



THE SPIRIT

Ascension Lutheran Church Newsletter

November 2022

A Reason to Rejoice



“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

-Philippians 4:4-7

Can you already smell the turkey? The mountains of mashed potatoes submerged in gravy and the sweet scent of pumpkin pie baking are only weeks away. Soon we will gather at tables with our closest family and friends and sit across from brothers and sisters and moms and dads and uncles and aunts, some of whom we haven't seen for years. When the table is set, the buffet ready to go, the little ones peeking over counters to see all the pies and pastries prepared for the feast, perhaps we will pause with those gathered around the table to give thanks to the Lord for all that He has provided for us. Rejoice in the Lord always; again, I will say rejoice.

Joy and thanksgiving don't always come so easily, though. Many have no family or friends to celebrate with this year. Some of us may not have the means to put together a feast or to travel to see our families. We may notice empty seats this year, remembering those who have moved away or who have gone to be with the Lord. Rejoicing *sometimes* may not be so difficult, but to rejoice in the Lord *always*, well, for some of us it just doesn't seem possible.

Maybe it would help if we knew the story behind these words. The letter to the Philippians was written by the apostle Paul, possibly the greatest missionary the church has ever known. He travelled the world to tell people about what Jesus had done for them. This letter, however, is different from some of his other letters because it's one of several that Paul wrote while he was in prison. He was under constant guard, in chains day and night; he was restricted in his activity. Already he had been beaten, flogged, pelted with stones, and mocked for his work, and now he languished as a prisoner for the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Yet this is the man who wrote those impossible words: Rejoice in the Lord always. Again, I will say, Rejoice.

How is it that Paul could rejoice in such circumstances? How is it that we could rejoice in all times, even when life is hard? For Paul, the answer was simple: the Lord is at hand. He was a prisoner, it's true. He had been treated poorly by friends and enemies alike. Paul was comforted in all times by the reality of Jesus' presence, both His presence now and the promise of His coming once more. In other words, Paul lived in the present with an eye toward the future, knowing that Jesus would bring him through every step of the way, from this life to the blessings of unending life in Christ. For Paul, that was reason enough to rejoice in every circumstance. Could it be that it's enough reason for us, too? We experience trials of all kinds. We might find ourselves alone on Thanksgiving, we might have half-filled plates, or we might miss those we've lost in the past year, but through it all we live in the present with an eye toward the future. The Lord is at hand. He is with us now just like He was with Paul, and He will bring us through this life to the joys of the life to come. Rejoice in the Lord always, again I will say, Rejoice!

May you find reason to rejoice this Thanksgiving and may the peace of God which surpasses all understanding guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

A happy Thanksgiving to you all,

Pastor Mike

Condolences

Condolences to Ed Kleiner and family on the death of his father, James Kleiner, who died on October 22.

*We mourn
with you.*



Prayers & Praises

Thank you to all of those who made the "Heat and Eat" fundraiser possible! Thanks to Thrivent for a gift to get us started on our grocery supplies, thanks to all who gave extra time to get supplies ready for the kids to prep the meals. Thank you to Monster Cookies and More for the "bonus" we got to share as people picked up their meals. Thank you to those of you who purchased meals and smoothies and who donated monetarily toward this fundraiser - you blew us away with your excitement and generosity - we sold 134 meals and 69 smoothies!

~ Shanda Knight

I want to thank all my friends at Ascension for the nice birthday cards and flower sent to me to help me celebrate my 100th birthday.

-Lois Osness

THANK
you.

