

**LUTHERAN CHURCH OF
THE ASCENSION**
7607 Garden Gate Drive
Citrus Heights, CA 95621

Sunday Worship

8:00 & 11:00 A.M.
Traditional & Blended
9:30 A.M.
Contemporary Worship
9:30 & 11:00 A.M.
Christian Education



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The Ascension Herald



FEBRUARY

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

February is often thought of as the month of “love.” We all enjoy Valentine’s Day— hearts, flowers, and remembering those we love with gifts to show them that we care. But, how do we show our love at Ascension and to our brothers and sisters in Christ? Remembering and praying for those who are ill or having a hard time with life’s challenges is one way.

Pastor Mike will be undergoing surgery on February 8th. Praying for him and his family during this time will show our love for him. Coming to church each Sunday in his absence will show our love for Ascension and help give support to each other. It will also show our support for our beloved Pastor Mike. Continuing our offerings during this time, attending Bible studies, and other planned services will also show our support and love.

Last month, Susie invited those with a bit of free time to call her about opportunities here at Ascension. If you have not made that call, maybe this is the time to pick up the phone. I am sure she will have an opportunity for you to share your talent and love. She will help tailor something just for you, and then you will probably wonder why you hadn’t done it sooner.

The small groups which are forming always have an empty chair. Try out something that interests you. These groups then become your support group. Recently someone said to me, “Boy, you know everybody here.” I can assure you that I do not “know everybody.” But by becoming involved with various small groups, you get to know those around you on another level—not just saying “good morning” at the Sunday services. Ascension then becomes your extended family—just like I feel that it is my family. So, during this month of “love,” show that you care. Pray for your Ascension family and support our church by attending services and classes and giving regularly. Especially pray for our Pastor Mike and his family during his coming surgery. Also support and pray for Pastor Dunn and the rest of the staff as they continue the day to day operations of our church.

I pray that each member of my Ascension family will enjoy God’s richest blessings and feel the love that we extend to each other.

Your sister in Christ,
Doris

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.

From the Pulpit



**Lead Pastor
Mike**

These last months at the encouragement of staff and the request of many members I have been utilizing this space and opportunity to keep the congregation appraised concerning my impending surgery and its implications on our common ministry. A date now appears to be set for February the 8th at 7am out of Sutter General Down Town.

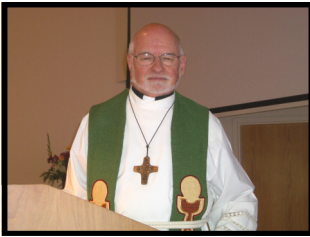
Some have speculated that I am dealing with a medical condition that has been deteriorating and this is why I am having further surgery -- people are falsely concluding that things are different from what they are being told having felt misled concerning my previous repeated emergency surgeries last May. None of these speculations are accurate. Basically after undergoing repeated major surgical procedures last May and dealing with serious complications and serious illness the trauma imposed on my body convinced the caring physicians that it would be prudent to postpone repairs (hernias), reconstructions (colostomy-reversal) and closures (my significant wounds were left virtually open) until my body had time to recover and strengthen -- I have been a person in waiting. In other words like "Humpty Dumpty" I am still in pieces but with a significant difference -- all of Sutter's doctors can and will put me back together again.

As I have articulated in previous writings the recovery for this process is suppose to be rather difficult and it will require at a minimum eight to ten weeks before I can resume most normal activities. In the interim, having the time to prepare and not being caught by a major emergency this time around, preparations have been made. There will be excellent preaching on Sunday mornings and our Syndical office (the Bishop's office -- who have been much more than supportive) have provided us with Pulpit Supply, Weekly Worship Leadership and excellent on-call pastor care in Pastor Mary Adelsberger. We are a blessed congregation as well because we have so many trained and gifted members. We currently have two members who have graduated recently from Seminary and two ordained clergy persons who are members as well and who will provided support for Pastor Dunn (we are of a size as a congregation which requires two pastors on staff) and additional pulpit supply (Sunday Morning Sermons). Janna Mikkelson will assist with on-call Pastor support (as will two ordained clergy in the area), teach Confirmation in my place, provide pulpit supply, teach one of my bible studies, and provide the logistical support for our Lenten special services as well as, with Pastor Dunn, provide oversight and expertise. All of my classes and responsibilities have been entrusted to persons (with back-up persons) who possess the particular gifts necessary. Decisions pertaining to matters of a foreseen nature, anticipated nature or proactive nature have been pre-directed and persons have been given appropriate authority to enact them and leadership has been informed. We are about as prepared as we can be for both the anticipated and the possible unexpected. God has provided us with staff of unusual abilities and Lay leaders of unusual giftedness. With your prayers and support our ministry will continue to be conducted with excellence for the sake of the One whom we love and who loves and strengthens us -- Jesus Christ our precious Savior, let our unified sacrifices bring Him the Glory. Jesus be praised!

