

The *Ascent*

September 2009

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

“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 all baptized into one body,” (1 Corinthians 12:12-13a).

Each one of us is part of something bigger than ourselves—the Body of Christ, the Church. We see our connection with that body whenever we gather for worship, Bible study, or Sunday School. We are also connected in ways that we may not always see. Let me identify for you three of those connections as they relate to our life and ministry here at Ascension.

Home/Hospital Communion. Whenever I celebrate the Lord’s Supper with those who may be confined to home, hospital, or nursing home, I also commune myself. My rationale is that I want to represent for that other communicant the rest of the Body of Christ, which is not able to be present in that setting, just as that person represents for me the rest of the Body of Christ, with whom we are in community.

Confirmation Instruction. This fall we are entering into a cooperative venture with Joy Lutheran Church for the instruction of our confirmands. Since neither Joy nor we have a large number of young people, it makes sense for us to join together to offer an instructional program that will enable the youngsters to learn and grow in their faith, not in isolation, but in a setting that is more reflective of the Body of Christ.

The classes will be held at Joy on Wednesday evenings and Pastor Nathan Allen of Joy will be the primary instructor. I will have a presence there and will contribute my leadership gifts as needed.

Upon completion of this two-year period of instruction, confirmation (Affirmation of Baptism) for our youth will take place here at Ascension.

K-Life Use of Jordan Hall. Our Church Council has entered into an agreement with K-Life of Tulsa for the rental of Jordan Hall on Monday and Tuesday evenings and every other Thursday evening.

K-Life is the spiritual component of Kanakuk Kamps, which offer summer camping experiences to young people. In order to encourage year-long spiritual growth, weekly K-Life programs have been developed in local communities for high school and junior high students, and every other week for elementary school students. Jordan Hall will be the setting of these gatherings during this school year.

Our own students are welcomed and encouraged to participate.

In these and other ways, we reflect our membership in the Body of Christ.

Peace & Blessings!

Pastor Norm

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**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.*  
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Church Council Minutes - No meeting in August.

ASCENT NEWS ITEMS;

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

This and That

SIMPLY GIVING: If you are interested in the Simply Giving program, 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.

FOOD PANTRY NEEDS: The food pantry is in need of restocking. Special needs are: cereal, peanut butter, cornbread mix, canned tuna, rice, beans, macaroni & cheese, spaghetti noodles and sauce, dish soap, hand soap, and toilet paper. Thank you for supporting the food pantry.

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY: Please join us on September 22 at 10:00 a.m. for our next gathering at Sandy Isakson's home at 6619 E. 55th Street.

TRINITY MINISTRIES: *RSVP to Billie Lindburg or Warren Werling.* Thursday, September 17th. Rick Brinkley from Better Business Bureau presents "How to Avoid Scams." Program begins at 10:00 a.m. at Joy Lutheran, 9940 S. Yale. Lunch will follow; the cost is \$6.00

DAYTIME 5X5: Organizational meeting on Wednesday, Sept. 9, at 10:00 a.m. in the adult classroom. Led by Pastor Norm. All are welcome.

EVENING 5X5: We are taking a break until October. Those who would like to join us then, talk with Blaine Frierson (695-5979) or Keith Khoo (633-4732) for details.

TAKE A FRESH LOOK AT YOUR FINANCES

With the kids back in school, September is an ideal time to review your finances. Here's how:

1. **Identify financial goals.** Where have you made progress or fallen short? Update goals that have changed.
2. **Evaluate life changes.** Events such as getting married, having a baby or getting a new job can have a big impact on your finances. Plan ahead to make the transition smoother.
3. **Protect your assets.** Ensure you have adequate health, auto, life and disability insurance coverage.
4. **Evaluate investments.** Calculate the return on each of your stocks, bonds and mutual funds. Make sure you're satisfied with their performance and your assets are diversified.
5. **Review your retirement plans.** Contribute the max to your employer's 401(k) plan or an IRA.
6. **Prepare for the unexpected.** Review your will to ensure it still reflects your desires.

For financial guidance, contact Ed Meyer, FIC, Robert Morgenthaler, FIC, Tim Veldstra, FIC, or Tamara Massey, MBA at (918) 392-7130 or greencountryassociates@thrivent.com today, or visit thrivent.com.

