

# Ascension Messenger

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH | FEBRUARY 2018 | VOLUME 16

## The Sorrow, Repentance and Love of Lent

We've barely been able to catch our breath from celebrating the joyous Christmas season when we suddenly find ourselves thrown into a very different kind of place in the Church year. We now enter the deep and reflective season of Lent.

This year, it seems somewhat ironic that Ash Wednesday falls on Feb. 14th —Valentine's Day. As odd as that may seem on the surface, we may soon begin to realize how tightly bound together grief, repentance and love are in our Christian walk. For example, we know that repentance leads to salvation: ***"For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death."*** (2 Cor. 7:10).

We also know that repentance does not come from our own decision to change, but it is God's great love and kindness for mankind that draws all of our stubborn hearts back to Him: *"Do you suppose, O man—you who judge those who practice such things and yet do them yourself—that you will*

*escape the judgment of God? Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?* (Rom. 2:3-4).

Yet God's kindness may not always appear to us as "kindness" on the surface. When you read Paul's writings to the church in Corinth, he tells them that their grieving and sorrow produced repentant hearts, which in turn, is what brings us to experience mercy. When we look back on our own lives, we often start to see how the hand of God used sorrow to draw us into a deeper relationship with Him.

As we begin this new Lenten season on Feb. 14th, pray that you will be drawn closer into the true love of the Father through repentance. Reflect on your sinfulness; acknowledge your need for His mercy and seek to know the Savior, who gave His life for you, out of His great love.



## MARK YOUR CALENDAR



- **February 3 - 8:30 a.m.**  
LCMS Regional Workshop
- **February 14th**  
Ash Wednesday  
5:30 p.m. Soup Supper  
7:00 p.m. Lenten Service
- **February 16 - 6 a.m.**  
Men's Breakfast
- **February 17 - 9 a.m.**  
Hour of Prayer
- **February 20**  
6:30 p.m. Board of Fellowship  
7:45 p.m. Board of Lay Ministry
- **February 21**  
5:30 p.m. Soup Supper  
7:00 p.m. Lenten Service
- **February 28**  
5:30 p.m. Soup Supper  
7:00 p.m. Lenten Service

## Member Spotlight:



### Getting to Know Margaret Kingman

My name is Margaret Kingman. I was born in Torrance, California and I grew up in Redondo Beach. I went to Mira Costa High school in Manhattan Beach in 1966. I graduated in 1969. My father and mother were George and Jane Kingman. My parents had five children, me being the middle child. My oldest brother, Vincent, lives in Maplewood, Minnesota. In my brother's family, I have my sister-in-law, Carol, and three nieces and two great-nieces and great-nephew.

Starting in 1981, I started working for an aircraft company named Puritan-Bennett and was there for 12 years. In 1993, I went to work for Target Stores in Torrance and worked there for 14 years.

My hobby is knitting. I love to knit and make items for people. I belong to a group called Yarn Angels.

I met Robbie Myers in 1993 and he introduced me to Ascension Lutheran Church and I



was confirmed in 1983. I have been at Ascension now for 35 years. I feel close to God and have met a lot of nice people. I have been going to LWML Christmas parties every year I help with vacation Bible school every July. God got me interested in a great church and great people like Pastor Abram and family and the congregation.

## LWML News...

by Carol Woods

The LWML continues to share God's love with those less fortunate. In February we are involved in two service projects:

**Undie Sunday** is being celebrated throughout our district on February 11<sup>th</sup>. Collections of underwear and socks will be distributed to people in need both in our district and in ministries in Mexico. A box will be available in the narthex for your contribution.

Personal Care Kits are being assembled by the LWML at our next meeting on February 27<sup>th</sup>. If you would like to contribute to this project, the following items are needed:

**ONE** light-weight dark color bath-size towel (between 20" x 40" and 52" x 27")

**TWO** or three bath-size bars of soap equaling 8 to 9 oz.

**ONE** adult-size toothbrush

**ONE** sturdy comb

**ONE** metal nail clippers

Donations may be brought to church on Sunday or left in the church office during the week.

February is also the deadline for retreat registration. Checks need to be made out to "Ascension Lutheran Church of Torrance." In the message line write "LWML Retreat." Don't miss this day of fun, fellowship, and Bible study with Kimberly Abram.



## Ascension's Youth Ministry, "Da Patater Society" Serving Up Friday Night Fellowship



**Friday Night Friends**—Calling themselves "Da Patater Society," Ascension Lutheran's youth group, led by Dave and Susan Ower, gathers on the church campus each week for games, discussions, dinner and devotions.

