

The *Ascent*

January 2008

Ascension Lutheran Church
4803 South Lewis Avenue
Tulsa, OK 74105-5154
918-743-5741 / FAX: 918-743-4854
E-mail:
welcome@ascensionlutheran.net
pastornorm@ascensionlutheran.net

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A Note from Pastor Norm

What an ordeal was the ice storm of December 2007! No lights or heat at our house into the sixth day, and no phone (or DSL and TV) into the 15th day. No lights, heat, or phone here at the church into the ninth day, and no DSL or fax into the 15th day. We will not soon forget the ice storm of 2007.

What a blessing from God that we have survived to tell our tales! What a blessing from God that so many came from so far to help restore our utilities! Trucks from Georgia, North Carolina, Mississippi, and Louisiana were among those I saw in our church parking lot, which was used as a staging area for the restoration efforts. Let us not soon forget the grace of God that sustained us during these trying days.

As I prayed for you during those days of cold and darkness, I found myself using the words from the "Great Thanksgiving," part of the communion liturgy from our traditional worship service. You will recognize the words.

The Lord be with you. Some of you I was able to check on. Some of you checked on Pam and me, not an easy thing to do with our home phone out of commission. Some of you checked on one another. But because I couldn't be with all of you and we couldn't all be together, I prayed that the Lord would be with you.

Lift up your hearts. Day after day I came to the church hoping to find our utilities restored. Day after day I left disappointed. When the homes to the north of the church had power restored on Wednesday (December 12) and their Christmas lights brightened the neighborhood, a part of me

said, "Good for them. God bless them every one." But another part of me said, "But what about us? When will we have heat and light again?" When the lights west of the church went online on Thursday (December 13) while the office remained in the dark, my feelings intensified. As I imagined that you might be experiencing some of the same feelings of frustration and impatience, I prayed that God would lift up your hearts.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. Pam and I are blessed with a well-insulated home. Even with no heat source overnight, our thermostat dropped no more than 1°, even though the temperatures outside were freezing or below. Some nights our thermometer didn't drop at all. We were blessed to have hot water for our showers, and we remembered that we didn't need an electric dishwasher; we could wash dishes by hand. Although it was an inconvenience, we could raise and lower our garage door manually. As I thought of those of you who were forced to cope without the luxuries we have come to take for granted, I prayed that you would thank God for the blessings you still enjoyed.

I used the "opportunity" of this crisis to work on a couple of things. First, I visited all of our church members who are in nursing homes, figuring (correctly) that those facilities would have heat and light. Second, I caught up on some of my reading. Several evenings I went to Michaels Arts and Crafts, where Pam works, not to shop (I hate shopping), but to use her warm, brightly-lit classroom for a study. One of the books I read was Kelly Fryer's Reclaiming the "C" Word: Daring to be the Church Again (Augsburg Fortress, 2006). One of Kelly's observations that jumped out at me was her reminder that the church is not first and foremost a building, an activity, or an organization. The church is people. As Article VII of the The

Augsburg Confession (one of our defining Lutheran documents) states, "The church is the assembly of saints in which the Gospel is taught purely and the sacraments are administered rightly." We are the church not only when we are gathered around Word and Sacrament, but also when we are scattered.

While we cancelled more than a week's worth of church activities, including Sunday worship services, we never cancelled church. That is impossible. You are the church. We are the church. You are the church when you come for worship, and you are the church when you go home or to work. You are the church when you are husband or wife to your spouse, and when you are parents to your children. You are the church when you help clean up tree limbs from my roof or from

the church yard. You are the church when you deliver food baskets and Christmas gifts to those in need. You are the church when you share a hot meal on a cold day with those who have no heat. You are the church when you check on one another and pray for one another. In the name of Jesus, keep on doing what you do. No ice storm can ever cancel church.

Warmest Peace & Blessings!

Pastor Norm

Pastoral Care: If you are in need of pastoral care when dealing with health issues, life choices, or other personal challenges, please contact Pastor Norm.

Church Council Minutes - December 9, 2007

The December 9th meeting was called to order with Chris Falkensten presiding. In attendance were Barbara James, Keith Khoo, Eileen Imwalle, DB Woods, Ed Dreyer and Pastor Dake.

Minutes were amended and approved.

Treasurer's Report

The treasurer's report was reviewed and approved by council. It is available for review and is posted on the bulletin board outside the office.