*Rose Beier
Ed Billings
Jeff Colvin
Maria Drewes
Ivy Gibbons
Anabell Hakes
Traci McNally
Ruth Prins
Ken Schwake
Mike Sullivan
Mary Volker
Dana Walker
Bill Winzenburg*



GALATIANS 6:2. ESV

NON-PERISHABLE ITEMS:

Toothpaste ~ Toothbrushes ~ Shaving Cream ~ Shampoo
 Bar Soap ~ Toilet Paper ~ Mouthwash ~ Feminine Products ~ Kleenex ~
 Paper Towels ~ Laundry Soap ~ Dish Soap ~ Cleaning Supplies ~ Quarters for Washing Machines

FOOD SUGGESTIONS:

Canned Meats* ~ Peanut Butter ~ Canned or Dried Beans* ~ Canned Fruits & Vegetables*
 Rice ~ Cereal ~ Pasta ~ Soups*, Chilies* and Stews* ~ Shelf-stable Milk

*All canned items need to have an easy open pull-tab style top. Nothing requiring a can opener, Thanks!

Look for a table in the narthex.



Friday, November 11th
6 pm

Feature Movie
"Family Camp"

Movie summary: Two polar-opposite families find themselves sharing a cabin for a week away at camp. With the highly coveted camp trophy at stake, dads Tommy and Eddie end up lost in the woods. The hilarity, and yet poignant points that follow, will leave you laughing and thinking for days.

A COUPLE NOTES:

- ⚡ This movie is VERY family friendly.
- ⚡ Run time: 1 hour, 50 minutes long.
- ⚡ The plan is to let everyone get food and start the movie no later than 6:20

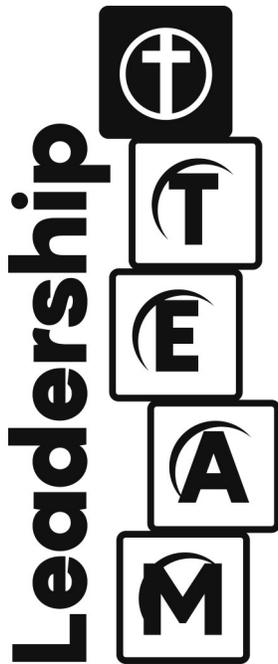
LIGHT MEAL PROVIDED

Hot Dog Bar
Chips
And more

Bring your own beverage, please,
only water will be available

CAN'T WAIT TO SEE YOU AT THE THEATER, a.k.a. the Fellowship Hall!

Please feel free to wear comfy clothes, bring a lawn chair or use the tables and chairs normally used for fellowship.



Leadership Planning Session November 5th at 9:00 am

IF YOU ARE

A Committee Chairperson
A Member of a Committee
Church Staff

Please join us at this session, to ask God for purposeful direction on planning activities at Ascension for the coming years.

☀️ **Mark your calendar and plan to attend!**

3rd Annual Hickory Hills Campground Lights Display



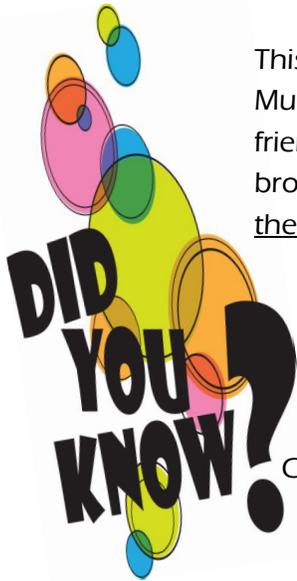
It's never too early to think about Christmas! Though the Advent and Christmas seasons are still a little way off, we've got a unique opportunity to communicate the true joy of the Christmas season to residents of Northeast Iowa this year. Our congregation will be setting up a Christmas light display at Hickory Hills this November, and we need your help! If Christmas lights are your thing and if the prospect of sharing the joy and message of Jesus' birth with our community excites you, this project is for you.

Ascension needs to be finished with design and construction of our display at the Hickory Hills Campground by November 27th.

If you are interested in working on the light display, please contact the church office at 233-1358.

Young Disciples

This is youth group for kids in 4th through 6th grades! Much of our time is spent building strong Christian friendships and learning how to support one another as brothers and sisters in Christ. Do you know a student in these grades? Encourage them to join us!



