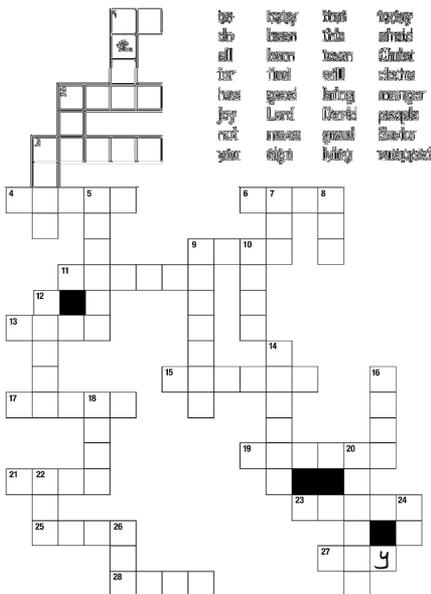
- Pencil
- Poster board
- Scissors
- Craft pompoms (red, white, green, silver, gold)
- Glue

What you do:

1. Trace large capital block letters J, O and Y on the poster board.
2. Cut out the letters.
3. Glue pompoms on one side of each letter, completely covering it.
4. Share JOY by displaying the letters in your home.

Puzzle!

The word list contains the angel's Christmas message to the shepherds. Fill those words into the crossword squares. Then write them on the correct lines below to complete Luke 2:10-11, NIV.



" _____ of _____ the _____ in the _____ of _____ a _____ to _____; he is _____ the _____." Luke 2:10-11, NIV

Answer: "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is _____ the _____." Luke 2:10-11, NIV

Bible Quiz

According to the fourth Gospel, "There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the _____."

A. love
B. life
C. light
D. Lord

Safe Toys and Gifts



December is the month we celebrate the birth of Christ, God's gift to us. If you are like me, you try very hard to remember and honor Christ's birth, but alas, in October the stores start bombarding us with material "gift" ideas. Since it's a fact of life, I'd like to share some guidelines for buying safe toys as suggested by Consumer Reports.

Buy age appropriate gifts. This information can be found on the label, and often takes into account "small parts" that can lead to choking (a very real danger to children under three years of age) or parts that are sharp. For older children who want electronics - especially games - look on the box to see if it is appropriate for the child you are buying it for. Look to see if it is violent and whether it has any value (such as educational).

Avoid toys with unsafe lead levels. The fidget spinners may have high levels of lead in them and if ingested can cause illness and even death.

Keep deflated or broken balloons away from children. If a child inhales a balloon piece, it could result in choking.

Check for recalls. In 2017 there were twenty eight toy recalls issued for things like choking hazards or fire.

Avoid high powered magnet sets. They should be kept away from children under the age of fourteen.

Make sure you get safety gear with scooters, bikes or roller blades. Safety gear should fit the child properly and be appropriate for the toy purchased. Check out Consumer Reports helmet buying guide and ratings if you have questions.

Remember your job isn't over once the gifts are unwrapped. You need to engage with the children/grandchildren/friends in play and provide supervision appropriate for safe play.

Merry Christmas, and remember the reason for the season

Judy Dahl RN

To my dear Ascension family -



I am very grateful for the warm embrace I have felt over the years at the outpouring of your love, prayers, caring ways and expressive words of understanding graciously extended to our family during Ron's lengthy illness and again, following his passing on October 22.

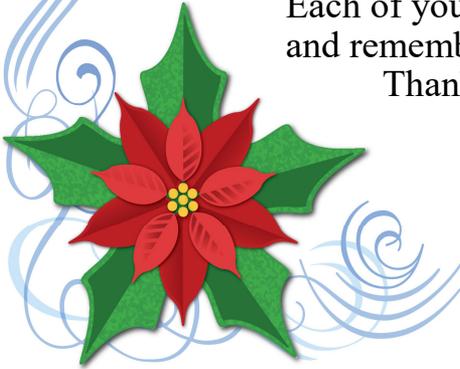
I was uplifted in my spirit by the beautiful gift of music and comfort from Mikiko, our choir, Harpist Celia Canty and Pastor Doug's sensitive and eloquent message of trust and hope in Christ's merciful and saving promises to those who know and love

Him. Thank you to all those who assisted in preparation for a lovely and welcoming reception following the service.