Three years ago, Ascension's youth program had dwindled to nearly nothing and high-school age members were either having to join other church youth programs or not be a part of a youth program at all. It was then that, through the grace of God, Dave Ower and his wife, Susan, answered the call to step in as youth leaders at Ascension.

Since then, the group has seen steady growth, drawing between 15-35 young people each week, with a strong core in place and developing friendships among these teens. But it wasn't always that way. Dave remembers that first night back in July of 2015. "We had zero kids show up for youth group. Sue and I went home feeling a little defeated and we asked God for guidance. He has delivered."

The group calls themselves "Da Patater Society," a name they developed together back in those early days. Literally, it means "The Potato Society," but Dave says is a reminder of the goodness of God's bounty. "The potato feeds everyone in so many different ways—French fries, baked, mashed, tater tots — just like God shows Himself to all of us in many different ways. To us, it just fits."

Although many of the students who attend Da Patater Society are members at other churches, Dave believes it is an important characteristic of this ministry. "I believe we are teaching them to get along with kids from different denominations. It is a gift and it helps them understand their role in the broader Christian community," Dave said.

What happens at youth group? "I try to give the kids a place to let their hair down after a busy day and a hectic week of studying and school," Dave said. "I try to teach that there is a time and a place for everything and that we can have a good time playing games, enjoying dinner together and connecting with God through devotions."

The Ascension family can support this ministry by providing snacks and beverages for meals. In addition, Dave is asking for volunteers to help with feeding the kids between February and April while Sue is unavailable to help. Please contact the church office for more information.

## Pastor's Pen

By Pastor Michael Abram

The season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, which is February 14<sup>th</sup> this year. The season is one of remembrance, self-denial, and repentance. It is a time when we, through our self-denial, worship, and prayer, remember the suffering and death of our Lord, as well as our own sins that caused His grief. While every day is a call to repentance, in Lent, we are called to a deeper examination of our mortality and brokenness as we also remember our baptism and our restoration from our alienation from God.

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***Lent Services are held each Wednesday evening beginning Feb. 14th and continuing through March 21st. The theme is The Lord's Prayer***

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The "restoration" we experience through our life in faith is the focus of our Lenten services this year. In faith, we go from being the enemies of God to being able to call Him Father.

Jesus has given us a way in which to pray to our Heavenly Father in the *Lord's Prayer*. Understanding each petition as we pray this prayer, helps us to experience the fullness of our relationship with our ultimate Father.

I urge you to come to the services each week throughout Lent. Hear how praying the *Lord's Prayer* with understanding can deepen your prayer life and help you to experience God, not as a distant angry God, who is enraged at your sin, but rather experience Him as Your Heavenly Father who intends to bless you as a father blesses His children.

# We Celebrate February Birthdays and Anniversaries

## Birthdays

**February 5** Joshua Nelson  
Emmaleigh Schneider

**February 8** Rockwell Holtz

**February 10** Amanda Ower  
Debbie Scott

**February 11** Nathan Morrow  
Betty Yost

**February 12** Philip McRae

**February 13** Julian Calderon  
Patty Calderon  
Matthew Madrigal

**February 14** Robert Pelletier

**February 15** Chris Melvin  
Martha Petredis

**February 16** Matthew Hirano  
Katelyn Pagnini

**February 17** David Ower  
Peter Spartalis

**February 19** Pastor Michael

**February 22** Faith Cataldo

**February 28** Kimberly Sandoval



## Anniversaries

**February 2** Philip & Brandi LaPointe  
Jim & Rhonda Pagnini

**February 13** Don & Cathy Rohweller

**February 19** Ernie & Chris Haeger

**February 28** Bobby & Becca Itow

## Pre-School News...

by Tammy Simpson, Pre-School Director

February— this is the time of the year when I start to wish for warmer weather, more sunshine, and a brighter outlook. How can I make it through with a smile on my face and a song in my heart? Valentine's Day!!! It is the month of kindness, love, compassion and chocolate! Who can be grumpy???? It is important that we actually teach children about kindness? I read an article recently, by Lisa Walker that provides some more ideas about ways to help your children develop compassion and kindness. The following is an excerpt from her article, "Ideas for Teaching Kindness to Preschool Kids":

- ◆ Role Play - Show your child how to be kind through "pretend play." Use mini figures to act out scenarios involving kindness.
- ◆ Talk About Feelings - Help your child understand how he can affect the feelings of others by talking about emotions.
- ◆ Demonstrate Kindness - Your child learns by watching you, so be sure to demonstrate kindness -- even with small acts.

I hope that you all have a wonderful month!