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans is a fortune 500 financial services membership organization helping nearly 3 million members achieve their financial goals and give back to their communities. This column was prepared by Thrivent Financial's Media Relations Department for use by these representatives
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COMING EVENTS: September 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Worship: 8:30 & 11:00 Sunday School: 9:45		1	2 Confirmation Intro, Joy Luth. 7:00 pm <i>D.B. Woods</i>	3 Evang. Comm. Mtg. 7:00 pm <i>Don Doty</i> <i>Betty Robertson</i>	4 <i>Mark Harris-McGinnity</i>	5
6 <i>Tom Dossett</i>	7 <i>Carol Anwar</i>	8 <i>Kelly Knopp</i>	9 Daytime 5X5: 10 a.m., adult classroom / Confirmation class, Joy, 7:00 pm <i>Randi Clark</i>	10 Worship & Music, 6:30 pm <i>Ben Christy</i>	11 <i>Peter Frierson</i>	12 <i>Hailey Peterson</i>
13 RALLY DAY – 9:30 Worship, 10:45 Breakfast & activities / Council mtg. 12:15	14 ELCA Conf. <i>Alicia Malsam</i>	15 ELCA Conf.	16 ELCA Conf. Confirmation class, Joy, 7:00 pm <i>Billie Lindburg</i>	17 Trin. Ministries: 10 a.m., Joy Luth. “How to avoid scams” <i>Blaine Frierson</i>	18 <i>Kristin Perrin</i>	19
20 <i>Katie Bruce</i>	21	22 Women’s Bible study, Sandy Isakson’s home, 10:00 am	23 Confirmation class, Joy, 7:00 pm	24 <i>Pam Dake</i>	25	26
27	28 <i>Ron Peters / Denise Kilmetz-Khoo</i>	29	30 Confirmation class, Joy, 7:00 pm			

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.



Can You Hear Me Now?

The Word of God is the true holy thing above all holy things.
—Martin Luther

It's hard to hear anything when we're not listening.

Maybe it wasn't chirping on the cell phone, but who hasn't doodled on a sermon note, caught up with the latest gossip, counted all the vowels in the bulletin, or balanced the checkbook in the pew? Some preachers are better than others, but they are all doing their best to speak the Word of God to those who will heed it.

Can you heed me now?

God, help us to listen to your Word. Make it real and alive in our lives. Amen.

SEPTEMBER READINGS:

Sept. 6 – 14th Sunday after Pentecost

Isaiah 35:4-7a
 Psalm 146
 James 2:1-10 [11-13] 14-17
 Mark 7:24-37

Sept. 20 – 16th Sunday after Pentecost

Jeremiah 11:18-20
 Psalm 54
 James 3:13-4:3, 7-8a
 Mark 9:30-37

Sept. 13 – 15th Sunday after Pentecost

Isaiah 50:4-9a
 Psalm 116:1-9
 James 3:1-12
 Mark 8:27-38

Sept. 27 – 17th Sunday after Pentecost

Numbers 11:4-6, 10-16, 24-29
 Psalm 19:4-14
 James 5:13-20
 Mark 9:38-50

Serving our Lord, September 2009

11:00 am	Ushers	Lectors	Acolytes	Communion Assistants	Lay Assistant	Greeters	Counters
6	Ron Peters / DB Woods	Lillian Cantrell	Elizabeth Balman	Lynn Jacobsen Sandy Isakson	Linda Christy	Bill & Shirley Bryant	Stan Lewis
13	Stan Lewis / Karol Wagar	Karol Wagar		Bill & Shirley Bryant	Sandy Isakson	Merl & Billie Lindburg	Stan Lewis Bonnie Peters
20	Merl & Billie Lindburg	Sandy Isakson	Jack Frierson	Doris Elliott Donna Glocker	Ron Peters	Donna Glocker Sandy Isakson	Denise Khoo Kelsey Khoo
27	Ed & Norma Dreyer	Katherine Tooley		Lillian Cantrell Linda Christy	Jerry Peterson	Betty & Lynn Jacobsen	Gerry Oltrogge Jerry Peterson
8:30 a.m.	Lectors	Communion Assistants	Altar Guild <i>Shirley Bryant Eileen Imwalle Sandy Isakson</i>		<i>Thank you for volunteering at Ascension!</i> 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).		
6	Carol Anwar	Carol Anwar					
13	Ellen Harris	Denise Khoo					
20	Linda Christy	Linda Christy					
27	Cathy Newsome	Cathy Newsome					

Altar Flowers Provided by:

6	Warren & Carroll Werling in honor of their anniversary; Mary Faulkner in honor of Stephanie & Ryan's new life together
13	Merl Lindburg in honor of Billie's birthday
20	
27	Barbara Shelby & Bette Briggs in memory of William Briggs



The Arkansas Oklahoma Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

6931 S 66th East Avenue Suite 310 Tulsa, OK 74133-1760
(918) 492-4288 Fax (918) 491-6275

Floyd M. Schoenhals
Office of the Bishop

August 21, 2009

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. (1 Corinthians 12:27)

After adopting the social statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* on Wednesday, August 19, 2009, and four resolutions on Ministry Policies on Friday, August 21, 2009, Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson said to voting members, visitors and guests of the ELCA Churchwide Assembly, **“We finally meet one another—not in our agreements or disagreements—but at the foot of the cross, where God is faithful, where Christ is present with us, and where, by the power of the Spirit, we are one in Christ.”**

Faithful Christians disagree with one another (often strongly) about the interpretation of the Bible with respect to many different issues, including human sexuality, **but we are all still one in Christ.**

Some faithful Christians will celebrate that the ELCA has committed itself to “finding ways to allow congregations **that choose to do so** to recognize, support, and hold publicly accountable life-long monogamous, same-gender relationships.” (emphasis added) Other faithful Christians will strongly lament and grieve this decision. **But we are all still one in Christ.**

Some faithful Christians will celebrate that the ELCA has committed itself to “finding a way for people in such publicly accountable life-long monogamous, same-gender relationships to serve as rostered leaders of this church.” Other faithful Christians will strongly lament and grieve this decision. **But we are all still one in Christ.**

Because **we are all one in Christ**, the voting members of the Churchwide Assembly committed this church to “bear one another’s burdens, love the neighbor, and respect the bound consciences of all” in the implementation of these resolutions. I pray fervently that all the members of the congregations of the Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod will embrace this commitment.

