

CONNECTIONS

The Newsletter of ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH

6520 Loma De Cristo, El Paso, Texas 79912

February 2010

Connecting the Community to Christ

Bob Lambeth, Director of Christian Education

Pamela Miller, Office Coordinator

Veronica Matthews, Director Ascension Day School

WORSHIP SERVICES

Sunday 8:00 A.M. and 10:30 a.m.

Family Bible Hour 9:15 a.m.

Wednesday Lenten Services 7:00 p.m. (starting February 17)

IN THIS ISSUE

Spiritual Food
Saints of Ascension
Studying the Word
Music Ministry
January Church Council Minutes
Treasurer's Report
Mid-Week Lenten Services
Altar Care
Helping Hands
Prayer Chain
Scout Sunday
Ruth Salcido's Address
Card Shower for Connie Steelhammer
Fellowship Hour Refreshment Guide
Ysleta Lutheran Mission Store
Cummings' New Address
Helping Haiti
Getting To Know You
Youth
Ascension Day School
February Birthdays
Our Soldiers
Food For Thought
Just For Laughs
Business Listings

February At-a-Glance

- **LUNCH BUNCH:** Friday, Feb. 5th, 11:20 a.m. @ Jaxon's near Executive Center.
- **SCOUT SUNDAY:** Feb. 7th
- **YOUTH LOCK-IN:** Friday, Feb. 12. Meet at the church @ 7 p.m.
- **TRANSFIGURATION SUNDAY CHORAL SERVICE:** Feb. 14th, 4 p.m. @ Zion Lutheran Church.
- **LENTEN SERVICES:** Begin Ash Wednesday, February 17th @ 7 p.m. Each service will be preceded by a soup supper at 6 p.m.

SPIRITUAL FOOD FOR FEBRUARY **SPIRITUAL FOOD FOR FEBRUARY**

January 31 – February 6

Jer. 1:4-10, 17-19; 1 Cor. 12:31b-13:13; Luke 4:31-44

February 7 – 13

Is. 6:1-13; 1 Cor. 14:12b-20; Luke 5:1-11

February 14 – 20

(Feb.14 is Transfiguration of our Lord)

Deut. 34:1-12; Heb 3:1-6; Luke 9:28-36

(February 17 is Ash Wednesday)

Joel 2:12-19; 2 Cor. 5:20b-6:10; Matt. 6:1-6, 16-21

February 21 - 27

Deut. 26:1-11; Rom. 10:8b-13; Luke 4:1-13

February 28 – March 6

Jer. 26:8-15; Phil. 3:17-4:1; Luke 13:31-35

Source: Lectionaries section in the Lutheran Service Book

You will find the Lutheran Hour Ministries' Sunday sermons and daily and Lenten devotions on the internet at
www.lhr.org

SAINTS OF ASCENSION

Dear Friends in Christ,

Would you agree that God is certainly patient with all our uncertainties about Him? Yet, we have Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, who have answered many of the questions we have concerning God.

Suppose God asked us some questions? Things like.....

What if I decided to stop leading you tomorrow because you didn't follow Me today?

What if I couldn't take the time to bless you today because you couldn't take time to thank Me yesterday?

What if you never saw another flower bloom because you grumbled when I sent the rain?

What if I didn't walk with you today because you failed to recognize it as My day?

What if I took away the Bible tomorrow because you would not read it today?

What if I took away My message because you failed to listen to the messenger?

What if I didn't send My only begotten Son because He wanted you to be prepared to pay the price for sin?

What if the door of the church was closed because you did not open the door of your heart?

What if I stopped loving and caring for you because you failed to love and care for others?

What if I would not hear you today because you would not listen to Me?

What if I answered your prayers the way you answer My call to service?

What if I met your needs the way you give me your lives???

As the season of Lent approaches, let us all search our hearts and ask our loving Father to help us, in Jesus name!

Your friend in Christ,

Bob Lambeth,DCE

2

STUDYING THE WORD THROUGH BIBLE CLASSES

Wednesday Morning Bible Study for Women—This is an excellent opportunity to take part in a long term study of God's Word. The group meets on Wednesday morning at 10:00 in the church conference room. Contact B.J. Schwab at for more information.

