

LUTHERAN CHURCH OF
THE ASCENSION

7607 Garden Gate Drive
Citrus Heights, CA
95621

Sunday Worship

8:00 & 11:00 A.M.
Traditional & Blended
9:00 A.M.

Contemporary Worship
9:30 & 11:00 A.M.
Christian Education



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November 2011

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Our council met in October for a "retreat." The focus of the day was the book by Michael Foss, Senior Pastor at Lutheran Church of the Redeemer in Atlanta, Georgia, "From Members to Disciples." The biblical basis is the book of Acts. We understand the members of our congregation have been blessed with various gifts, and we trust that the Holy Spirit will help us to live our faith. This being said, we look to God for our calling to use the gifts He has given us. I have heard Sunday School teachers say they answered a certain question a certain way, but until the words came out of their mouth, they didn't know what they were going to say. The Holy Spirit at work. I have also heard Stephen Ministers say they didn't know what they were going to say or pray to help their care receiver, and then the words came out and they were just what the care receiver needed to hear. Have you heard a sermon and wondered how the Pastor could focus on you with that particular sermon? The Holy Spirit at work. Our congregation is very busy with Sunday School in full force, new member classes are being conducted, as well as various Bible studies, Young Adult classes, and small groups. Have you had a nudge to perhaps help in some way? Someone may have asked for your help, but you were reluctant to accept the challenge. Could it be the Holy Spirit nudging you? If so, that would be a "call." Will He take you out of your comfort zone? Maybe. Will it be easy? Maybe not. Will He be there for you as you pray for help in making decisions and accomplishing His will? Of course! How will you answer the Holy Spirit? Take me Lord, take me Lord. Let us give thanks for all God's blessings and respond accordingly. Your sister in Christ,
Doris

I

Need for prayers

We pray for the sick and the lonely and for those who care for them. Remember with cards of cheer the people who are confined to their homes/ hospital and others who have special needs and would also enjoy our visits and cards.

Typically the November News letter is an opportunity, indeed, almost an obligation to write about the Thanksgiving Holiday and all the many things for which we Christians living in America have to be thankful for -- and we do have a tremendous amount to be thankful for! For me especially I have a tremendous amount to be thankful for since, the doctors tell me repeatedly that I should not be here, having a wonderful wife, two great Children and six adorable grandchildren! I also have been blessed with the world's most wonderful cat -- Spike. And I am truly thankful to serve such a blessed congregation with such terrific brothers and sister who have stood with me and my family during this difficult time, maybe the finest Council I have ever served with (and I have served with some exceptional ones) and without question the finest staff in any congregation anywhere -- period. To express my feelings concerning my tremendous spouse or for that matter to write of my feelings concerning my kids and grandbabies would take volumes and we cannot afford the paper.

What I really desire to write to you about in this letter is something else for which I am grateful -- our small group committee/task force and the ministry they are now implementing under the leadership of Kevin Murphy (wonderful name). This ministry team is really going to town! Small group ministries and small groups are so important to a congregation of our particular size. They are utilized by God to mature us in our faith, build support systems and community and as the foundation of congregational ministry. I encourage everyone who can find the time to try one out. Most break after just short periods making it easy to try one out and then drop out if it is not all it is cracked up to be.

In particular, you have heard me plug a once popular small group here at Ascension -- "Pulpit Pleasures." This was huge a few years ago and it ran for a very long period; but its leadership needed to take a break. Over this period of time many who were a part of this group have inquired as to re-starting it, but some of these persons have either passed or become physically limited and cannot be a part of the new group. A goodly number of folks have signed up but there is plenty of room for more. This small group gives its participants real insight into preaching and Lutheran worship; even more so, I think, it is a tremendous and fun way to grow spiritually. What this group consists of is examining the Lectionary (the assigned up coming Lessons for a particular Sunday, the season in which the Sunday exists, the theme of the day built into the Church Calendar and liturgy (these things I will teach the group over a few sessions to prepare you and to acquaint you with resources)). During the week you personally examine the texts, Sundays and Seasons and liturgy in anticipation of where you think the preacher is going to go (you will be taught how to understand Lectionary and the character and purpose/significance of the Prayer of the Day). Then after the sermon is delivered (on whatever day and at whatever time the group chooses to meet) the small group gathers to discuss the sermon against the text, themes, etc. and examine the up-coming material and tests. One learns a great deal as well as an appreciation of preaching properly. I will also show you how I personally was taught to prepare and deliver a sermon and how I now (nearly, exactly the same) go about doing these things.