ALSO, I am making this special request that every member who is able please be in church on the 5th of February -- I want to speak to you uniquely from my heart on pertinent matters which concern me.

See you in church,

Pastor Mike



Pastor Allen

Many of you are in small groups, some that have been around for a while and some that are just starting. People often ask me about study materials for their small groups. I have some very brief comments about that.

First, the small group steering committee has a list of all the audio visual materials that are for small groups. I have a copy of that list in my office. Some of you also have copies.

Second, the up to date VHS and DVD materials are in my office. That is a central location and everybody knows how to find my office. The materials are at eye level on my book shelves. I am still in the process of putting the material in alphabetical order. If somebody wants to help me with that, please let me know. There is also a sign-out sheet on one of the shelves and it is easy to find.

Third, if you would like to look at the audio visual materials, let me know and when you might be able to come by. Sundays are always good and my door is usually open, if you want to look at what's there. But during the week, just call and I will be available. If it happens that I am out on a visit when perhaps you just drop by without calling first, just tell Helena or Susie that you are going into my office and then come on in. My door is usually open unless I am gone for the day.

I look forward to seeing you looking over the materials on the book shelves.

Parish Assistant

There are lots of exciting things happening here at Ascension! Yes changes too; but those can be exciting. As I write this we are accepting resumes for a new youth director. While Sean will be missed by everyone, I can't help but be energized and eager to have a new person on board. This is an opportunity for us to not only show our support for the youth group in a tangible way by providing a person of exceptional personal traits, but it's also an opportunity to provide an excellent mentor to our youth. Only those applicants with theology training and stellar character traits are being considered-only the best for our youth and their families.

Lenten Season is almost upon us, which means Soup Suppers are in the works. Janna Mikkelson will be leading the Lenten teachings this year; Janna was a tremendous help to the staff during Pr Mike's illness last year, and has selflessly offered to help again during this next surgery and recovery (thank you Janna!). The season of Lent starts with Ash Wednesday on Feb 22nd, and as always Ascension will offer the Imposition of Ashes in the sanctuary from 9-12pm. You can drop in anytime during that time frame and receive a blessing and the cross of ashes on your forehead. Why ashes you say?

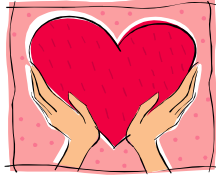
- Ashes are a symbol of our need to repent, confess our sins, and return to God.
- Ashes remind us of God's condemnation of sin, as God said to Adam, "Dust you are and to dust you shall return" (Genesis 3:19).
- Ashes suggest cleansing and renewal. They were used anciently in the absence of soap. On Ash Wednesday ashes are a penitential substitute for water as a reminder of our baptism.
- Ashes remind us of the shortness of human life, for it is said as we are buried: "earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust."

Don't forget to attend the Ash Wednesday evening service at 7pm, and from February 29th through March 28th we will hold soup suppers at 5:30pm, preceding the Wednesday night services. Please get your friends together and SIGN UP to cover the kitchen on one of the 5 soup supper nights. A representative from WELCA will attend each night to advise the group in how to set up etc, so you will not be all alone. The soups and desserts will have sign ups also, so keep watching for these on Sunday mornings.

I also encourage you to give me a call anytime, and make an appointment to see me. A large part of my mission here is to ensure you are using your gifts and passions in a way that is meaningful to you and the church. I know we keep saying this...but you are here for a reason. It is not by coincidence or accident you are reading this right now. If you have felt pulled to be a part of something at the church, that's because you are being pulled by the Holy Spirit to use the gifts He gave you. Maybe you're just not sure where you can serve and what you would be good at? Let me help you find the right place of service for you.

