

Ascension Messenger

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH | APRIL 2018 | VOLUME 18

Becoming a Church that Serves: Having a Desire to Serve Others the Way Christ Served

Next time you come to church, look around the campus and notice all that happens behind the scenes that makes a church body work. See all the people who are part of worship: those who greet you as you enter the church, who lead Bible studies and Sunday School, who help with children's messages and ushering, those who set up and assist in serving Holy Communion, those who set up your coffee and doughnuts for fellowship time, who sing and play in the Worship Team and clean up after the services. These may be things we take for granted every Sunday, but it is an example of how the volunteers serve in key ways in our Church life.

Without those who give freely of their own time in service to Christ and His Church here on earth, little would ever get done. Christ himself lived his life in service to others and calls all of us to do the same. We are all needed to serve in ministry where God has gifted us and He calls us to do it, not with resentment or a sense obligation, but with joy, empowered by His Holy Spirit.

This month's issue of *Ascension Messenger* is filled with examples of volunteerism at work in our church as we come together to serve in worship, leadership and fellowship and in reaching out to the community in Christian love and friendship.

***"Serve the Lord
with gladness!"***

Psalm 100:2

Pastor Michael has asked Ascension's newly-elected leaders and board members, as they begin their ministries (see page 4), to reach out to people in the church to get involved and help where they can. Please prayerfully consider this, even as a short-term commitment, and then "serve the Lord with gladness," as He asks us to do.

Volunteers are needed to make this church go and God wants to use each one of us to use our gifts to glorify Him. Prayerfully consider being part of the exciting things He is doing here at Ascension!

Mark Your Calendar



- April 7 - 9:00 a.m.
Hour of Prayer
- April 10 - 6:30 p.m.
LWML
- April 14 - 7:30-10:30 a.m.
Pancake Breakfast
- April 17 - 6:30 p.m.
Fellowship Board; 7:45 p.m.
Board of Lay Ministers
- April 21 - 9:00 a.m.
Hour of Prayer
- April 24 - 10:00 a.m.
LWML Servant Event

Want to Serve? Mark your calendars now and plan to be a volunteer this year at Ascension's 2018 Vacation Bible School July 23-27! Register at www.ascensiontorrance.org or by calling the church office at (310) 793-0071.

Ascension Prepares to Serve Hundreds at Annual Pancake Breakfast and Silent Auction

Ascension's 13th Annual "God Bless America" Pancake Breakfast Scheduled for April 14th

There's nothing quite like the smell of sizzling bacon and sausage, the taste of hot pancakes hot off the griddle and a steamy cup of coffee outdoors on a cool spring morning. What makes it even better is when it is alongside hundreds of friends and family from the church and school and the surrounding community.

That's what Ascension will be serving up this Saturday (April 14) at the annual Pancake Breakfast and Silent Auction on the church

campus. Breakfast will be served from 7 a.m. to 11 a.m.

The event, now in its 13th year, is a tradition at Ascension that draws church members, school families and friends from the community for a morning of food and fellowship.

Along with the breakfast, a silent auction and a raffle prizes will be on display in the Parish Hall, featuring over 100 gift baskets and other items to help raise funds for the church.



Get 'em while they're hot! Scott Tanaka serves as a volunteer flipping pancakes at the annual Pancake Breakfast, which brings hundreds from the church, school and community each year.

Huber's Volunteerism Shines in Long-Standing Church and Community Tradition at Ascension



Norb and Linda Huber, who helped start the annual Pancake Breakfast and Silent Auction event 13 years ago, will be leading it for the last time at Ascension this year as they prepare to retire in Northern California in June to be closer to family

Although it takes the teamwork of dozens of volunteers from the Ascension church, school and Pacific Lutheran High School to make the annual Pancake Breakfast successful each year, it is the leadership of one couple who manage all the details to bring it all together.

Norb and Linda Huber, longtime members of Ascension and both deeply committed volunteers in the ministry at Ascension, have been at the helm of this community tradition for nearly 20 years.

The Pancake Breakfast, which is one of largest events Ascension puts on every year, was started by Norb and Joe Strubbe as a school fundraiser in 1984 as part of what was then the South Bay Lutheran High School and Good Shepherd Lutheran in Inglewood. The event

moved to Ascension in 2005 and has been a tradition here ever since, providing fellowship for thousands through the years. The popular Silent Auction and raffle drawing portion of the annual event is managed by Norb's wife, Linda, and the Fellowship Board of Ascension.

Norb, who has a heart for evangelism in all that he does in the community, sees this Pancake Breakfast as an outreach ministry. "This is an event that brings people together from our church, schools and community," he said. "There is no fear in inviting people to something like this. Our vision for this

event has always been to provide a relaxed and stress-free way for our church to connect people with people in this area."

After this year, however, that vision needs to be carried forward by a new team of leaders, as Norb and his wife, Linda, leave in June to retire in northern California to be close to their family.