See you in Church,

Pastor Mike

Pastor Allen's Newsletter

Hi to all you active participants and friends of Ascension,

Many of you know that I plan the worship services for Sundays and for other days as they come along. I have lots of tasks related to worship planning. There are two things that I want to tell you about, one that I have been doing regularly and one that is brand new.

The task that I have been doing regularly is scheduling temple talks. I know that occasionally people tell Pastor Murphy that they want a temple talk and he sends them my way. Very often, people schedule temple talks with me six to eight weeks ahead. Isn't that something? So when people sometimes ask me for a temple talk for the following week, I am frequently unable to accommodate their request. So if you would like to do a temple talk on a particular Sunday, please schedule it as far ahead as you are able. And do what you can to keep temple talks to "threeish" minutes.

The brand new task actually came my way from Pastor Harry Carlson who has a heart for "mission partners". He suggested that Ascension pray for different congregations a month at a time. That makes sense to me. So, we will start praying for a congregation in November. A volunteer will call the congregation to tell them that we are praying for them and to inquire about any special needs for which we can pray. There is a standard petition that I include in the intercessory prayers from time to time and our prayers for the congregations will fit nicely there. Start looking forward to those prayers. Oh, if anyone has a congregation for which you want us to pray, just let me know.

So there you have information about two of my worship planning tasks, one that is long term and one that is brand new.

In Christ,

Pastor Allen B. Dunn

COUNCIL CORNER

Treasurer reported we are currently under budget \$56,236.73.

Finance Committee Report: Tom informed us that the Finance and Steward committees met and are trying to come up with a plan and letter to request congregation members help balance the budget.

June Smith was approved to join the Social Ministry Committee.

Preschool budget presented and approved by the Council.

Nominating committee has met and is working to fill the position of Secretary.

The majority of the meeting was spent in budget discussion.

Parish Assistant
November 2011

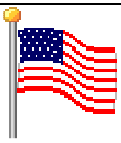
There are so many wonderful things going on at Ascension, so many worth-while missions, outreach opportunities and selfless volunteering that I see every day it just fills me with such joy. The thing that strikes me the most is when I ask people to help out on a ministry or task, if they feel called to do it they inevitably answer 'yes, and thank you so much for thinking to ask me'. As I am enlisting them to take on yet another task in their busy lives they are thanking me!

During this Holiday season, Ascension does need more volunteers. WELCA will be assembling their holiday food baskets, and they always need help to make this ministry happen. They assemble roughly 30 food baskets for Thanksgiving and again at Christmas, and they also coordinate our Giving Tree. In the lobby will be a hanging Christmas tree, with gift tags on it. Consider taking a tag and returning with the gift. These gifts are going to kids from Ascension and the kids that have been referred by Ascension family members. Some may include our local community kids from the San Juan School District. ALL will be anonymous. For volunteer opportunities during this Holiday season contact Cindy Erickson (916) 543-9913 or cindy.erickson@ch2m.com.

Now that the weather is turning colder, you may find yourself baking more, I know I always do during the winter. Would you consider baking goodies for coffee hour? Every batch you make saves money, plus we have amazing bakers here!

There are so many ways to be involved in service here at Ascension. Please come and see me if you are interested in learning more.

Blessings,
Susie



Remember those serving our country

Lord, bless and protect the men and women of our country's armed forces, especially those serving in harms way. Which include the following:

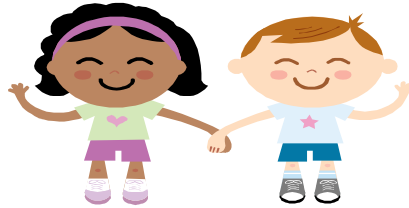
Danny Ramirez, Daniel Garcia, Kevin McGibbon, Jason Cutter, Clint Palmquist, James Swanson and the members of the Special Operations Liaison Element.

Be with and strengthen their families. Amen

ASCENSION CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL

NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER

The end of October came and went so quickly! We enjoyed our Harvest Party, and participating in Trunk or Treat. Both activities offered so many fun activities for the children. Now we are looking forward to new month, and more fun events!