Blessings,
Susie

ASCENSION CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL NEWS



The children look forward to their Valentine Party each year. They have been busy creating special Valentine's for their friends and family, and love to share them at our party on February 14th. It is an opportunity for the children to practice their writing skills as they address their Valentines, as well as practice their manners as they share in a special lunch together.

Our bible verse for the month is: 1 John 4:7

"My dear friends, we must love each other."

Our themes for the month are:

Valentines, Presidents, Dinosaurs, Small World

We hope to have a special visit from the Tooth Fairy this month as well!

Special Events:

Valentine Party—February 14th @ 10:00am

(crafts, delivery of Valentines, special lunch)

School Closed—February 20th in observance of President's Day

We currently have 27 students attending the preschool. The preschool, and daycare, have openings for students age 2-5 years. We have full time and part-time options. We would love to share God's word, and his love, with more little friends. Please help us by telling friends and family members about our school. The teachers at Ascension are kind, loving, creative, patient, and energetic! They would love to share their gifts with more children. Thank you for all your support!

In Christ,

Ms. Marsha, Ms. Tonja, Ms. Melinda, Ms. Gail and Ms. Grace

Social Ministry

Please Support the Souper Bowl of Caring

More than 20 years ago the Souper Bowl of Caring began with a simple prayer from a single youth group "Lord, as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us to be mindful of those without even a bowl of soup to eat." Since that day, the Souper Bowl has raised more than \$81 million for local charities across the country.

Ascension youth will again participate with a service project sorting packaged foods at the Placer Food Bank on Saturday, February 4. **On Sunday, February 5** the youth will be holding soup kettles at the exits after all three services to collect donations for the Placer Food Bank to buy food for hungry people in the community. Please donate if you can and bring a can of soup, fruit, vegetables or any packaged nonperishable food to replenish WELCA's food pantry at Ascension. Thank you for your generous support during these very difficult economic times.

Small Group Corner

It's been a very exciting few weeks for Small Groups at Ascension. Several new Small Groups have organized and will start to meet or are scheduled to have their first meetings soon. Below is a list of new groups that are getting started.

The **Pulpit Pleasures Small Group** is currently meeting each Monday from 5pm to 6:30pm at Ascension. Pulpit Pleasures is a study group for those interested in examining weekly sermons presented by our pastors.

The **Healthy Living Small Group** will meet for the first time on Monday, February 6 at 7pm in the Fellowship Hall at Ascension. The purpose of the group is to promote good health practices and for some of us, shed a few unwanted pounds. Contact Dave Little at 723-5772 or littlemjo@msn.com for more information.

Because of the long list of those interested in joining, **The Book Club** is going to have a group that meets during the day and one that meets in the evening. If you are interested in the day group, contact Jerry Steward at 723-9633 or jerrysteward@comcast.net. If you are interested in the evening group, contact Justine Moyer at 722-2762 or justinel-eem@surewest.net.

Children of Elderly Parents will be meeting for the first time on Tuesday, February 21 at 7pm at the church. This small group is a support and advice group for children caring for elderly parents. Contact Sue Ridgeley at 721-3464 or ridglese@comcast.net for more information.

Several other groups are in the process of organizing for their first meetings soon. They include the **Newly Retired Small Group**, **The Camping Club**, the **Gourmet/Wine Group**, and the **Ladies Night Small Group**. We're also still taking names for those interested in these Small Groups: **Single Again**, a small group for those recently single due to death, divorce, or separation and aimed at adults who are still working and are able to meet during evenings and/or on weekends; **Parent Support**, a small group for those with children at home who are both sharing ideas and looking for ideas on how to raise children; the **Walking Group**, a group for walking, talking, and just getting out to exercise; and **Men's Night Out**, a small group for adult men of all ages interested in dining, movies, local sporting events, and other social activities.

Of course, there are many other existing Small Groups in our church that deserve attention as well: **40+ Actives**, **Quilting**, **Ruth Circle**, the **Bereavement Group**, etc. Additionally we have several Small Groups which study scripture and religious texts. The Small Group Steering Committee is hoping that within the next few months, we'll have a new system for keeping everyone up to date with meeting times and locations for each Small Group. Perhaps a bulletin board somewhere at church or a separate webpage and/or newsletter online. Suggestions are always welcome! Contact Kevin Murphy at (916) 342-2050 or skamurphy@hotmail.com.