Thursday Morning Ladies Bible Study Group meets at 9:45 am in the home of Sue Anderson. The group has just begun a Beth Moore study *Jesus The One and Only*. Contact Sue at for additional information.

The Lunch Bunch—meets the first Friday of every month at Jaxson's, near Executive Center, at 11:20. All are welcome for devotion, great food, and prayer!

Men's Saturday Bible Study—Meets every Saturday morning at 8:05 in the Fellowship Hall. The topic being discussed is the Early Church. A light breakfast and coffee is served each Saturday morning. All men of the congregation are welcome along with friends.

MUSIC MINISTRY

The **Chancel Choir** rehearses Wednesday evenings at 7 p.m. Once the Lenten season begins, practices will be held immediately following the evening worship services. Please consider adding your voice as the choir prepares music for the Lenten and Easter seasons.

REPORTS

January Council Minutes

Financial Secretary: The year-to-date actual general fund offerings, through December 31, 2009, are \$325K. This is \$3,000 more than last year. We are \$11K under budget. There were good offerings in December, just not as high as anticipated. A total of \$999 was collected for Haiti at the end of services on January 17, 2010.

Trustees: AT&T has told us not to give up on the cell phone tower. They were not satisfied with the outcome of the City Council Vote. AT&T is not finished with proposing the cell phone tower on the Church's property. Rotor Rooter was called regarding clogged pipes. They ran a camera through the lines. The lines are in good shape. At the end of the belly of the line a lot of sludge was found. The trustees will drop enzyme tablets into the lines once a month and hope that will clear up the sludge that is gathering there. If the enzymes don't work, a pressure cleanout will be required. This will cost approximately \$1,100. Elliott has received a quote of \$14,000 to redo the parking lot, this includes everything; and a \$6,000 quote to do the screws and flashing on the roof. Both jobs are a work in process and the trustees are still getting quotes. The Day School had heating problems in early January. The heating was checked and a recommendation was made to replace the thermostat for \$1,100. As of right now the thermostat is working fine and if the need arises to replace the thermostat, the trustees will do it for the cost of the thermostat and the seven wires.

Stewardship: The following changes have been made to the budget:

Account 4140 (\$284) move to line item 4393.

Youth retreat funds now will be line item 4325.

Changed account number for Lutheran Witness to line item 6189.

Salaries for the choir director and organist have been in error on the budget for the last few years. Corrected figures are: \$7,104 for the choir director and \$9,288 for organist; \$7,766 - \$7,104 = \$662, moved to line item 6690; \$10,480 - \$9,288 = \$1,192, moved to line item 6622.

Additional changes: Corrected line item 6614 to 2010 estimate of \$33,628, moved surplus of \$13,184 to line item 6608 (\$6,616 + \$13,184 = \$19,800. Combined line item 6618 and interim pastor savings \$127,304 + \$31,386 = \$48,690 to a new line item 6606. The subtotals and total expense remain the same.

3

Day School: The Day School Board appointed Ron Spott as a member because he had completed his four-year term. On February 1, 2010, a total of 71 students will be enrolled. Day School registration for the 2010-11 school year begins the week of February 1.

Youth: The Youth Board met January 7. Two members were present, along with Pam Miller. Pam will be an ex-officio member. The week before Valentine's Day the Youth will be selling Valentine lollipops for 50 cents each as a fundraising project for the National Youth Conference. The Youth Board was thinking of making this fundraiser fun by having the youth compete with the adults to see who could sell the most lollipops. Stay tuned. They will also be holding a yard sale on March 6 to raise funds for the National Youth Conference. The congregation is encouraged to donate items they no longer want to the yard sale.

The youth will be having a lock-in on Friday, February 12.

For the National Youth Conference the board needs to decide on the adults who will go. Tanya Rohwer will be the female adult attending; Lounell Southard is the back-up.