Pastor's Report

- Bill & Shirley Bryant had their 50th Wedding anniversary December 8th.
- We reviewed the shut-ins that Pastor visits for Christmas Baskets to be delivered.
- The Christmas Eve Service will be held at 7:00 and the Christmas Day Service will be at 10:00

Stewardship

A stewardship meeting was held Dec. 4th. They reviewed the commitment cards that have come in. A follow-up letter has gone out to members. The next meeting will be held December 18th.

Old Business

Our treasury note has been cashed and will be transferred and reinvested.

- Annual Review. We generally reviewed how our finances were tracked. We have been on track for the year with our expenses.
- Secretarial and Pastoral pay was discussed and will be reviewed by Mutual Ministry and Stewardship committees later in the month.
- Notices for the Congregational meeting will go out for the meeting to be held on January 20. A notice will also be in the Ascent and coming bulletins.
- The nominating committee is still looking for a new President and Vice President. If you are interested or know of someone please get with Chris or Keith.

New Business

A youth lock-in will be held on December 28th. They will be going to Incredible Pizza and then to Keith and Denise Khoo's

Our next meeting will be held January 13th.

Respectfully,
Barbara James

ASCENT NEWS ITEMS;

Please submit any news items by email to norma-dreyer@utulsa.edu or call me at my home phone, 583-3759 by the 21st of each month.

This and That

BOOK OF FAITH: How We Read and Interpret Holy Scripture. Please join us on Sundays at 9:45 AM in the adult classroom. Taught by Pastor Norm.

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY: January 22, 10:00 a.m. in the adult classroom. Katherine Tooley will serve as hostess.

SIMPLY GIVING: If you missed the program on Simply Giving and are interested in learning about it, please contact Mary in the church office. Simply Giving is a service for people who wish to have their offerings transferred electronically to the church's account rather than having to write checks.

DAKE OPEN HOUSE: You are all invited to an Epiphany open house at the home of Pastor Norm and Pam on Sunday, January 6, from 2:00 – 4:00 at 5142 S. Columbia Place.

REASOR'S COUPON BOOKS: The Women of Ascension are now selling Reasor's coupon books for \$5.00. The first coupon in the book is worth \$5.00, so you immediately get your money back. Contact Sandy Isakson for more information and to purchase your coupon book.

TRINITY MINISTRIES: Luther College Choir will offer a performance on Sunday, January 27, at 7:30 p.m. at Trinity Episcopal Church, 501 S. Cincinnati. Cost is \$15 for adults and \$8 for children. Contact Billie Lindburg or Warren Werling for more information.

6F: Please join us on **January 11th** for a chili cookoff beginning at 6:00 pm. You may enter the cookoff as individuals or teams. Bring a pot of chili to be judged. Prizes will be awarded. Those who don't wish to bring chili for competition, please bring accompaniments for chili such as cheese, diced tomatoes, diced onions, avocado, salsa, cornbread, chips, salads and desserts. Please come ready to eat!

THANK YOU to everyone who helped us celebrate our 50th Anniversary. We were truly blessed with your presence, cards and mementoes. ~Bill & Shirley Bryant

THANK YOU! The staff wishes to thank the members of Ascension for the gifts presented to them from the congregation. We are grateful to you for your kindness and generosity to us.

Our heartfelt sympathy goes out to the family of Shirley Johnson who died on Wednesday, December 19th. Please keep them in your prayers. In Shirley's memory, donations may be made to Ascension's Abiding Gifts fund for worship and music.

Our prayers and sympathy also go out to the family of Gertrude Vaughn Rahmes, a charter member of Ascension, who died at the age of 90 on November 22, 2007 in Hamilton, Ohio.

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING: Plan to attend on Sunday, January 20, at 9:45 a.m. in the adult classroom. The agenda includes the election of Council members and officers and presentation of the budget for 2008.

COMING EVENTS: January, 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Worship: 8:30 & 11:00 Sunday School: 9:45		1 Holiday – Office closed	2 <i>Beth Coleman</i>	3 <i>Katie Williams</i>		
6 Dake Open House, 2-4 <i>Annette Hillstrom</i>	7 <i>Gary Collins</i>	8	9	10 Worship and Music Com. 6:30 <i>David Hillstrom</i> <i>Elizabeth Balman</i>	11 6F Night <i>Karol Wagar</i>	12 Workday, 8-12
13 Council Mtg. 12:15 pm.	14	15	16 <i>Mary Faulkner</i>	17 <i>Doris Williams</i>	18	19
20 Congregational Mtg, 9:45 am.	21 <i>James Harris</i>	22 Women's Bible Study, 10:00 am. <i>Betty Collins</i>	23	24	25	26
27 Trinity Min. Luther Coll. Concert, 7:30 pm. <i>Sara Anwar</i>	28	29	30	31		

Birthday honorees are highlighted in italics on the calendar. If your birthday does not appear, please contact the church office at 743-5741 so we may update our records.