Council Corner

- Worship and Music announced that there will be two healing services; the first on January 29th for the 8:00 and 11:00 services and on February 5th for the 9:30 service.
- A hiring committee has been chosen to support in the search for our new youth director.
- Life and Growth has chosen Pirates of the Caribbean as the theme for the next summer barbeque. The pastry challenge will take place on March 11th.
- Evangelism will have the new welcome table up and running on February 5th. Next new members' class will start on January 29th and it will go through March 11th.
- Social Ministry will be holding their "Soup Bowl Sunday" to help collect funds for hunger relief on February 5th. And this year we are asking that you also bring a canned or packaged food item for our food pantry.

Ascension Youth News - February 2012

February 4th: Souper Day of Giving

We will be meeting at the church the church at 8:30 a.m. so that we can be at the Placer County Food bank at 9 a.m. We will be helping them out for several hours and will be back at the church around 12 p.m.

February 5th: Souper Day of Giving (collecting money)

At the end of all three services we will have teens placed at all the main exits with large soup pots to collect money to give to the Placer County Food Bank.

February 5th: Super Bowl Party

We will be meeting at the Mortensen's house at 3 p.m. to hang out together to watch the Super Bowl. Everyone needs to bring some kind of snack or drinks to share with everyone else. Everyone can be picked up at 7:30 when the game is over.

February 24th - 25th: 30 Hour Famine

We will be meeting at Faith Lutheran at 6 p.m. and will be having a great night of playing games and learning about hunger throughout the world. We will be teaming up with the Faith Lutheran youth group. They will be working on service projects on Saturday and will be breaking the fast that afternoon. Pick up at Faith Lutheran at 4 p.m. on Saturday the 25th.

Season of Lent Ash Wednesday Feb 22nd

Lenten Services Wednesday Night Services and Soup Suppers

*Ash Wednesday
February 22nd*

*Stop by the sanctuary for
Imposition of Ashes &
Holy Communion 9-
12pm*

*Services that
evening at 7pm*



Soup Suppers 5:30pm

Lenten Service 7pm

*February 29 &
March 7, 14, 21, 28*

Come and enjoy fellowship and good food with us.

We hope to see you there! All are welcome.

Treasurer's Report

As of December 31, 2011



Checking Account—Actual Balance \$8,325.40

Year to date income from all sources	\$63,173.49	Year to date expenses
\$53,872.08		

We have started the 2012 fiscal year in a positive way. All of the bills and benevolences for the month of December have been paid.

As of December 31, 2011 all bills were paid. Benevolence payments totaling \$5,474.22 were made during the 1st month of the 2012 fiscal year. (Ascension's fiscal year is December 1, 2011 through November 30, 2012.)

The total offerings received during the 1st month of the 2012 fiscal year were \$61,789.39 Offerings include regular and restricted (white envelopes), loose plate, Sunday school, Simply Giving and Thrivent Choice Dollars that are designated as regular or restricted. 15.61% of the offerings received were designated as restricted, which means that the donors do not want their offerings included in calculating the congregation's basic benevolence amounts. (10.5% of General Fund offerings are designated for benevolence.) The unpaid restricted benevolence amount as of December 31st is \$5,852.90.

Stocks:

Value carried in the financial records:	\$17,262.85	
Value from the December 31 Broker Report:	\$41,127.44	(up \$1,469.46 from November)

Money Market Fund:

Value carried in the financial records:	\$6,498.12	
Value from the December 31 Broker report:	\$7,310.17	(up \$306.35)

Mortgage:

The outstanding mortgage balance on December 14, 2011 was \$411,410.99
 An extra principal payment of \$2,013 was made with the funds received for debt retirement in November.

A copy of the complete December 2011 financial report that includes the statement of financial position , the statement of activities for all General Fund accounts, and the statement of activities for all dedicated accounts, is posted on the kiosk in the narthex.