Each of you has a place in my heart and remembrance in my prayers of Thanksgiving.

With love,

Mary Ann



In Memoriam

Rena Wagner

Ascension Lutheran Church

675 Black Oak Dr.
Medford, OR 97504-8314
541-773-3594
www.ascensionlutheran.com

**Communion Services every
Sunday at 9:30 AM**

Our Mission

We, the members of Ascension Lutheran Church, gratefully rooted in the Good News of God's Grace, proclaim our partnership with the whole church of God and give ourselves to worship, witness and service.

Our Vision

We are a community of believers, empowered by the Holy Spirit to support and serve one another.

We believe that we are called to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through our words and especially through our deeds toward all who live in the greater Rogue Valley of Southern Oregon.

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Return Service Requested

Sun		Mon		Tue		Wed		Thu		Fri		Sat	
2	9:30 - <i>Worship</i> <i>Program rehearsal follows</i> <i>10:45am - Education Hour</i>	3	630- <i>Comm Quilters</i>	4	8:30a - <i>Quilters</i> 3:45p - <i>Discovery Chorus</i> 6p- <i>Confirmation</i>	5	9:30a— <i>Bible Study</i> 5:15p - <i>Worship and Music Meeting</i> 6:30 - <i>Choir</i>	6	9:30a - <i>Joyful Noise</i> 9:30a - <i>ALCW Mtg</i> 11a - <i>J/N @ Brookdale</i> 1p - <i>Medford Brightline Eaters</i> 6:00p - <i>Grace Notes</i>	7	6:30 - <i>AA</i>	1/8	8th— <i>Scandinavian Bake Sale 1-4p</i> 2p— <i>Girl Scouts</i>
9	9:30 - <i>Worship</i> <i>Program rehearsal follows</i> <i>10:45am - Education Hour</i>	10	3p - <i>Admin Mtg</i> 630 - <i>Comm Quilters</i>	11	9:30a - <i>Arts and Spirituality Mtg</i> 3:45p - <i>Discovery Chorus</i> 4p - <i>Finance Mtg</i> 6p- <i>Confirmation</i>	12	9:30a— <i>Bible Study</i> 6:30 - <i>Choir</i>	13	9:00a - <i>Joyful Noise</i> 1p - <i>Medford Brightline Eaters</i> 6:00p - <i>Grace Notes</i>	14	6:30p— <i>AA</i>	15	9a - <i>Christmas Program Rehearsal</i> 12p— <i>G.S. Sensory Santa event</i> 6p - <i>Christmas Youth Celebration Night!</i>
16	9:30 - <i>Worship</i> <i>Christmas Program</i> <i>10:45am - Education Hour</i>	17	630- <i>Comm Quilters</i>	18	8:30a - <i>Quilters</i> 3:45p - <i>Discovery Chorus</i> 6p- <i>Confirmation</i> 7p - <i>Council</i>	19	9:30a— <i>Bible Study</i> 6:30 - <i>Choir</i>	20	9:00a - <i>Joyful Noise</i> 1p - <i>Medford Brightline Eaters</i> 3:00p - <i>Comm Life Mtg</i> 6:00p - <i>Grace Notes</i>	21	12:30p— <i>Medford Garden Club</i> 6:30p - <i>AA</i>	22	
23	9:30- <i>Worship</i>	24	<i>Christmas Eve</i> <i>Worship times—</i> <i>6:30pm</i> <i>9:00 pm</i>	25	<i>Christmas Day!</i> <i>Office Closed</i>	26		27		28	6:30p - <i>AA</i>	29	
30	9:30 - <i>Worship</i>	31	630- <i>Comm Quilters</i>	1	8:30a - <i>Quilters</i> 3:45p - <i>Discovery Chorus</i>	2	9:30a— <i>Bible Study</i> 6:30 - <i>Choir</i>	3	9:00a - <i>Joyful Noise</i> 9:30a - <i>ALCW Mtg</i> 1p - <i>Medford Brightline Eaters</i> 6:00p - <i>Grace Notes</i>	4	6:30p - <i>AA</i>	5	