

The *Ascent*

December 2008

Ascension Lutheran Church

4803 South Lewis Avenue

Tulsa, OK 74105-5154

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A Note from Pastor Norm

“For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were baptized into one body . . . If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.” (1 Corinthians 12:12-13, 26).

At the end of October Bishop Floyd Schoenhals of the Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod convened the pastors and congregational leaders of the Tulsa-area ELCA congregations. Each of our seven congregations (Ascension, Bethany, Fellowship, First, Joy, Prince of Peace, and St. Andrew) are part of the same body of Christ. But even though we are in relatively close geographical proximity to one another, we often function like amputees, rather than as different parts of the same body. Our independent organizational structures—and our busy schedules—mean that we don’t always have a good track record when it comes to knowing, communicating, encouraging, and working cooperatively with one another.

It should be no secret that we are not the only congregation with an aging membership, leaders who are few in number and sometimes burned out, facilities of such an age that maintenance is a challenge and financial burden, volunteer fatigue, and a budget deficit. The November issue of The Lutheran describes similar challenges throughout the United States. But in our relative isolation, we may feel at times like we are the only ones who are struggling with these issues.

The Bishop’s Consultation was a first step in encouraging us to meet together, talk together, and

work together. The ultimate goal is not institutional survival, but enhancing the ministry to which our Lord has called us. Despite the challenges that confront us, there is much faithful ministry and ongoing outreach upon which to build.

In response to the Bishop’s Consultation process, retired Bishop Bob Studtmann and I have met to discuss whether there might be ways for St. Andrew in Sand Springs and Ascension to be partners in ministry. This was a preliminary and exploratory conversation, and we have agreed that a next step would be to involve the leadership of our congregations in order to become better acquainted one with another and to expand the conversation.

Recently I attended a workshop on “Nurturing Hope.” There are three goals in the process of nurturing hope:

1. Empowerment—seeing oneself as agent, not victim.
2. Envisioning abundant futures.
3. Imagining multiple realistic paths to desired futures.

While the workshop focused primarily on nurturing hope within pastoral care relationships, I believe these concepts also have application within our congregation and within the Bishop’s Consultation process, as together we remain open to the abundant future God has in store for us.

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

November 9, 2008

The November 9 meeting was called to order with Keith Khoo presiding. In attendance were Barbara James, Eileen Imwalle, Sandy Isakson, Kelly Knopp, and Pastor Dake.

Keith called the meeting to order. Minutes were reviewed and approved

Treasurers 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.

- Pastor opened with a Bible Study on 2 Corinthians 4: 1-12
- The Bishops consultation was held on October 30th. All the congregations met and exchanged ideas and thoughts. Issues for future attention include outreach and keeping youth involved.
- Strategic planning included internal, external, short and long term planning.
- Pastor attended the workshop at Hillcrest Hospital. Nurturing Hope.
- While Pastor Norm is on vacation, Blaine Frierson and Don Marshall will preach. Blaine and Linda Christy will be available for pastoral needs.

Old Business:

Thrivent will have their annual food distributions on Nov. 16th. Joy Lutheran has kindly made their donation to our Helping Hand Pantry.

The roof contract has been received and will be signed and sent back to A-Best roofing so we can be put on the schedule.

We are looking at different fund raisers to help pay for the roof.

We discussed office rental space for CCE. It was approved that we offer a rate to them for rent and allow them use of the chapel for prayer meetings.

Lynn Jacobsen will provide lunch and devotion at our December meeting.

Respectfully
Barbara James

As you send your Christmas greetings, please remember those who are confined:

Betty Collins
Brighton Gardens
5211 S. Lewis Ave.
Tulsa, OK 74105

Dorothy Steeples
University Village
8555 S. Lewis Ave.
Tulsa, OK 74137

Ruth Loyd
Parks Edge Nursing & Rehab Center
5115 E. 51st St.
Tulsa, OK 74135

Helen Latvala
Burgundy Place
8887 S. Lewis Ave., #805
Tulsa, OK 74137

"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." (Luke 12:34)

This passage from Luke speaks to me about stewardship. Sometimes when we think of stewardship, we only consider money and tithing. Stewardship is also tithing your time and talents.

I grew up in a home where church was our center. Even when times were difficult, my parents gave as they could. I know how important regular stewardship is, in order to do God's work. My parents set a good example by giving of their time, talents, and tithes to our home church in Ohio. When we moved to Tulsa, they continued the same path at Ascension. There are so many ways to share your gifts at Ascension. Take time to find an area to share your special interest and talent. You will feel such a sense of being needed and appreciated.

You may even make a new friend or get to know a long-time friend better.

Let Ascension be your treasure!

Sandy Isakson
Ascension Church Council

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS 2008

WHAT CHILD IS THIS?