Vicki Sears
 Treasurer

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:

*Danny Ramirez, Daniel Garcia, Kevin McGibbon, Jason Cutter,
 Clint Palmquist, James Swanson, John Wernegreen, Ross Nolan,
 and the members of the Special Operations Liaison Element.
 Pour your love and care on their families. Amen*



Life & Growth Committee

Greetings Everyone,

Your Life & Growth Committee has been in the planning stages again. We had a very successful summer event which I am sure most of you remember Harry Potter, and then we followed with our Annual Chili and cornbread cook-off. We have some awesome chili chefs here at Ascension. **Thank you!**

Well we are back at it again and are working on our annual Pastry Challenge, so get out those recipes or prepare your palette to judge this delicious event. This one will be held in March 11, 2012. Look for more information to follow.

This summer prepare your hearts, minds and best costumes to meet our best rendition of Captain Jack Sparrow when **"Pirates of the Caribbean"** will take over Ascension. We have a lot of fun planned for everyone on this one so plan on joining us. Tentatively set for June 9th. Watch for the flyers.

Coffee Hour: We would really like to give all of you a heartfelt **"Thank You"** for all of the great items you have been bringing for Coffee hour. We turned to our wonderful congregation and asked you to help us out with our budget by bringing in items and you brought some of the best items I have ever seen or tasted. **Thank you again** and please keep those goodies coming. If you don't bake we will also take coffee, coffee creamers, napkins, coffee cups, apple juice and many more items. Please see me (I am usually in the kitchen) if you have any questions.

I believe that all of us pray for this congregation as I do so please keep your prayers coming while we face some challenges here in the very near future. We are a very strong family and I believe we can do anything we set our minds, hearts and prayers to do.

God's Blessings to All,

Trudy Woodgate
Committee Chairman



The Power of Prayer

We have a new prayer ministry here at Ascension. Every month, we will be praying for a different church during our Sunday services, and we encourage our parishioners to keep this church in their daily prayers. Last month we prayed for Advent Lutheran Church, this month we are praying for **Grace Lutheran Church, 433 F St. Lincoln, CA 95648**. Please pray for to congregation to embrace, support, and pray for their new pastor, Judy Morgado, and their new council; for the congregation to stay united.

Every month the staff will contact the designated church, and ask for any special prayer requests. We will also encourage their parishioners to visit us and make themselves known to our family. We encourage our Ascension family to do the same! Take a visit to their church, and get to know our brothers and sisters in Christ.

It is no doubt that praying for each other will strengthen our ministries. As God's children we must reach out to be a support system to each other!

If you have a church in mind, please email one of our staff and we will create a 2012 schedule of churches.

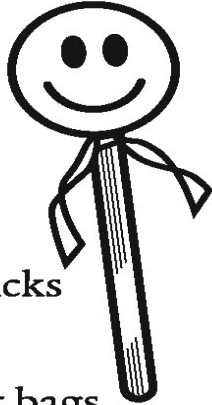
Thank you for your continued prayer life and support of our large family!

A COOKIE SMILE

Make these cheerful lollipop cookies to share.

What you need:

- An adult to help
- 1 roll of sugar cookie dough
- Knife
- Cookie sheet
- Wooden craft sticks
- Frosting
- Sprinkles
- Cellophane treat bags
- Ribbon



What you do:

1. Freeze the roll of dough.
2. Cut dough into ¼-inch slices.
3. Place slices 2 inches apart on cookie sheet.
4. Bake at 350 degrees for five minutes.
5. Remove cookies from oven and place a stick into the bottom of each cookie (about 1 inch into the dough).
6. Return cookies to the oven until done, three to five more minutes.
7. After cookies are cool, make a “face” on each one, using frosting and sprinkles.
8. Put cookies into bags and tie with a ribbon. Then give away these edible smiles!

