

CONNECTIONS

Ascension Lutheran Church
February, 2019



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

Feb 9th	Smart Book Sale—9 to 2pm
Feb 10th	Smart Book Sale—After Worship
Feb 14th	Valentines Day (Hey MEN! - Don't Forget!)
Feb 17th	Smart Book Sale—Last day
Feb 18th	Presidents' Day—Office Closed

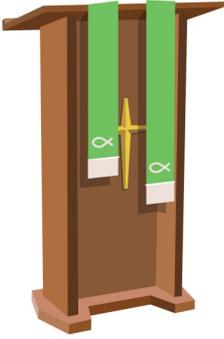
Communion Worship every Sunday-9:30 AM.
Education—10:45
www.ascensionlutheran.com

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

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





The Wow Season

Pastor Doug Vold

Easter is late this year which means there is a longer time than usual between Christmas and the beginning of Lent. This time is a happy season known by one of the most unusual names in the Christian liturgical calendar lexicon. We call it Epiphany, but I'm thinking it could be renamed "the wow season."

A couple of weeks ago the children's sermon featured an extended conversation on the word, "wow!" We started by talking about things like a sunset that turns all the clouds in the sky pink and orange, or waking up to a world covered with snow. There are things in life that fill us with wonder, or surprise, or amazement. We say "wow!"

The season of Epiphany begins, in the Jesus story, with the visit of the Magi, and concludes with Jesus' transfiguration on the mountain top. In between are narratives in which people encounter Jesus and say "wow!" Jesus heals people. Jesus talks about God as if he knew God personally. Jesus is a person of power and mystery. He makes us wonder. He calls us to follow.

An epiphany is a great thing to have: a sudden insight into reality, a perception of essential meaning, a moment of revelation, a glimpse of something profound. In the Gospels, people's encounters with Jesus are filled with these moments of awe and wonder. They are the place where faith begins.

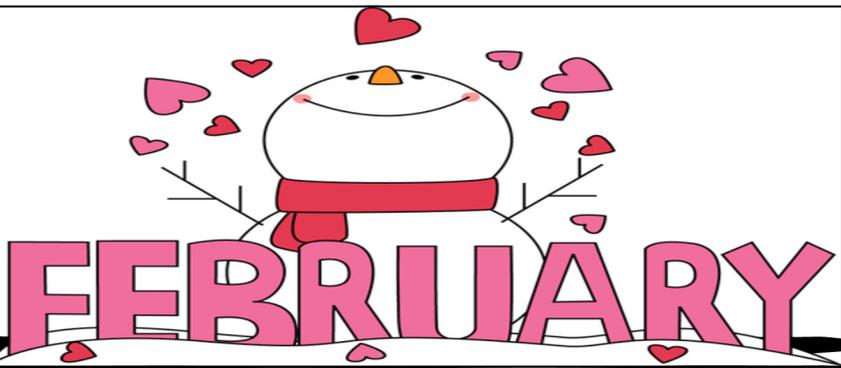
And, because this is the way this liturgical stuff is supposed to work, what we learn from Epiphany – the season – about epiphanies – the wows – applies to all of life along the journey of faith. Moments of insight sustain us. Glimpses of beauty uplift us. Flashes of understanding and perception nurture faith. In some ways the whole business of faith is a journey through the wow season.

So go ahead. Let yourself say it. Delight in the opportunity. Embrace those epiphanies when they come along and be glad for the gift. One never quite knows when they will come or just what will come out of them. An encounter with the mystery we call God and what else can I say? “Wow!”



ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE - FFEC

Faith Formation and Education Committee is looking for new members that are interested in helping define and plan opportunities for all of us to grow in our faith. This might include intergenerational education, information on ways to put our faith into action through service and social ministry and information on life challenges and transitions. As we journey together it is good to have experiences that allow us to engage, question, explore and get to know each other better. If you have ideas or have had experiences that you would like to see happen at Ascension please join us. Meetings are scheduled around the availability of members. Please talk with Pastor Doug or Luann Lane for more information or come to the February meeting. (check the calendar for date and time)



Age 5-5th grade:

- Feb 3 – Family Sunday School: Martha and Mary
- Feb 10 – Workshop
- Feb 17 – Workshop
- Feb 24 – Workshop

Middle School:

- Feb 3 – Homebound Communion
- Feb 10 – Activity and set up for bookfair
- Feb 17 – Bible Study with Pastor Doug
- Feb 24 – Activity

High School:

- Feb 3 – Homebound Communion
- Feb 10 – Blessing Bags and set up bookfair
- Feb 17 – Starbucks / Bible Study with Tara
- Feb 24 – Helping with Sunday School

Baby Class:

February 10



2-5 year old Class: February 3, 10 & 17





HELP NEEDED!

Sunday school is STILL 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

Puzzle!