December 3: 6:30 P.M. Isaac: Child of Laughter and Sacrifice
-Genesis 18:1-15
-Genesis 21:1-7
-Genesis 22:1-18

December 10: 6:30 P.M. Moses: Child of Water and Deliverance
-Exodus 2:1-10
-Exodus 14:15-31

December 17: 6:30 P.M. John the Baptizer: Child of Sound and Sight
-Luke 1:5-25
-Luke 1:57-66
-Luke 3:1-6

December 24: 7:00 P.M. Jesus: Lessons and Carols

December 25: 10:00 A.M. Jesus: Child of Peace and Salvation
-Luke 2:1-20

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## Demonstrate your thankfulness

Ascension relies heavily on a seasonal increase in contributions each year starting around Thanksgiving. These contributions help support the work of the church now and throughout the year. During this season, please consider demonstrating appreciation for your own good fortune or good health by making an additional contribution or, if you haven't done so already, by committing to a consistent giving plan. Ascension offers congregation members a convenient electronic giving option for making donations. Please contact the church office for details.

## ASCENT NEWS ITEMS;

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

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# This and That

**SILENT AUCTION:** Be sure to check out the silent auction items on the table in the upstairs hallway. These beautiful baskets have been donated by Doris Williams and the proceeds will go toward the "roof fund." These baskets will only be available for bids for two Sundays, so be sure to bid right away.

**WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY:** Our December gathering will be the **Holly Berry** luncheon on December 13 at 11:00 AM in Jordan Hall. Ham will be provided and guests are asked to bring your favorite accompaniments. The Amazing Nathan will be performing. We will have a "naughty" Santa gift exchange and Becca Imwalle will have a display of her China experiences. We will also be accepting donations of new socks and caps for the Oaks children.

**SIMPLY GIVING:** If you are interested in the Simply Giving program, please contact Mary in the church office at 743-5741. 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.

### 6F – Fabulous Friday Family Fun Food & Fellowship Night:

Our next 6F night is December 12. Dinner at 6:15 will be a chili and corn muffin night followed by a Christmas story exchange along with a carol sing. Please bring whatever fixin's you like with chili (cheese, chopped onions, Fritos, etc.) as well as salads and desserts. Stories needn't be long or involved; just whatever was/is memorable for YOU! Also please bring the titles of favorite carols or Christmas songs.

**Christmas Dessert Auction:** By popular demand, the Helping Hands committee is organizing another dessert auction the weekend before Christmas. On Sunday, Dec. 21st, you will have a great opportunity to buy home baked treats for your family, company, or even gifts. All proceeds will go towards the "roof fund". There will be no Sunday School on that day, and a light brunch will be provided. In lieu of a freewill offering for breakfast, we are asking that all who attend either purchase at least one item, or make a donation towards the roof fund. Please plan on bringing some Christmas goodies to be sold, and don't forget your check book. We have already booked Dashing Dave Imwalle to be our auctioneer, so be ready for a rousing good time!!! If you should have any special requests for baked goods, please let Carol Anwar know, and we'll see if we can provide them.

**Jar Sales:** There are extra Holiday Jars available on the table in the upstairs hallway. The cost is \$5.00 each. These jars make excellent gifts. All proceeds go to the Adoption program through FCS. Please give your money directly to either Carol Anwar, Eileen Imwalle, Barbara James, or Mary Faulkner. Please don't put it in the offering plate.

To Ascension Food Pantry,

Thank you so much for helping our family out with the groceries and toilet paper and laundry stuff. It is great to know that there are people who are willing to help others out like this. I am hoping that we may be in a position to do the same for someone else. I feel so blessed and may God surely bless you!