November 5th from 6pm-10pm, the Preschool Board is hosting a Parent's Night Out for children ages 1-10. With Christmas coming you may need to do some shopping...or maybe you would like to have a date with your spouse...or just have some quiet time? If so please consider supporting our preschool. The price is \$10 for one child--\$15 for two children. The children will eat dinner, play games, watch movies, and socialize with their friends.



Also in November, on the 23rd from 10am-12pm, the children will be having their Thanksgiving Feast. It is a wonderful celebration that focuses on being thankful for the blessings we have all been given.

Our bible verse for the month is:

"Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his love endures forever!" Psalm 107:1

Our bible stories include:

The Battle of Jericho, David and Goliath, Jarls of Oil, Thanksgiving, Daniel and the Lions Den

Currently we have 24 children enrolled in the preschool. Each is a tremendous blessing, each has special qualities and gifts, each are a precious gift from God. We are so very thankful to have such wonderful students.

God's Blessings to all,
Ms. Tonja, Ms. Marsha, Ms. Moira, Ms. Grace,
Ms. Gail and Ms. Melinda

Small Group Corner

by Kevin Murphy

Unless you have been absent from church on Sundays in October, you know about the sign-ups for new Small Groups taking place in the narthex before and after services. The Small Group Steering Committee put together eleven new Small Groups to see if any would generate interest and the congregation has responded enthusiastically!

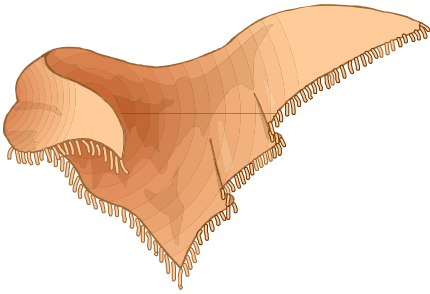
Below is a list of the new Small Groups we hope to begin organizing in the coming weeks. Once we have enough people for each group, we'll put everyone in contact with each other to work out their own organization including dates and times to meet.

1. **NEWLY RETIRED:** A small group for those newly retired and learning how to adjust to their new life outside the working world.
2. **THE BOOK CLUB:** A small group for anyone interested in reading a good book, including both secular and spiritual works.
3. **SINGLE AGAIN:** A small group for those recently single due to death, divorce, or separation. Aimed at adults who are still working and are able to meet during evenings and/or on weekends.
4. **THE CAMPING CLUB:** A small group for anyone interested in getting away to the great outdoors and spending time exploring.
5. **PULPIT PLEASURES:** A study group for those interested in examining weekly sermons presented by our pastors.
6. **PARENT SUPPORT:** A small group for those with children at home who are both sharing ideas and looking for ideas on how to raise their children.
7. **HEALTHLY LIVING:** A small group for those interested in learning how to eat right and exercise and how living healthy can be related scripture.
8. **LADIES NIGHT:** A small group for adult women of all ages interested in dining, movies and other social activities.
9. **MENS NIGHT OUT:** A small group for adult men of all ages interested in dining, movies, local sporting events, and other social activities.
10. **RAISING GRANDCHILDREN:** A support group for grandparents raising or helping to raise their grandchildren who want to learn more and share with others.
11. **CHILDREN OF ELDERLY PARENTS:** a support and advice group for children caring for elderly parents.

We are not limited to just this list. Other suggestions include a Stamp group, Beading group, Al Anon, a bicycle group, a wine and cheese group, a gardening group, a gourmet group, and a walking/hiking group. Signing up for a group doesn't commit you but we won't know the level of interest unless we hear from you. Look for us at church or feel free to sign up by calling (916) 342-2050 or send an email to skamurphy@hotmail.com.

We also have two existing Small Groups looking for new members. Jerry Steward's Small group is about to start a study called "The Screw Tape Letters" which is a study on temptation and how Christians deal with it. The group meets the first Wednesday of the month at 10am. Contact Jerry at 723-9633 or 300-1056 or email her at jerrysteward@comcast.net.

Janna Mikkelson has a group exploring and discussing the Nooma DVD Set: a series of modern-day parables that pertain to scripture. The group meets Monday evenings every three to four weeks. Contact Janna at 436-6971 or jmccarley78@hotmail.com.



