

The *Ascent*

January 2012

Ascension Lutheran Church

4803 South Lewis Avenue

Tulsa, OK 74105-5154

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A Note from Pastor Norm

While we are just beginning a new calendar year, we began a new church year with the First Sunday of Advent on November 27. Whether you noticed or not, we have begun The Year of Mark.

We use the *Revised Common Lectionary* (common because it is used not only by Lutherans, but by many other Protestant churches and—with some variations—the Roman Catholic Church, as well) for our Sunday Scripture readings. The *Revised Common Lectionary* has a 3-year cycle of readings: Last year was The Year of Matthew, and next year will be The Year of Luke. John's Gospel is used in all three years, especially during the Easter season. But this is The Year of Mark when we get a heavy dose of Mark's Gospel.

What makes Mark unique? What do we get from Mark's Gospel that we might not get from Matthew, Luke, or John? Let me suggest a few things to be on the lookout for.

A Sense of Urgency. Mark seems to be in a hurry to tell his story. There is no infancy narrative—no Christmas story. Mark kicks things off with John the Baptizer and Jesus' baptism in the Jordan River. Throughout the first chapter, Mark repeatedly uses phrases like: "immediately," "at once," "just then," "straightaway." Mark sets Jesus' ministry in motion immediately and keeps the action moving.

Not Everybody Gets It. Mark often portrays Jesus' disciples as lacking in understanding (for example, Mark 6:52; 8:17). Those who should have known Jesus best simply had a difficult time comprehending who he really was and what that meant for themselves and for the world. In contrast, Matthew, writing after Mark by

approximately 10-20 years, tends to portray the disciples not as blockheads, but as "ye of little faith," (for example, Matthew 6:30; 16:8). Given the alternatives, I'm not sure if I would rather be labeled a dunderhead or a person "of little faith." In any event, even amongst his disciples, not everyone gets Jesus.

It's About the Cross. There are several occasions on which Jesus instructs his followers not to tell anyone what they have just seen or heard (for example, Mark 1:44; 5:43; 7:36; 8:30; 9:30). Is this a matter of reverse psychology, hoping that folks will blab the news all over if he tells them to keep quiet? Hardly! Coming down from the Mount of Transfiguration, Jesus tells his disciples that they are to tell no one what they have seen, "until the Son of Man had risen from the dead," (Mark 9:9). At the cross, a centurion declared, "Truly this man was God's Son," (Mark 15:39)—and there is no command to silence. Jesus' invitation to faith is not based on miracles or eloquent sermons. In Mark there is no Sermon on the Mount as in Matthew or Sermon on the Plain as in Luke. There is no Lord's Prayer. Instead, Jesus' invitation to faith is based on his death and resurrection. It's about the cross.

Of course, there are other nuances that are unique to Mark's Gospel. But these are a few of the themes you might pay attention to as we make our way through The New Year of Mark.

Peace and 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 11, 2011

Meeting called to order by Chris Gausvik.

Attendance: Pastor Norm, Chris Gausvik, Linda Christy, Cathy Newsome, Jim Harris, H. I. Aston

Absent: Bonnie Peters, David Imwalle, Preston Napier

Guests: Ellen Harris, Carol Anwar

Chris Gausvik advised Council the order the agenda would follow which would allow the guests to speak first re Contemporary Service issues, with the regular Council agenda to follow.

Opening devotion by Pastor Norm: The Prayer of St. Francis read by Pastor Norm.

Chris Gausvik opened with a status report as to the Contemporary Service and the many issues that the Church is currently facing. He advised that the individuals providing the music portion of the Contemporary Service have chosen not to do so for the foreseeable future. The Council decided to continue the service without the music until a decision can be made at the next council meeting in January and after a more thorough vetting of alternatives.

Cathy Newsome asked that Council move to approve the Minutes of the November 11, 2011 meeting. Discussion re minor editorial changes made by Pastor Norm. Jim Harris made a motion to approve Minutes as they appeared in the Ascent. Second by Cathy Newsome. Approved as presented.

Treasurer's Report: Cathy Newsome

Report and notes submitted by Cathy Newsome. Council advised as to the status of operating funds and savings account status, and expectations of giving through year-end. Also discussion held re status of mortgage and means by which to pay off mortgage, and also discussion re our obligation to the Synod. H.I. Aston made a motion to pay our \$2,000 obligation to the Synod with a second by Jim Harris. Motion approved.