Paula Beach volunteered to buy pizzas for one of the youth meetings/parties. The Hjalmsquists volunteered to do the spaghetti dinner fundraiser, date yet to be decided. Ross Weber will match any donations up to \$500 for the National Youth Conference fundraiser.

New Business:

Lent: Sue Anderson will organize the Lenten Soup Suppers and Lounell will assist her. The Elders will do the first soup supper on February 17.

CNTF: Two names have been submitted for the Intentional Interim Pastor. Additional names and biographical information should be arriving from District before January 31. Afterwards the CNTF will do scripted phone interviews and background checks. Once a list of names has been created a congregational meeting will be called to decide on which pastor to ask to be ALC's interim pastor. If anyone one knows of anybody who may be interested in being an interim pastor please tell the Elders.

February 14 is Transfiguration Sunday at Zion Lutheran Church at 4:00 pm. Area Choirs have been invited to sing Christmas or Epiphany music.

The Second Annual choral festival will be at Ascension Lutheran Church on April 18th at 4:00 pm. Area choirs will be invited to attend. A light supper will be served following.

A bill will be coming up for the 2010 Synodical Convention. ALC has already budgeted the \$672.30 that will be due no later than March 1.

Repairs need to be done to the organ. Linda Dunn talked to Mark Van Daalen, an organ repairman. Mr. Daalen submitted an invoice than included replacing three speakers, revoicing the organ, labor and travel expenses. The total is approximately \$1,376; \$1,500 has been budgeted for repair. Mike Wolfenbarger moved that we repair the organ. **MSC**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m. with the Lord's Prayer.

Terry Weber, Secretary

Treasurer's Report

Church	Jan-Dec 09
Offerings	\$329,569
Other Income	\$46,421
Total Income	\$375,990
Expenses	\$347,894
Net Income	\$28,096

Day School	Aug-Dec 09
Income	\$71,869
Expenses	\$66,374
Net Income	\$5,495

Michael Radach, Treasurer

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

MID-WEEK LENTEN SERVICES: Plan now to be with us for Soup Suppers at 6:00 p.m. and Lenten Services at 7:00 p.m., which will start on Ash Wednesday, February 17 and continue up to Holy Week. Ash Wednesday is an opportunity to receive ashes—the wearing of ashes serves as a reminder of our mortality, our sin, and our hope for renewal of repentant living through the death and resurrection of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

February Altar Care--8:00: Charlene Radach and Billie Meitler 10:30 B.J. Schwab

HELPING HANDS OF ASCENSION – is organized by Ascension's Board of Christian Service. It consists of volunteers who bring meals to families of Ascension. Bob Lambeth, DCE, will get in touch with the group's chairperson when he hears of a home that needs assistance. If you have a need, please call the church office or talk with Bob 833-1009.

Helping Hands for February, 2010: (The asterisk represents the group's leader.) *Gretchen Schmalz, June Chacon, Vicki Cox, Stephanie Silverthorn, Donna Tuchenhagen, Norma Rust.

Prayer Chain of Ascension: is composed of congregational members who have agreed to pray for members and non-members concerns. Your prayer requests can be sent to Olga Sullivan or Jan Schlak, and they will activate the Prayer Chain. Prayers have been requested for a variety of needs, including thanksgiving, concerns, health, and family. It takes a matter of minutes to offer up a prayer, and it is a simple and needed act of Christian Service. If you would like to be a part of this ministry, contact Olga or Jan and you can be notified of prayer requests via phone or e-mail. There are no requirements to be a part of this ministry—all you need is a willingness to pray!

SCOUT SUNDAY FEBRUARY 7

All current Scouts, Boys, Girls, and parents, from all Troops and Dens are encouraged to wear their uniforms and help usher. Scouts arrive at 10:00 am and receive assignments for ushering from Michael Kelly.

NOTICE TO FRIENDS OF RUTH SALCIDO!!!

Ruth will be celebrating her 90th birthday on March 8th.