Social Ministry Committee

A recent article in the Sacramento Bee “Prayer Shawl Ministry Knits Threads of Hope” described the caring ministry of St. John’s Episcopal Church in Roseville. Ascension also has a prayer shawl ministry featuring handmade shawls that are given to the sick, bereaved or those experiencing other hardships. A recent recipient said “I felt as if God was holding me in his loving arms. I can’t begin to thank the person who made that shawl with prayers for the unknown future recipient. I believe God knew it would be me and used that beautiful shawl to comfort me.” Thank you to the ladies of Ascension who make these comforting shawls. If you would like to help with the knitting of these shawls or if you know someone whose life could be brightened at a difficult time, please contact Parish Assistant Susan Van Vliet.

Chimes Choir

We are still looking for members to be a part of our “Chimes Choir”. If you can read music and would be interested in participating in this music ministry, please contact

Suzanne Still at (916) 728-5356
or email suestill@comcast.net

A Very Special Church...

In 2008, Ron & I made the difficult decision to leave a church that was slowly dying of old age and dissension. My Lutheran roots tugged at me; an internet search turned up a few Lutheran churches within a reasonable distance. We began our search for a new church home with a visit to Ascension. Its a little scary going to a new church for the first time, you wonder if anyone will talk to you, or perhaps look at you as though you dropped in from another planet, or maybe not even see you at all. To our great relief, we were recognized as visitors while still in the parking lot and warmly welcomed! Throughout the service we often smiled at each other, feeling the same joy. Our search for a new church home began and ended that day.

Ascension is a very special church!

We were pretty much blown away by all that Ascension offered...I love music of all kinds (well, maybe not Rap so much). I treasure the hymns from my childhood and also love clapping and dancing (more or less in place) to praise songs. We are so blessed with many dedicated and gifted musicians and singers and the opportunity to attend any one of three different services, wow! There is something here for everyone.

Ascension is a very special church!

Later that first year, we brought our then 15 yr. old grandson to help with Trunk or Treat. He was greeted by a member of the youth group and invited to both church and youth group meetings. He and the other kids have had the wonderful experience of demonstrating their faith and ministering to others on their mission trips, an experience that will forever touch their hearts and lives. We have a fantastic youth group and Sunday school at Ascension. I love seeing all the teens and little ones in church and find joy when an infant cries during a service! They are the church of the future. The seeds of faith are planted here.

Ascension is a very special church!

Every Thursday my dad in Connecticut receives a CD from Ascension. It is a recording of the 8 o'clock service. Dad is legally blind, and since mom went to heaven nearly two years ago, there is rarely anyone to drive him to the Lutheran church he and mom attended for nearly 50 years. I had heard about the CD ministry and asked if they would mind including him. On more than one occasion when I have spoken with him, he has been teary with gratefulness. We are hoping and praying he will be well enough to travel here for Christmas. He told me, "then I can thank them for sending me the CDs". Each Sunday, he listens to the service from the previous week, and his home health aides often listen along with him. The caring ministry of Ascension reaches across the continent!

Ascension is a very special church...because it is a very special group of people, people who reach out with the love of God in their hearts, love for the newborn infant to the orneriest teen, to the house bound elderly. Each Sunday, as I watch our church family gather at the communion table - some with babes in arms, others with canes or wheelchairs, each with their own story - to bow before our God and share in the Feast of His love, I feel so blessed.

So you knew the stewardship part was coming, right? Its no "Breaking News" that our church as well as many members are hurting economically. As I've listened to Pastor Mike and others speak about that, I've felt a bit worried for the future of our church but also challenged. First, I am challenged to have faith that God will show us the way; secondly I am challenged to be part of that way. I am so grateful to be a child of God and a part of this church family. How do I "pay it forward"? Perhaps that is a question for each of us to reflect and pray upon as we prepare once again to welcome the Child, born in a lowly manger, whose love changes everything.

In His Love,
Cheryl



Make It Simple

A Resource for Stewardship Education and Annual Response

**Stewardship Committee
By Ron Adams**

Sharing Enough

Philippians 4:11b-13 I have learned to be content with whatever I have. I know what it is to have little, and I know what it is to have plenty. In any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of being well-fed and of going hungry, of having plenty and of being in need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

What does “contentment” feel like? This is a difficult question in our current culture. When surveys have asked “How much is enough?” responses have consistently been “Twenty percent more than I have now.” If that is true, how do we break the endless circle that this leads us toward—it is always “twenty percent more.” We are told over and over every day—“You don’t have enough...What you have is fragile and could be gone at any moment...You have to go get more!” These messages come from a world focused on scarcity.