I thank God for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the gifts that God has given this church for the sake of the world. In the culture in which we live, unity is equated with uniformity, and differences are viewed as reasons for division. This week in Minneapolis the ELCA Churchwide Assembly witnessed to the world that this church is diverse. This church has differences and disagreements. We are all—every one of us—broken in sin. We all—every one of us—live in bondage to sin. But Christ has died for all of us! Christ has been raised for all of us! Christ has made us one with God and one with one another! Christ has made us whole! We are one in Christ!

My prayers are with you and every one in the Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, as we **boldly share God’s grace with everyone!**

Yours in Christ,
Floyd M. Schoenhals, Bishop

Boldly Sharing God’s Grace with Everyone

Rally Day of Pancakes & Praise!

September 13, 2009
One service at 9:30

Join us for our Rally Day of Pancakes & Praise on Sunday, September 13th.
There will be one service at 9:30 AM followed by breakfast and some surprise activities.

balloon release



Pancake Breakfast

Treasure hunt for the kids

The ultimate treasure
is eternal life!

"Battle of the Bibles"

Bring a bible. Prizes for the oldest,
biggest, smallest, most unique; who
can bring the most bibles?

Sunday school classes will begin on September 20th.

Gratitude for the Lutheran teens who visited New Orleans

The Kindness of Strangers

The end of July brought the biggest convention to town since Hurricane Katrina, but it wasn't doctors, lawyers or other professionals. In fact, it wasn't even adults. It was 37,000 teenagers and their chaperones from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), who filled hotels all over town for the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering, which they called "Jesus, Justice and Jazz."

Besides their worship events at the Louisiana Superdome and the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center, the teens spent much of their five days in New Orleans performing some 200 community service projects, including hosting a health fair in New Orleans City Park, building a two-mile hiking trail around the park's Goat and Scout Islands and adding new plants to the Botanical Garden. Elsewhere, they held reading fairs for children and painted and cleaned houses and schools. Some boarded buses and headed to the Falgout Canal marina to replant marsh grasses; others converged on Holt Cemetery to weed, seed, restore tombstones and, in some cases, rebury the dead. At the end of their busy days, many of them found time to donate blood to the Red Cross. In all, our Lutheran visitors from all over the United States contributed a quarter of a million volunteer hours to the people of New Orleans—and, in many cases, thanked *us* for the chance to have done so.

We're humbled. Humbled at their generosity. Humbled at the sight of so many young people traveling so far to do so much hard work during their summer vacation. Humbled that the "Katrina fatigue" felt by so many Americans was replaced, for a few days, with an enthusiasm even some of us find hard to muster some days. Regardless of your faith, or lack thereof, these excited young volunteers were an inspiration, and just one of them accomplished more good than all the preachers and politicians in the world who saw Katrina as either perverse justice or crass opportunity.

Among the many small moments of grace between our young guests and the locals came last weekend at Betsy's Pancake House in Mid-City, which had its usual mix of Sunday morning regulars — sleepy folks with Saturday night faces and regal African-American churchwomen in their Sunday finery. Into Betsy's dining room came nine teenagers, led by a pastor and two chaperones, looking friendly but shy and a bit out of place. Tables were rearranged; coffee was brought. The waitress, with little prompting, welcomed them and told them the tale of the coffee shop during Katrina. The kids were more curious about grits. They opted for white toast instead.

"We could have gone to Burger King, but we saw this and wanted to eat at a place with neighborhood people," said the pastor, the Rev. Dr. Brian W. Armen, shaking hands with people who approached their table. He and his flock were from Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church in Johnston, Penn. None of them had been to New Orleans before.

Then, the waitress laid a \$20 bill on the table. "That man who just left paid for some of your breakfast," she said, and within a couple of minutes bills were being passed to the visitors from around the room — \$10 here, \$20 there, and the pastor's wife began to cry, saying "Thank you," to which the morning regulars replied, "No, thank *you*."

How do you thank someone for helping rebuild your city? It's a question with which we've all wrestled during the past four years, and the answer is: You can't. But the simple act of buying a stranger a breakfast said "Thank you" in myriad ways: Thank you for coming. Thank you for caring. Thank you for your sweat and your optimism, for your curiosity and bravery in traveling to a place so unlike your own home. And, when many in the rest of the country seem to have "gotten over" Katrina and can't understand why we can't, perhaps the real message was: Thank you for not forgetting.

Most of all, thank you for reminding New Orleans — a city that's so dependent on the kindness of strangers — that there still are people in this world who come to town and leave behind things more valuable than overflowing cash registers.

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

E-mail: welcome@ascensionlutheran.net

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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