Her address: Ruth Salcido, Luther Haven, 8949 N. 97th Street, Apt. D—213, Milwaukee, WI 53224-1695

CARD SHOWER: Lets all send Connie Thinking of You Cards to let her know how much she is thought of! We can shower her with love and prayers during a difficult time! Address: Connie Steelhammer, 18222 Girasole, San Antonio, TX 78258

CARE CALLER MINISTRY: Ascension's Care Caller Ministry is off and running. Each member of Ascension has been assigned to a care call group. Your care caller will phone you once a month just to keep in touch and to ask if you have any prayer requests, joys, or concerns. The care call committee prays that this ministry will reinforce our Christian care and concern for each other as fellow members of the body of Christ. If you have any questions about the Care Caller Ministry, please contact Jan Schlak, Coordinator of Care Needs.

5

REFRESHMENTS DURING FELLOWSHIP TIME: If you volunteer to serve refreshments during fellowship time, please do not serve red or purple colored beverages. This stains the carpet when spilled and is difficult to remove. Thank you for your consideration! Also, parents please make sure that your children finish their snacks in Fellowship Hall before going to class or the playground. When snacks are dropped on the play area and are stepped on, it becomes embedded in the play surface and is difficult to remove. Help us keep these areas clean! Thanks!

MARCH NEWSLETTER DEADLINE IS FEBRUARY 19! Please send your submissions to the church office or to Gretchen Schmalz. Think ahead about information you would like to submit for publication in March! Please submit any plans that your service board is making or any upcoming events.

PULL TAB TOPS FOR CHARITY! You can put your pull tabs in the container that is on the kitchen counter in Fellowship Hall. Ruthy Pople will take the tabs to the Ronald McDonald House. They sell the tabs for money to purchase items to help the families who stay at the House.

DONATE TO THE YSLETA LUTHERAN MISSION THRIFT STORE! Remember that you can donate used clothing and other household items to the Mission's Thrift Store, the proceeds of which go to help the work of the Mission. You can put your donations in the container located downstairs in the Choir/Boy Scout Room; the Mission staff will pick up the donations.

NEW ADDRESS FOR THE CUMMINGS FAMILY. Please note Jennifer and Richard Cummings new address:

Richard, Jennifer, and Solomon Cummings
1605 Via Appia
El Paso, TX 79912
Phone number remains the same

HELPING HAITI: Thrivent Financial for Lutherans will add \$1 to every \$2, up to a total Thrivent Financial contribution of \$1 million, that our members donate to: Lutheran World Relief or LCMS World Relief/Human Care (please indicate your choice of organization on the check. Donations will be accepted through March 31, 2010. Please call 1-800-236-3736 for more information. Make checks payable to:

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans (memo line-Haiti relief)
Attn: Fraternal Department
4321 N. Ballard Road
Appleton, WI 54919

GETTING TO KNOW YOU...

BONNIE AND RALPH MATARAZZO

The Matarazzos, despite Ralph's serious vision problems, are still very active. They travel from their home in El Paso to their home in Tyrone, New Mexico (near Silver City) – spending about 50% of their time in both

locations. The Tyrone home was owned by Phelps Dodge Copper Company. Their neighbors in Tyrone also call this location their second home; and Bonnie and Ralph treasure the friendships they have made there -- saying that they are "fine folks" with whom they share meals and times to visit. They both agree that it's cooler up here for summer living.

Ralph grew up in Schenectady, NY, and after graduation from high school, he was drafted into the Army-Air Force, situated in ground forces. This was World War II, and he was stationed in Europe. The Air Force advertised for aerial machine gunners – Ralph applied – and this became his job. He was in the Air Force for 31 years (in fact he was in the Air Force when Pearl Harbor was attacked).

6

Following the War he was stationed at Smoky Hill AFB in Kansas, and it was at this time that Bonnie and Ralph met. Bonnie was working at the local theater, and through the encouragement of a friend, Ralph introduced himself to this "nice girl". Lindsborg Kansas was home to Bonnie. She told us that it was called "home of the Swedes"--every 2 years they had a Swedish festival.