In this setting how do we understand our relationship with God? God is creator—we are God’s creatures. How do we live in relationship with our creator? Martin Luther reminds us in his explanation of the First Article of the Apostles’ Creed “that God has created me and all that exists...God daily and abundantly provides...all the necessities and nourishment for this body and life...out of pure, fatherly, and divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness of mine at all!” It is in this relationship that we recognize that God has abundantly provided us with all that we need. Living in that abundance we give of the blessings we have received.

If we focus on the scarcity, we never have enough. When we focus on God’s abundant blessings, there is more than we can ever imagine. Recognizing God’s abundant blessings we experience Paul’s message to the Philippians in our own lives. We can be content with what we have because we know that we are blessed and can “do all things through him who strengthens us.”

Youth News!

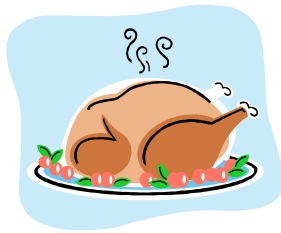


November 13th – 20th: Operation Christmas Child Boxes Due!!

The Youth group is collecting Operation Christmas Child boxes during this week. There are wrapped boxes placed out in the Narthex with information put within them that can be picked up and filled. You can also bring your own boxes that are wrapped where the box is wrapped with the lid separately so that it will open. Each box should have a label and 7 dollars placed in them. The last day they can be turned in is November 20th.

November 20th – Operation Christmas Child

We will be meeting at the church at 12:30 p.m. to go over to help up at the center that is collecting all the Operation Christmas Child boxes from 1 – 4 p.m. This is a great opportunity for our youth group to reach out and help out for those in need throughout the world!



November 20th – Thanksgiving Dinner

The youth group will be celebrating the Thanksgiving Holiday with all of our youth families. We will be having dinner from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. All youth families are welcome to join in. The youth group will provide the turkeys and the youth families will bring the side dishes. Please contact Sean (916) 508-4754 to RSVP so that we can have an accurate number of people attending so we have enough turkey.

Thanksgiving Holiday Food Basket List



| | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| <i>Turkey-Frozen</i> | <i>Pie</i> |
| <i>Stuffing Mix</i> | <i>Gravy</i> |
| <i>Jell-O</i> | <i>Vegetables</i> |
| <i>Mashed Potatoes</i> | <i>Canned Fruit</i> |
| <i>Canned Yams</i> | <i>Rolls</i> |
| <i>Cranberries Sauce</i> | <i>Butter</i> |
| <i>Fruit</i> | <i>Cool Whip</i> |

Ascension's WELCA group is gearing up for another Holiday giving season! They are asking for help in donations of your time, and/or food to fill the Holiday baskets.

These baskets will go to Ascension families that will benefit from a nice turkey dinner during the holidays, a meal that maybe they couldn't otherwise afford. Numbers allowing we will distribute next to friends of Ascension members, and to the families of the San Juan School District.

WELCA can also use your help when it's time to fill these baskets and distribute them! Pick up will be at the church, but there's work to be done to get ready for that day. Would you please consider helping?

Call Cindy or email her for more details!

Cindy.erickson@ch2m.com or 543-9913

Thank you!



Share the joys of the Christmas season!

This year we are blessed to have the opportunity to provide gifts to several kids in need.

We started right here at Ascension, then reached out to friends and to the local school district, to find families that need help this Holiday Season.

If you are able to give a gift, please remove a tag from the hanging tree in the lobby. (The tree will be up the week before Thanksgiving-keep watching for it!)

The tag will indicate the age of the child and what is needed.

Please attach the original tag to the gift and return unwrapped.

God Bless You for helping out children in need during this Christmas season!

Thank you!

Upcoming Events

40's + Activities

November 5 Dinner at Golden Corral 3:30p.m.
December 3 Blue Diamond Plant & Old Sacramento 10 a.m.
Contact Harold Swanson 332-3904 for more information.