Discussion re the Church continuing to have a deficit budget and the need to plan for 2013. The

Council will consider rental rates currently charged to tenants, the possibility of renting out more space in order to increase income, and also the need for the Congregation to be realistic about our financial status. Jim Harris offered a four-year projection if all items remain as is (that is, no large expenses for repairs, etc.).

It was decided that the anonymous gift made specifically for the purchase of music software to enhance the music at the Contemporary Service be held until further notice.

Pastor Norm advised that the Risograph and folding machine are no longer working properly and Mary Faulkner is researching the cost of suitable replacements. Jim Harris made a motion that Chris Gausvik be authorized to approve the expense of each once a decision has been made; second by Cathy Newsome. Approved.

Evangelism report: Cathy Newsome

A new sign advertising the Soup Suppers was purchased for \$300 and placed at the entrance to the Church. The sign has removable plaques for advertising future events. Ellen Harris suggested also placing an advertisement in the Tulsa World re our Christmas services. Council advised that flyers were handed out to approximately 150 apartments recently, announcing Christmas services. H. I. Aston suggested and Council agreed that "free will offerings" not be asked for when outside guests have been invited in this manner.

Stewardship: Jim Harris:

Jim Harris reported that out of 45 possible pledges for 2012, 32 were received, amounting to approximately \$117,000 in pledges.

Worship & Music: Pastor Norm:

Pastor reported that Catherine Ratliff's contract has been changed, and she is now considered a W-2 employee. Pastor also confirmed that there is just one service scheduled for Christmas and New Year's Day to be held at 10:00 am.

New Business: Pastor Norm:

Pastor advised that Clyde Glandon at CCE has requested the use of Jordon Hall on February 25, 2011, 9:00-3:30, for an ecumenical retreat consisting of approximately 50 people. Jim Harris

made motion to approve; second by Pastor Norm, approved.

Jim Harris asked the status of those on Council and confirmation of those positions that need to be re-elected or filled. Those positions are: Jim Harris as Vice President; open for re-election are Bonnie Peters, Cathy Newsome, Linda Christy and Chris Gausvik.

Cathy Newsome has asked that a current audit be performed and Jerry Peterson will be asked to fill that task.

2012 Budget Issues:

Discussion held re the review of the existing budget including issues of pension, salaries and insurance. Discussion also held re the need for a continuous review process of Church employees which is needed in order to project any increases in salaries,

etc. when preparing a new budget. All budget issues to be reviewed and ready for discussion at the 2012 Congregational meeting on January 22nd. Jim Harris proposed a \$15,000 deficit limit of the budget projection, with second by Pastor Norm, approved.

Council to meet again for its regular meeting on January 8th. Bonnie Peters to provide lunch.

Pastor Norm made motion to adjourn, second by Jim Harris, approved. Closing prayer by Pastor Norm.

Minutes prepared by Linda Christy, December 19, 2011.

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.



Evangelism Committee Apartment Outreach

Members of the Evangelism committee visit local apartment complexes to invite our neighbors to join us for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services.

This and That

Pastor Norm, Mary and Catherine would like to thank all of you for the Christmas gifts and greetings. We are grateful for your kindness and generosity.

Annual Congregational Meeting: Sunday, January 22, 2012, at 9:45 AM

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY: Join us for our next Bible study on Tuesday, January 24.

DAYTIME 5X5: On the first and third Wednesdays of the month at 10:30 A.M. in the adult classroom, led by Pastor Norm. We are studying the Minor Prophets—so called not because they, or their message, are unimportant, but because these prophetic books are relatively short. We are following the chronological order outlined on page 1089 of your *Lutheran Study Bible*: Zephaniah on January 4 and Nahum on January 18.

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.

GOSPEL PARALLELS: Matthew, Mark, and Luke (and sometimes John) often tell the same or similar stories. Sometimes they use identical words, and sometimes their accounts differ significantly. What are we to make of this? Come and see! Sundays at 9:34 AM in the adult classroom. Led by Pastor Norm.