JANUARY READINGS:

Jan. 6 – Epiphany of our Lord

Isaiah 60:1-6
 Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14
 Eph. 3:1-12
 Matthew 2:1-12

Jan. 20 – 2nd Sunday after Epiphany

Isaiah 49:1-7
 Psalm 40:1-11
 1st Cor. 1:1-9
 John 1:29-42

Jan. 13 – Baptism of our Lord

Isaiah 42:1-9
 Psalm 29
 Acts 10:34-43
 Matthew 3:13-17

Jan. 27 – 3rd Sunday after Epiphany

Isaiah 9:1-4
 Psalm 27:1, 4-9
 1st Cor. 1:10-18
 Matthew 4:12-23

Serving our Lord, January 2008

11:00 am	Nursery Attendant	Ushers	Lectors	Acolytes	Communion Assistants	Lay Assistant	Greeters	Counters
6		Bill Bryant / Doyle Hill	Lillian Cantrell	Elizabeth Balman	Donna Glocker / Doyle Hill	Linda Christy	Ardith Andrist / Lillian Cantrell	Merl Lindburg / Mary Faulkner
13		Clint Britsch / Stan Lewis	Brenda Ramirez	Nicole Ramirez	Sandy Isakson / Mary Peterson	Chris Falkensten	Mary & Jerry Peterson	Stan Lewis / Bonnie Peters
20		Gerry Oltrogge / Mary Peterson	Pam Dake	Alex James	Lynn & Betty Jacobsen	Ron Peters	Brenda Ramirez / Katherine Tooley	Ronda Falkensten / Denise Khoo
27	Preston Napier	Doug & Roberta Napier	Ronda Falkensten	Nathan Napier	Lillian Cantrell / Linda Christy	Sandy Isakson	Linda Christy / Ronda Falkensten	Gerry Oltrogge / Jerry Peterson

Alter Guild: Ardith Andrist, Lillian Cantrell, Randi Clark, Donna Glocker

8:30 a.m.	Communion	Lectors
6	Eileen Imwalle	Ellen Harris
13	Linda Christy	Linda Christy
20	Cathy Newsome	Cathy Newsome
27	Denise Khoo	Pam Dake

Please Help!

**** Nursery volunteers** are needed. Please sign up in the Narthex. Plan on being in the Nursery at 10:30 AM to receive the children as they arrive.**

Thank you for volunteering at Ascension!

Please mark your calendars for the dates you are assigned to serve.

If you cannot volunteer on your assigned date, please find a substitute and notify the church office (743-5741).

Altar Flowers Provided by:

IF WE ARE FAITHFUL

*It is the notion of stewardship that helps us to understand
That whatever we think we own is only for a time.
Whatever we seem to have within our grasp
- our time, our talent, and our treasure-
all these belong now and forever to God, who put them into our hands in trust.
If we are faithful, we are stewards.
If we are faithful, we know that we manage what is someone else's.*



The Ice Storm Cometh



And the Power Lines Goeth



**And the cold and the darkness
stayeth forever
(or so it seemed)**

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Pastor Norman Dake

Sunday Services:

Celebrative Praise – 8:30am
Traditional Liturgy – 11:00am

Sunday School – 9:45 am

Office Hours: 8:00am–12:00 noon Mon-Fri

Website: www.ascensionlutheran.net
E-mail: welcome@ascensionlutheran.net
pastornorm@ascensionlutheran.net

Mission Statement:

- **Proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all people in all walks of life with every possible means, in accordance with the Work of God, Creeds and Confessions of the church.**
- **Worship our Lord through Word and Sacrament, celebrating Christ's victory over sin and death as the hallmark of our faith**
- **Teach our members the relevancy of faith in life.**
- **Extend care and the call of Christ to each person in accordance with their needs**
- **Promote fellowship among our members.**

*Glowing and Growing
in the Light of the Lord*



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