What is more important to him is that the church continues to see the value of volunteerism. "There is a sense of motivation in Christians to outwardly express their faith by serving. Jesus was a servant, and we have all been given talents to serve as well."

Pastor's Pen

By Pastor Michael

The newness of Spring is a reminder of what God has done for us in Christ Jesus. Because of our faith in Him and what He has done through His death and resurrection, we are new creations. We have been given a new heart! One that loves God, loves others, and seeks to bring others into His Kingdom where we live under the rule and reign of Christ the King!

We of course, continue to also battle our old natures, the Scriptures often refer to our old nature as the "flesh." This is the part of us that resists God at every turn. Our flesh seeks after its own. It is lazy and weak. Do you remember on Jesus' last night when asked the disciples to stay awake with Him for just one hour to pray, and they couldn't do it? His response was, "the Spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

But we are called to live in our New Natures; to be driven by our New Hearts! God wants us to live not in the flesh, but in the newness of life that He gave us in our baptism. And new life is one of service to God and others!

We are experiencing a lot of changes at Ascension. Some beloved members have gone on to be with the Lord and await the resurrection and the life of the World to Come. Others have moved due to job changes. Some have moved or will soon be moving after retirement. What this means is that there are a lot of holes to be filled in regard to service in the congregation. We desperately need people to step up and help in a number of areas.

I am so grateful for those who have volunteered to serve on committees and lead in our congregation. But these leaders are going to need helpers along the way. It would be so easy to remain in the weak and lazy flesh and avoid all calls and challenges to serve. But God desires that we live in our New Natures, and like I said before, that means serving others.

I am urging our leaders to reach out and call on people in the congregation as they need help for certain events and projects. All I'm asking of you is to be ready to serve when called upon.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT:

Getting to Know Ryan and Alisa Recker



Ryan and Alisa Recker were both born and raised in the Peoria, IL area. They went to middle school and high school together and started dating the end of their senior year of high school. Then, Ryan went off to the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs for four years while Alisa attended the University of Illinois. Ryan majored in Economics and Alisa majored in Bioengineering, both graduating in May 2013. They married in July 2013 and moved to Dayton, OH later that same month.

For careers, Ryan is active duty Air Force working in Financial Management at Los Angeles Air Force Base (LAAFB). Alisa just started working as an engineer for the Space Defense Task Force at LAAFB.

Ryan enjoys fishing, homebrewing beer and wine and 3D printing, while Alisa loves baking/cooking, dancing, crafting and reading. Both like waterskiing, boating, camping in their teardrop camper, hiking, playing with their Pomeranian dog, Bella.

The Recker's began coming to Ascension in April 2017. When they moved to the area, they Googled LCMS churches. They said they connected with the congregation at Ascension more than at the other LCMS churches they visited. They enjoy Ascension's sense of community and Pastor Michael's sermons.

Although still fairly new here, Alisa and Ryan have gotten involved here in the church. Alisa was part of the Reformation and Resurrection Day Choirs and helped with VBS in 2017 and Ryan with ushering and offerings.

We are grateful that God helped us through the difficult, long-distance relationship we had for four years in college. The military lifestyle is sometimes rough, and God has helped us adjust to the new city each time we move.

WE CELEBRATE APRIL BIRTHDAYS

April 1	Alisa Brege	April 20	Alina Eng Levi Pagnini
April 2	David Huber Anne Sugiyama	April 21	Mark Woods
April 3	Boyd Ruse	April 22	Amy Livergood James Pagnini
April 4	Susie Lin	April 23	Alissa Nagano
April 5	Clementine Aguilar Jordan Em	April 25	Carol Woods
April 9	Matthew Mardesich	April 27	Sierra Sandoval
April 11	Sandi Tanaka	April 28	Roxene Helme Molina Michael Petredis
		April 29	Sachiko Doi Christopher Wendell



Introducing Ascension's Newly-Elected Leadership

Please pray for Ascension's officers, directors and board members, who were installed to their roles on Sun., April 8th



Mike Davis,
President



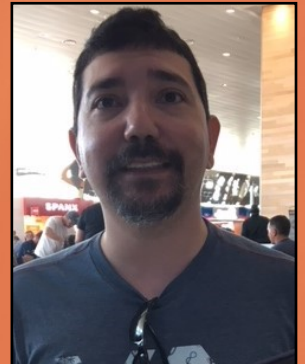
Don Rohweller,
Treasurer



Kathy Davis,
Secretary



Cliff Yost,
Asst. Treasurer



Bobby Itow,
Asst. Treasurer

Newly-elected Board Directors: Board of Lay Ministry: Bruce Morant; Board of Evangelism/Assimilation: Stephania Bommarito; Board of School Administration: Karen LaPointe; Board of Parish Education: Denise Spartalis; Board of Youth: David Ower; Board of Church Properties: Greg Schneider; Board of Parish Fellowship: Kimberly Abram