COMING EVENTS: January 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Worship: 8:30 & 11:00 Sunday School: 9:45						
1	2 <i>Beth Coleman</i>	3 <i>Katie Williams</i>	4 5x5 10:30 Evangelism Committee 6:30	5 Worship/Music 6:30 K-Life 7:00 Young People in Recovery 7:00	6 K-Life 3:30 <i>Annette Hillstrom</i>	7 <i>Gary Collins</i>
8 Council 12:15	9	10 <i>David Hillstrom</i> <i>Elizabeth Balman</i>	11 <i>Karol Wagar</i>	12 K-Life 7:00 Young People in Recovery 7:00	13	14 Global Missions 9:00-3:00
15	16 Martin Luther King Holiday <i>Mary Faulkner</i>	17 <i>Doris Williams</i>	18 5x5 10:30	19 K-Life 7:00 Young People in Recovery 7:00	20	21 Norwegian Club meeting <i>Jim Harris</i>
22 Annual Congregational Meeting 9:45 <i>Betty Collins</i>	23	24 Women's Bible Study 10:00	25 <i>Brendan Gausvik</i>	26 K-Life 7:00 Young People in Recovery 7:00	27 <i>Sarah Anwar</i> <i>Eric Pfaff</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.

Serving our Lord, January 2012

11:00 am	Ushers	Lectors	Communion Assistants	Lay Assistant	Greeters	Counters
1	Ron Peters	Carroll Werling	Avis Erickson Chris Gausvik	Linda Christy	Ardith Andrist Lillian Cantrell	Mary Faulkner Bonnie Peters
8	Stan Lewis Mary Peterson	Katherine Tooley	Doris Elliott Barbara James	Sandy Isakson	Ron & Bonnie Peters	Stan Lewis
15	Chris & Tyler Gausvik	Sandy Isakson	Sandy Isakson Lynn Jacobsen	Ron Peters	Randi Clark Doris Elliott	Catherine & Tyler Gausvik
22	Lynn Jacobsen	Chris Gausvik	Lillian Cantrell Linda Christy	Jerry Peterson	Chris & Catherine Gausvik	Jerry Peterson
29	DB Woods	Avis Erickson	Ron & Bonnie Peters	Linda Christy	Mary Faulkner	Mary Faulkner
8:30 a.m.	Lectors	Communion Assistants	<p><i>Thank you for volunteering at Ascension!</i></p> <p>Please mark your calendars for the dates you are assigned to serve.</p> <p>If you cannot volunteer on your assigned date, please find a substitute and notify the church office (743-5741).</p>			
1						
8	Jim Harris	Harold Wicks				
15	Nathan Napier	Nathan Napier				
22						
29	Ellen Harris	Eileen Imwalle				

Altar Guild: Dorothy Burgess, Doris Elliott, Amy Roe

Altar Flowers Provided by:

1	
8	
15	
22	Sandy Isakson
29	

JANUARY READINGS

Jan 1 – 1 Christmas

Num 6:22-27
Psalm 8
Gal 4:4-7 or Phil 2:5-11
Luke 2:15-21

Jan 8 – Baptism of Our Lord

Gen 1:1-5
Psalm 29
Acts 19:1-7
Mark 1:4-11

Jan 15 – 2nd Sunday in Epiphany

1 Sam 3:1-10 (11-20)
Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18
1 Cor 6:12-20
John 1:43-51

Jan 22 – 3rd Sunday in Epiphany

Jonah 3:1-5, 10
Psalm 62:5-12
1 Cor 7:29-31
Mark 1:14-20

Jan 29 – 4th Sunday in Epiphany

Deut 18:15-20
Psalm 111
1 Cor 8:1-13
Mark 1:21-28

HollyBerry Luncheon 2011

Women of Ascension celebrate Christmas at the annual HollyBerry Luncheon. Good food, Silly Santa gift exchange, cookie exchange, and collection of gifts for the children at the Oaks filled the party with Christmas joy.



Helping Hands Adopt-A-Family program provided food and toys for many in need for Christmas. Thanks to all who participated in giving.





Happy Birthday, Helen! This larger-than-life balloon man was delivered to Helen at her office from her co-workers.



Barbara Shelby underwent a lung transplant on October 30 and recovered very quickly. She came home after only 6 weeks and got her wish to be home for Christmas. Welcome home, Barbara!

“This is a picture of my wish for the coming part of my life. The sun and moon are my wish to do things that I haven't been able to do for so long. This will go on a quilt that is made yearly for all transplant patients for the year that is displayed at Christmas time. This is the 16th year for this project.” ~Barbara



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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:

**Responding to Gods love,
We faithfully
Welcome
Worship
Grow
Witness
Serve**

*Glowing and Growing
in the Light of the Lord*



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