Love is a fruit of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5:22-23. Identify another fruit that can make Valentine's Day — and every day — special. First, write a word that fits each clue below. Then unscramble the letters from the bold, vertical column to find another fruit of the Spirit. Write it on the blanks below.

LEAVE								
CHAPEAU								
TRANQUILITY								
BECOME MATURE								
RESPOND								
SPHERE								
OLD TESTAMENT QUEEN								
DISCOVER								
CONFIDENCE								
ALWAYS								

ALCW NEWS



ALCW Board Meeting:
Thursday February 7th @ 9:30am
Sarah Circle: Feb 12th, 9:30a
Martha Circle: Feb 13th, 12:30p
Coming Attractions:

The annual retreat at St. Rita's is set for March 8, 9 and 10, and the theme this year is *All You Need is Love (John 15:12)*. Check out the details with members of ALCW Board: Peggy Skeele, Winkie Griffin, Terry Helmling, Sue Yarne or Jeanette Eliason. This is a get-together weekend for the women of our local church cluster, with Bible study, prayer and social fun; you can plan on being there for one day or all three, including a Sunday service in that beautiful setting. Leading the Bible study and Sunday service will be Anne Marie Richardson, lay preacher from Cave Junction. Please try to join us –you are absolved of cooking duties for 2-1/2 days!

The January board meeting was to set up a tentative schedule for the events we host in 2019. The retreat at St. Rita's is first, but we also have our Spring and Advent Luncheons planned as well as Thank Offering Sunday, joint Circle luncheon meetings in July and August and the Holiday Bake Sale set, and you will get notice through the Newsletter and Sunday bulletins.

IF WE LOVE
ONE ANOTHER,
GOD
LIVES IN US
AND HIS
LOVE
IS MADE
COMPLETE IN US.



1 JOHN 4:12, NIV



**FINAL SMART BOOK SALE at Ascension
Saturday, February 9 from 9:00 to 2:00**

Please bring your books beginning after worship, Sunday February 3 through Thursday, February 7. (Please do not plan on dropping off books after Thursday as it is too hard for volunteers to organize them during setup.)

Volunteers are need for setup Friday, February 8 from 9:00 to about noon and during the sale on Saturday, February 9. Please sign up on the table below with monitor. **WE ALSO NEED BROWN PAPER BAGS.**

Ascension's Finance Update

By Marsha Bones, Finance Chair

The Lord has blessed Ascension with very caring and generous members! As January 2019 comes to an end, you have helped fulfill the goal of establishing a Mission Endowment Fund;

approved our \$419,062 budget which supports our ministry for this year; plus "bridged us to the future" with additional funds for potential building repair projects and additional ministry support. As the finance staff closes the finance books for January, about 18% of this year's budget is covered and approximately 5.3% of our Estimate of Giving has been achieved.

Wow! Ascension you are amazing! Your generosity has given our Congregation's ministry a boost to accomplish more of God's work not only today but into our future. I am thankful to be a part of this caring and generous Congregation.



Dear Friends and Members of the Oregon Synod,

It is a joy to wish you a happy new year. I look forward to the opportunities, challenges, joy and work that lies ahead. Mostly I am thankful that we enter this year together in Jesus' name with the Good News, ready hands and hopeful hearts that we are given.

Please know that my prayers are with you as you gather for your congregational meeting. The business of you congregation is important. The work we do together as the Oregon Synod is important. And, our unity as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is a gift. Let us vow to hold these gifts as one as we engage the world around us with hope.

This last year we came together in five Regional Gatherings around the state. Together we looked at the insights and sharing we had done through congregational vitality surveys, congregation to congregation visitations and more. This year we will be coming back to (and with) you for further gatherings in a similar pattern. We promised that we would equip you to interpret and apply *your* specific data and learnings for *your* local ministry. These **PHASE II** gatherings will be happening January – March, right around the corner. We are asking for a team of 3-5 leaders from you congregation to participate. I invite you to commit to these gatherings today as you meet with an eye on the year to come. You'll find more information at www.oregonsynod.org.

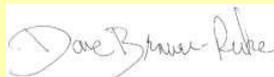
Our Annual Synod Assembly will be in Eugene this year, May 10-12, 2019. I hope that today you will be electing Voting Members to attend. Remember, in addition to your regular Voting Members we encourage you to send an *additional* Youth or Young Adult; an *additional* person of color, or somebody whose primary language is other than English; and an *additional* individual who identifies as LGBTQIA. At this year's Assembly you will be voting on people to serve both as the Bishop and the Synod Vice-President. As announced at last year's Assembly I feel led to joyfully stand for another term as bishop. Our Synod Vice-President Debbie Chenoweth will be finishing her service. Please be in prayer with us!