They married, and their first duty station as a couple was Biggs Field. Both of their children were born at Wm Beaumont Hospital. In 1954 they moved on to Dow AFB in Bangor, Maine. From Bangor they moved to Tucson, then to Castle AFB in California, and back to Biggs Field. It was at this time that Ralph worked with the KC135 Tankers – he operated the boom, which refueled planes in the air. The different types of planes he refueled were F101s, 102s, 104s, 105s, B52s, B47s, and Blackbirds – the boom was universal in order to fuel all types of planes. He said the receiver pilot would give directions, this operation taking place when flying between 500-550 mph.

Ralph was in Viet Nam 3 times. The only time that Bonnie was able to join him overseas to live was when he was stationed in Taiwan. Their daughter Connie was still at home and able to be with them. Their son David was attending UTEP at this time. Bonnie recalled that when Chiang Kai-shek visited their city, the ox carts, families riding on small motorcycles, and bicycles were not seen on the streets – giving the impression of an organized, neat, clean life. As soon as he left "it was life as usual".

After retirement, Ralph worked for Lear Siegler in Viet Nam, and then for Lockheed in Saudi Arabia as a mechanic. It was during this time that Bonnie made El Paso home, and in 1972 joined Ascension Lutheran Church. She and Juanita delaHoussaye had gone to the same church in Tucson, and through this connection the 2 became active at Ascension – in the Ladies Guild, Meals on Wheels, kitchen duty during VBS, and other activities.

Ralph recalled the 10 years he spent in Saudi Arabia. He worked as a mechanic on C130s for the Royal Saudi Air Force--both in Riyadh and Jeddah (located on the coast and one of the oldest cities in the country). He said that there were no cemeteries in Saudi, they would bury the dead out on the desert, before sunset on the day they died. Five times a day they would face Mecca and pray. However Ralph and other non-Muslim employees continued working. On Christmas Day, more than once, an Arab would say, "Merry Christmas, American". Ralph remembered that if the religious policemen saw a girl with a very short skirt, they would spray paint her legs. He also said that the pay was good and they received 3 vacations a year including flights to and from home. (This was overseas pay.)

Traveling has always been their "hobby". Bonnie visited Saudi one time. They visited Egypt and the Pyramids, and most often would meet in Athens and took cruises to the surrounding islands. They went to Turkey, Ephesus, and followed the path of St. Paul. Bonnie received a letter from the American Society of Ephesus that stated that "Christ, from the cross committed the care of His mother to St. John, and he took her to Ephesus, the ruins which lie on the west coast of Turkey facing the Aegean Sea. Scholars agree that the location of her home is identified as being on a small mountain top known locally as Meryem Ana." Bonnie noted that the house, in which Mary supposedly had lived, went through a number of earthquakes, but the building was not affected by the tremors. They visited a museum and saw a page of original writing of St. John. This is run by an Eastern

Orthodox group. The Matarazzos also went to the Island of Patmos and saw where St. John supposedly slept. There is a crack in the ceiling in the form of a cross.

Bonnie and Ralph were a couple that took advantage of what Ralph's Air Force background offered. This included visiting their son David who was stationed in Germany during his 20 years in the service. They would go to the AFB at Dover, Delaware and inquire where the destination of the next flight would take them – this took them to Spain, Frankfurt Germany, and various other places – offering grand experiences with many fond memories in their 61 years of marriage.

7

Ralph has a collection of swords, daggers, ancient firearms, Flintlock and percussion guns; one sword, a Sudanese sword, has a hilt fashioned after those used in the crusades.

Bonnie has a collection of very interesting pieces of jewelry, acquired during her travels; including a set of Alexandrite jewelry from Egypt (a brooch, ear rings, and a ring), Bedouin jewelry from Saudi Arabia – very fine handcrafted silver. Notice the gold bracelets that she wears.

Bonnie and Ralph were always ready to share their experiences with young people studying the Middle East. They visited Ron Spott's World Geography classes, bringing with them articles that were used in the life style of the Saudi people. Ralph also sent newspapers printed in English, describing the punishment for criminal activities – stoning, cutting off fingers and hands for thieves. These students would read the articles in disbelief. They brought clothing, headwear, jewelry, and many fascinating articles to Barb Spott's 6th grade class. A favorite activity was dressing the girls in this special clothing. Describing life in this part of the world was a primary source for these students.