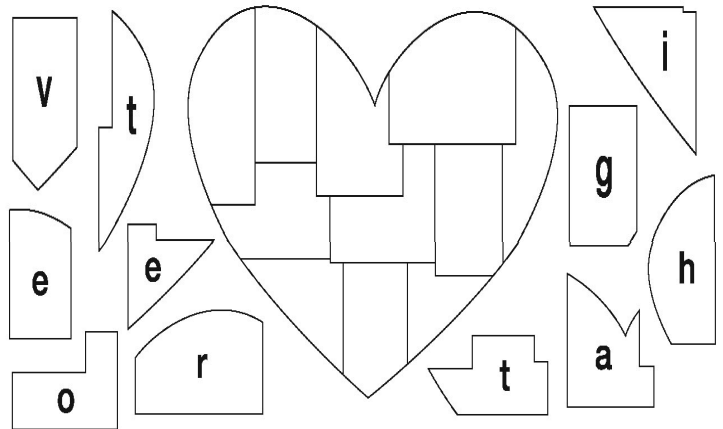


HOW TO GIVE

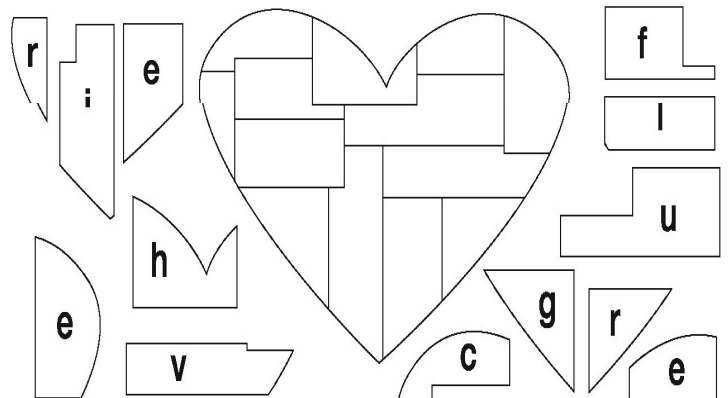
We can give in a variety of ways, including our money, possessions and time. But God says there's only one attitude to have when we give.

Finish the puzzles by matching the pieces and writing out the letters in order to complete 2 Corinthians 9:7, NIV.

“Each of you should give what you have decided in your ...



... not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a ...



Answers: heart to give, cheerful giver

February 2012 Birthdays &

Happy Birthday

Happy Anniversary

1	Kiera Maciel	17	Joshua McCrory
	Masako Swanson	19	Stephen Davis
2	Bob Edmondson		Sarah Engelsgaard
	Eric Erickson	22	Dolores Finn
	Bill Farnsworth	23	Marilyn Champ
	Kristen Williams		Benjamin Corbett
3	Janet Benton		David McGibbon
	Patti Kerley	24	Sara Davis
4	Patricia Engelsgaard	26	Lou Ann Cederlof
6	Margaret Bernard	27	Julia (Messina) Anderson
	Duane Engelsgaard	28	Scott Costa
7	Phil Guemmer		Bethany Peterson
8	Carol Best	29	Tamara Main
	Shelby Evans		
	Tim Pavelchik		
	Joshua Sigler		
10	Deanna Ferrell		
11	Carole Boon		
	Jerry Schumacher		
14	Raymond Forbes		
15	Dede Zampardi		
16	Helena Fisk		
	Tina McCoy		
	Lloyd Monson		



2	Deborah & Mark Jones
3	Jackie & Chuck Blackwelder
8	Kay & Craig Emery
10	Marianne & Bob Shoff
14	Cathy & John Krutzer
17	Melissa & Dave Williams
21	Lonnie & Mike Murphy
25	Linda & Scott Senteney

If we have omitted anyone, please accept our apologies and call the church office so we can correct our records. Thank you.

**Happy Birthday and
Happy Anniversary to all!**

The Broadway play "Wicked" is coming to the Sacramento Community Center in June and Harry Carlson has a couple blocks of seats. If you are interested in finding out more about the play and tickets, please contact Harry at 991-0476.



**THE ASCENSION HERALD
LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION**

7607 Garden Gate Drive, Citrus Heights, CA 95621
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Church Website: www.luthchurch.org

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Michael Murphy murphlonn@surewest.net	Lead Pastor
Allen Dunn adunn@luthchurch.org	Pastor
Susan Van Vliet susanv@luthchurch.org	Parish Asst
Beth Messina messinas@surewest.net	Music Coordinator
Roger Linder roger@rocemabra.com	Praise Band Director
Melinda Mortensen ascensionpreschool@comcast.net	Preschool Director
Sean Carpenter seanandmoira@gmail.com	Youth Director
Justin Carballar carbiemagoo@yahoo.com	Asst Youth Director
Helena Fisk helenaf@luthchurch.org	Secretary

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

9:00 am - Noon
1:00 - 4:00 pm

Food Closet Hours

Monday - Thursday
9:30 am - 2:00 pm

Lutheran Church of the Ascension
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CHANGE SERVICE REQUEST