Bereavement Group

Have you lost a spouse, family member, or friend? This group of men and women meets monthly at the church where we encourage one another through sharing and prayer. If you have questions, please contact Carole Boon (916) 729-3221. Our next meeting will be at 10:00 A.M. on November 15.

Ruth Circle

We will meet on November 9 at 1:00 P.M. in the Conference Rm #1. Our

Women of the evangelical Lutheran Church in America (WELCA)

WELCA meets the first Wednesday of each month at 6:00 P.M. in the Fellowship Hall.

Quilters

We meet the first and third Wednesday nine months of the year. Meeting time is 10 – noon. The quilts we make are given to those in need in our community, as well as graduates within our congregation. Come and help with this wonderful mission!

Pins & Needles/Mercy Ministry

We meet the 2nd Monday of each month from 10am - 12pm. All new-comers are welcome! Please call Louise Tichy at 725-5096 or Karen Walton at 728-1246 with any questions.

October Attendance

| | |
|--------|-----|
| Oct 2 | 302 |
| Oct 9 | 308 |
| Oct 16 | 298 |
| Oct 23 | 293 |

November 2011 Birthdays and Anniversaries



Birthdays

- 1 Max Dexter
Richard Simmons
- 3 David Miller-Mailhot
Mickey Tverberg
- 5 Wally Rosenberg
- 7 Mayda Brown
Kylie Thompson
- 8 Frank Blaha
Kaitlyn Flynn
Cecelia Linder
Violet Main
- 10 Stuart Slavin
- 12 Lillian Eichhorn
Letty Noggle
- 16 Richard Montgomery
- 18 Eileen Bruggeman
Gerald Peterson
- 21 Tom Orcutt
- 22 Linda Senteney
- 24 Jacob Davis
Sandi Ford
Betty Grimm
Kristen Neal
- 25 Bonnie Redding
- 26 Lois Miller
- 27 Marisa Senteney
- 28 Virginia Gifford
Mike Lawler
- 29 Jackie Blackwelder
John Razee
- 30 Beth Engelsgaard
Roger Linder
Alden Neff



Anniversaries

- 3 Sharon & Michael Carlson
- 8 Kelley & Darrin Moore
- 15 Tanya & Raymond Forbes
- 22 Dorothy & Rich Peterson
Meghann & John Wernegreen
- 23 Trudy & Robert Woodgate
- 24 Bernice & Bob Kent

Church Council

| | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| President | Doris Preston |
| Vice President | Tom Orcutt |
| Secretary | Jennifer Gallaway |
| Treasurer | Vicki Sears |
| Education | Amy Galyean |
| Evangelism | Angela Holmes |
| Life and Growth | Trudy Woodgate |
| Properties | Ron McCormick |
| Social Ministry | Rich Peterson |
| Stewardship | Ron Adams |
| Worship and Music | Janna Mikkelson |
| Youth | Michael Messina |
| Preschool | Linda Irion |
| Stephen Ministry | Bruce Boraas |

LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION

7607 Garden Gate Drive, Citrus Heights, CA 95621

Office - (916) 723-5223 Fax - (916) 722-7316

Ascension Christian Preschool - (916) 723-8455

Church Website: www.luthchurch.org

Administration & Staff

Michael Murphy Pastor
murphlonn@surewest.net

Allen Dunn Pastor
adunn@luthchurch.org

Susan Van Vliet Parish Asst
susanv@luthchurch.org

Beth Messina Music Coordinator
messinas@surewest.net

Roger Linder Praise Band Director
roger@rocmabra.com

Melinda Mortensen Preschool Director
ascensionpreschool@comcast.net

Sean Carpenter Youth Director
seanandmoira@gmail.com

Justin Carballar Asst Youth Director
carbiemagoo@yahoo.com

Helena Fisk Secretary
helenaf@luthchurch.org

MISSION STATEMENT

Welcoming all people to faith in Jesus Christ, Teaching them to observe all Christ has commanded, and equipping them for loving service.

Weekly Office Hours

9:15 am - Noon

1:00 - 4:30 pm

Food Closet Hours

Monday - Thursday

9:30 am - 2:00 pm

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**Lutheran Church of the Ascension**  
7607 Garden Gate Dr.  
Citrus Heights, CA 95621

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**CHANGE SERVICE REQUEST**