With your prayers, financial support and participation we are doing amazing work here in Oregon. Besides the work of your congregation, and those like you, we continue to do new work in Latino Outreach. We have secured grants to support four different ethnic specific ministries. The Flame, an LGBTQ outreach ministry continues to grow. We are present and in partnership with people in poverty; we are speaking out for the dignity and care of asylum seekers and migrants to the U.S.; we are starting a new congregation in the Bend area with the United Methodist Church; and much, much more. I look forward to sharing this work with you throughout the year.

May God bless you, your congregation, and those you minister to. The beat goes on!

In service,

Bp. Dave Brauer-Rieke





SAVE THESE DATES!!!

Best selling author, **Nadia Bolz-Weber** (also an ELCA Lutheran Pastor) will be in Ashland for two presentations, March 22 and 23. Founding pastor of the House for all Sinners and Saints in Denver, Nadia is known for her alternative approach to Christianity, which is both inspiring and challenging. Her soon to be released third book is Shameless: A Sexual Revolution. More information about location and tickets Feb.1st.

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.

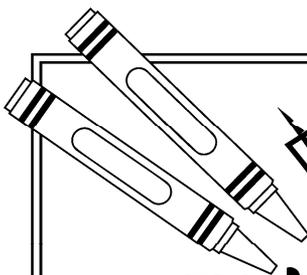
The grave plot details were printed in November's Newsletter and the November email. We would like to get the plots sold soon, so if interested please contact Eddie Adamson at 541-773-2792 or email eddie.adamson@carestream.com. If no one here at

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



PUZZLE

WITH LOVE FROM ABOVE

The Bible is full of special words from our loving God.

Directions: Using the messages on the candy hearts, complete the Bible verses (all NIV) below.



God is our _____ and _____,
an ever-present help in trouble. Psalm 46:1

“Surely I am with you _____.” Matthew 28:20

And the _____ of God ... will guard
your hearts and your minds in
_____. Philipians 4:7

Whoever lives in _____ lives in God,
and God in them. 1 John 4:16

_____ love drives out fear. 1 John 4:18

Answer: refuge, strength, always, peace, Christ Jesus, love, Perfect

A MESSAGE OF *Love*

Make this valentine for a family member or friend.



What you need:

- 10 wooden craft sticks
- Painter's tape
- Markers
- A photo and glue (optional)
- Craft knife (and adult help)
- Ribbon or a rubber band

What you do:

1. Set the sticks side by side. Secure with two tape strips.
2. Flip the sticks over. Draw (or glue on) a picture or write a message or Bible verse. If using glue, let dry.
3. Flip the sticks again and remove tape. If you glued on a photo, have an adult help cut the sticks (and photo) apart.
4. Secure the sticks with ribbon or a rubber band.
5. Deliver the gift and invite the recipient to assemble the puzzle.

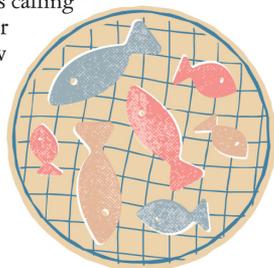


"Don't worry. I'm a church pastor. First little problem, and they'll find me."

?? ? Bible Quiz ? ? ?

In Luke's account of Jesus calling the first disciples from their work as fishermen to follow him and "fish for people" (NIV), which disciple is not named?

- A. James
- B. John
- C. Simon
- D. Andrew



Answer: D (See Luke 5:1-11.)

Social Bonds



Strong healthy relationships are important throughout your lifetime. Your social ties with family, friends, neighbors, co-workers and others impact your mental, emotional and physical well-being. Studies have found that having a variety of social relationships may reduce stress and heart related risks and are linked to a longer life expectancy. On the other hand, loneliness and social isolation are linked to poorer health, depression and increased risk of earlier death (source - National Institute of Health).

You begin to learn social skills as a child, but you can improve them at any point in your life.

A healthy relationship is when you feel good about yourself and feel safe talking about your feelings. You listen and trust each other and feel valued.

In an unhealthy relationship you may get blamed for the other person's feelings (It's a fact, no one else is responsible for your feelings but yourself). They can put you down or diminish your self-esteem. They may try to control you and your relationships and try to isolate you from family and other friends. Ultimately, the result is not feeling good about yourself.

There are several ways to build healthy relationships. You can join a group or go to church. I love how Ascension Lutheran is such a chatty group of people, especially during the Sharing of the Peace on Sunday mornings or visiting while munching on a cookie after services. You can mentor a child and find value in lis-

tening and communicating with the child and having a great influence on their lives. Volunteering is another way to bond socially. There are many opportunities available to fit with your time and talents. You can stop and visit with a neighbor, smile at and greet everyone you meet at the store or on the street and take the time to listen to the stories of others as most people love to tell "their" story.

At any age your relationships matter. A healthy relationship starts with liking yourself, so learn what makes you happy and treat yourself well before expanding yourself in relationships with others. Know that you deserve to be treated well by others. Now, go out and bond!!

Judy Dahl RN



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.

NONPROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
MEDFORD OR
PERMIT NO. 85

Return Service Requested