Thank you,

Kathleen, Mikey, William, James and Donovan

## COMING EVENTS: December 2008

| Sunday                                                                                            | Monday                       | Tuesday                      | Wednesday                                                                                  | Thursday                                                                                                           | Friday                                                 | Saturday                                                                                            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Worship: 8:30 &amp; 11:00</b><br><b>Sunday School: 9:45</b>                                    | 1                            | 2<br><i>Brittany Engelke</i> | 3<br><b>Advent soup supper &amp; worship, 6:30</b>                                         | 4                                                                                                                  | 5<br><i>Ron Hillstrom</i>                              | 6<br><b>The Messiah, 1<sup>st</sup> Lutheran, 5:30, 7:15</b><br><i>Norma Dreyer<br/>Helen Allen</i> |
| 7<br><b>The Messiah, 1<sup>st</sup> Lutheran, 5:30; 7:15</b><br><b>Evang. Comm. Mtg, 12:15</b>    | 8                            | 9<br><i>Katherine Tooley</i> | 10<br><b>Advent soup supper &amp; worship, 6:30</b><br><b>Worship &amp; Music mtg 7:30</b> | 11                                                                                                                 | 12<br><b>6F Night, 6-9</b>                             | 13<br><b>Women's Holly Berry Luncheon, 11:00</b>                                                    |
| 14<br><b>Council Mtg, 12:15</b><br><b>Christmas Music Program at Fellowship Luth. 11:00, 5:00</b> | 15<br><i>Gregory Engelke</i> | 16<br><i>Kathy Dossett</i>   | 17<br><b>Advent soup supper &amp; worship, 6:30</b>                                        | 18<br><i>Richard Harris</i>                                                                                        | 19<br><i>Margaret Butler</i>                           | 20                                                                                                  |
| 21<br><b>Dessert auction for "roof fund", 9:45</b>                                                | 22                           | 23                           | 24<br><b>Christmas Eve service, 7:00</b><br><br><i>Bradley Devault</i>                     | 25<br><b>Christmas Day service, 10:00</b><br><br>CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED<br><i>Carole Broadland<br/>Katie Devault</i> | 26<br><br>CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED<br><i>Irene Preston</i> | 27<br><br><i>Avery Baker<br/>Nathan Napier</i>                                                      |
| 28                                                                                                | 29                           | 30                           | 31<br><b>New Year's Eve</b>                                                                |                                                                                                                    |                                                        |                                                                                                     |

*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.*

### DECEMBER READINGS:

#### Dec. 7 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 40:1-11  
Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13  
2 Peter 3:8-15a  
Mark 1:1-8

#### Dec. 24 – Nativity of Our Lord

Isaiah 9:2-7  
Psalm 96  
Titus 2:11-14  
Luke 2:1-14 [15-20]

#### Dec. 14 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11  
Psalm 126 or Luke 1:46b-55  
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24  
John 1:6-8, 19-28

#### Dec. 25 – Nativity of Our Lord

Isaiah 62:6-12  
Psalm 97  
Titus 3:4-7  
Luke 2:[1-7] 8-20

#### Dec. 21 – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16  
Luke 1:46b-55 or Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26  
Romans 16:25-27  
Luke 1:26-38

#### Dec. 28 – 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Christmas

Isaiah 61:10---62:3  
Psalm 148  
Galatians 4:4-7  
Luke 2:22-40

## Serving our Lord, December 2008

| 11:00 am         | Ushers                          | Lectors                     | Acolytes                                                                     | Communion Assistants              | Lay Assistant                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Greeters                           | Counters                         |
|------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 7                | Merl & Billie Lindburg          | Katherine Tooley            |                                                                              | Bill & Shirley Bryant             | Linda Christy                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Betty & Lynn Jacobsen              | Merl Lindburg<br>Mary Faulkner   |
| 14               | Stan Lewis<br>DB Woods          | Mary Peterson               | Elizabeth Balman                                                             | Doris Elliott<br>Lynn Jacobsen    | Blaine Frierson                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Helen Allen<br>Dorothy Burgess     | Stan Lewis<br>Bonnie Peters      |
| 21               | Gerry Oltrogge<br>Mary Peterson | Karol Wagar                 |                                                                              | Lillian Cantrell<br>Linda Christy | Sandy Isakson                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Ardith Andrist<br>Lillian Cantrell | Denise Khoo<br>Barbara<br>Shelby |
| 24               | Doug & Roberta Napier           | Ellen Harris                | Nathan Napier                                                                | Ron & Bonnie Peters               | Jerry Peterson                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Doris Elliott<br>Katherine Tooley  |                                  |
| 25               |                                 |                             |                                                                              |                                   | Ron Peters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Jerry & Mary Peterson              |                                  |
| 28               | Bill & Shirley Bryant           | Lillian Cantrell            |                                                                              | Barbara James<br>Karol Wagar      | Linda Christy                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Mary Faulkner<br>Barbara<br>Shelby | Gerry Oltrogge<br>Jerry Peterson |
| <b>8:30 a.m.</b> | <b>Lectors</b>                  | <b>Communion Assistants</b> | <i>Altar Guild</i>                                                           |                                   | <p><i>Thank you for volunteering at Ascension!</i></p> <p><b>Please mark your calendars for the dates you are assigned to serve.</b></p> <p><b>If you cannot volunteer on your assigned date, please find a substitute and notify the church office (743-5741).</b></p> |                                    |                                  |
| 7                |                                 |                             | <i>Lillian Cantrell<br/>Ardith Andrist<br/>Randi Clark<br/>Donna Glocker</i> |                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                    |                                  |
| 14               | Jim Harris                      | Pam Nielsen                 |                                                                              |                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                    |                                  |
| 21               | Carol Anwar                     | Carol Anwar                 |                                                                              |                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                    |                                  |
| 28               | Pam Dake                        | Eileen Imwalle              |                                                                              |                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                    |                                  |

### Altar Flowers Provided by:

|    |                                                  |
|----|--------------------------------------------------|
| 7  | Dorothy Burgess in memory of Bill                |
| 14 |                                                  |
| 21 | The Napiers in memory of Fred and Elaine Preston |
| 28 |                                                  |
|    |                                                  |

### THRIVENT BUILDS WITH HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

The Tulsa Thrivent chapter for Lutherans has been advised it was successful in its application to build another Habitat home in the Tulsa area in 2009.