YOUTH

- ❖ Fundraising for the National Youth Gathering in New Orleans, LA!!! The Youth will be selling Valentine's Lollipops—only 50 cents per lollipop—to raise money for this powerful event. Please support our Youth!!
- ❖ Youth Lock-In! The (soon to be) annual youth lock-in will be Friday, February 12. Youth will meet at the church at 7:00 p.m. and travel for their dinner—Lounell's (hor d'oeuvres/appetiziers), Tanya's (main course), and then to the Miller's (dessert). Then back to the church for an evening of Bible study, games, and a movie. Sleep is optional!
- ❖ Look for more details on our community event in April!
- ❖ TNT: remember to join Bob and friends on Thursday nights at 6:30! Pizza to be enjoyed by all!

ASCENSION DAY SCHOOL

January 25: In house registration begins!

February 1: Open registration starts

February 8: Bike Day February 8th

February 12: Valentines Day Parties

February 15: Presidents Day Parade 9:00 a.m.

February 19: Rodeo Day

Themes for February: Valentines/Farm Work/ Senses & Body

BIRTHDAYS

2/2 Kathryn Oliver, Joel Smith, Russell Warren 2/3 Wanda Melendez 2/5 Vincent Barnes

2/7 Cathy Engel 2/12 Gerald Lichon 2/13 Trace Headley 2/15 Aaron Miller 2/17 Sean Miller

2/20 Olga Sullivan 2/22 Ruby Salewski 2/24 Ian Miller, Gloria Voge 2/26 Mary Overton, Allison Wedel

2/28 Kathrin Berg Pettit, Rhonda Westbury

PRAY FOR OUR SOLDIERS!

Sfc Geoffrey W. Oliver
A Co STB 1 AD G-3 AMD
COB Speicher Unit 72111
APO AE 09093

1st Lt Brian and Mrs. Harris
PSC 3 Box 2032
APO, AP 96266
(Brian/Ashley Harris)

Jared Knight
201 – RSAC
Camp Black Horse
APO AP 09320

8
Steve Gardner
CMR 422 Box 1241
APO AE 09067
Tina's e-mail
tinaseg@hotmail.com

AGAN Matthew Lobaugh
OPS/OA
USS Dwight D. Eisenhower
FPO, AE 09532-2830
lobaugmc@CVN69.navy.mil
MAJ DeMartelaere, David A.
CFLCC PMO, ADA Cell
Camp Arifjan
APO, AE 09306
david.a.demartelaere@kuwait.swa.army.mil

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

*Angels do not harp at one another; they are in a chord.
Christians, like pianos, need frequent tuning.
Don't point a finger. Lend a hand.*

JUST FOR LAUGHS

Here Goes. . . . (A Prayer)

“So far today, God, I’ve done all right. I haven’t gossiped, haven’t lost my temper, haven’t been selfish, grumpy, nasty, or overindulgent. I’m really glad about that.
But in a few minutes, God, I’m going to get out of bed, and from then on I’m probably going to need a lot more help. Thank you. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

(From *The World's Greatest Collection of Church Jokes*, published by Barbour PH)

BUSINESS LISTINGS

Paws Dog Training, Inc
Liz and Mike Wagner
P.O. Box 12423
El Paso, TX 79913
(915) 845-7297

Horseback Riding
Trail Rides and Lessons
Jacki Middagh
(505) 589-4585
(915) 490-9452

Window World
4800 N. Mesa
El Paso, TX 79912
(915) 533-8227
windowworldswtexas@yahoo.com
Owners: Kraig Tubbs
Jeff Volcmer
Kevin Tubbs

General Interiors
Gary Kroeplin
(915) 204-4224
gmkroeplin@yahoo.com
Over 15 years experience in:
home maintenance
painting—interior and exterior
tile work
Sheet rock
remodeling