Thrivent Builds and Habitat for Humanity will make a joint announcement in December on how the grant for \$54,695.00 will be awarded.

The Tulsa Thrivent chapter includes the 16 Lutheran congregations in the Tulsa metro area. The Lutheran congregations will provide the 300+ volunteers needed to build the Habitat home and also provide \$8,415.00 to help pay for the building of the 5th Thrivent Builds home in the Tulsa area in the last 4 years.

Howard Seigfreid

Contact: [C Ed Meyer](mailto:ed.meyer@thrivent.com)

E-mail: [ed.meyer@thrivent.com](mailto:ed.meyer@thrivent.com)

Phone: (918) 392-7130

## Fixed annuities: a safe choice for retirement income

For years, Americans have looked to the stock market to help meet their long-term retirement needs. Unfortunately for those near or in retirement, market gyrations can wreak short-term havoc with even the best designed pension funds, 401(k)s, individual retirement accounts and variable annuities. For investors in need of retirement income stability, now is a perfect time to consider the value of a safe choice: retirement income from a fixed annuity.

A fixed annuity is a contract made with an insurer in which an individual makes either a lump sum payment or a series of payments, and the insurer agrees to pay that money plus interest back in a lump sum, over a fixed period of time, or for as long as the individual lives.

With the guaranteed interest rates of a fixed annuity, investors avoid market volatility. Typically, the insurer supports these guarantees by investing in a well-balanced portfolio of quality corporate bonds, government securities and real estate, leaving the investor with guaranteed retirement income.

Fixed annuities offer:

- **Guaranteed rates of return**. Investors know exactly how much interest their annuity will earn each year.
- **Tax-deferred growth**. Investors won't pay taxes on any of the earned interest until they start to make withdrawals, so their money has the potential to accumulate more quickly than a taxable investment at the same rate.
- **Flexibility of contributions**. With a flexible premium annuity, investors are able to set aside the amount they want when they want to invest for retirement.

A fixed annuity can bring balance to a retirement portfolio that may already hold more aggressive investments such as stocks, or can simply add a degree of safety and stability to one's overall investment plan.

Equally important, with a fixed annuity, one can choose to receive income one can't outlive. Investors either can choose to receive income over their entire lifetime or for a specified number of years.

Fixed annuities may offer many benefits for the conservative investor, including:

- **Guaranteed return of premium payments**. Some annuity contracts guarantee that investors will receive no less than the sum of all premiums paid, less any previous withdrawals, if the annuity is surrendered.
- **Access to accumulated value**. Many annuity contracts allow investors to withdraw a percentage of the accumulated value each year without incurring surrender charges. With some annuity contracts investors also can access the funds in the annuity without surrender charges in cases of terminal illness or nursing home confinement. And, when investors start taking regular withdrawals in retirement\*\*, they can choose from convenient, tax-advantaged options such as receiving an income for life, receiving the interest only, or taking a set amount on a regular basis.
- **Benefits to beneficiaries**. Proceeds from an annuity can pass directly to one's beneficiary, bypassing the time-consuming and costly probate process.\*\*

Some things in life should come with guarantees. Retirement is one of them. Fixed annuities may help maintain one's financial independence throughout retirement, regardless of the performance of the stock market.

Ed Meyer (FIC), Robert Morgenthaler (FIC), Tim Veldstra (FIC), and Tamara Massey (MBA), members of Green Country Associates, are Financial Representatives with Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. You can reach them at (918) 392-7130 or toll free at 866-406-7130.

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**Ascension Lutheran Church**

4803 South Lewis Ave.

Tulsa, OK 74105-5154

Phone: 918-743-5741

Fax: 918-743-4854

**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](http://www.ascensionlutheran.net)**

**E-mail: [welcome@ascensionlutheran.net](mailto:welcome@ascensionlutheran.net)**

**[pastornorm@ascensionlutheran.net](mailto:pastornorm@ascensionlutheran.net)**

***Mission Statement:***

**Responding to Gods love,**

**We faithfully**

**Welcome**

**Worship**

**Grow**

**Witness**

**Serve**

*Glowing and Growing  
in the Light of the Lord*



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