November 18

6 to 7:30 pm

This month our event will be
“Great Minds Think Alike”

Crazy fun games, great people, and of course, a little scripture to ponder as well!



A huge “thank you” goes out to all of the men who attended our recent Fall Men’s Recharge with the theme of “IGNITE” here at Ascension. Seventeen men from all over NE Iowa gathered together on Saturday, October 8th for this amazing event. We had a powerful time of worship and three great speakers including Pastor Ryan Dexter from Hope Lutheran in Brighton IA, Dr. Brett Olsen and Tom Knight from Ascension-Waterloo. The grand finale for this event was a panel discussion that included three men who fielded



questions from the attendees about a variety of topics facing men in the world today.

I would like to thank all of the many hard working volunteers who labored tirelessly to make this event a reality. Also, thank you to our leadership and the congregation for all of your support.

To God be the Glory,
 Tom Knight
 Director of Men’s Ministry



	Current Expenses	Benevolence	Building Fund
September 25, 2022	\$4,424.27	\$1,038.32	\$177.50
October 2, 2022	\$6,722.71	\$1,407.93	\$355.00
October 9, 2022	\$8,039.24	\$814.50	\$335.00
October 16, 2022	\$7,033.77	\$1,012.34	\$334.39
October 23, 2022	\$5,528.59	\$1,007.58	\$478.00

ALERT

CHRISTMAS IS COMING EARLY TO ASCENSION!



We are busy collecting the materials for the 2022 OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD and are very excited for this terrific opportunity to spread the joy of Christ’s Birth all across the globe. For those of you who are not familiar with Operation Christmas Child, it is one of the International Relief initiatives of Samaritan’s Purse. You will have the opportunity to fill a CHRISTMAS CHILD Shoebox with selected items as well as a monetary donation for shipping. All of the Shoeboxes will be collected at Ascension and then sent to Samaritan’s Purse collection centers for distribution to needy children all around the world.

Another option, if you prefer, is to “Fill your shoebox” on the Operation Christmas Child website (samaritanspurse.org/Build a Shoebox Online). You can simply select from the items listed on the website and pay the donation fee. These “boxes” that are purchased online will go exclusively to locations that are very remote. Samaritan’s Purse does the delivery themselves using means other than FedEx.)

In 1993, Operation Christmas Child started and delivered 28,000 shoeboxes with their gifts and message of the Gospel to children in the Balkans. Since 1993, more than 198 million shoeboxes have been delivered to over 150 countries around the world. As many as 1,000 New Churches are being planted each year in part because of Operation Christmas Child.

“Every shoebox gift is an opportunity to reach a child with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It’s about telling children around the world and their families that God loves them. He hasn’t forgotten them. We’re taking the Good News to the Ends of the Earth and doing it through a shoebox.”

*Franklin Graham
President and CEO, Samaritan’s Purse*

Blessings to all,
Cindi Mason
Outreach Evangelism Committee

SAVE THE DATE
Sunday, November 6
Final date to return your filled box to Ascension
More information is available at samaritanspurse.org

Ascension Youth

“Heat and Eat” meals fundraiser a HUGE SUCCESS!

A special thank you to Shanda Knight for taking the lead and putting this fundraiser together! It truly is a blessing to have the love and support from our congregation. Thank you to everybody who continue to take time out of their day to invest in our youth and their walk with Jesus. We appreciate all the love, hugs and support.





Our Mission – Tree of Life Nature Preschool warmly reaches out to children and their families to introduce them to God’s love. Children are nurtured socially, emotionally, physically, and spiritually as they develop foundations for learning through the exploration of God’s world.

The opening of the preschool is planned for the fall of 2024. A concept for the curriculum and teaching methodology has been developed. The changes needed in the Ascension Lutheran constitution and by-laws to organize the preschool have been completed and approved by the congregation.

Ascension Lutheran has registered the name “Tree of Life Nature Preschool” with the State of Iowa. A web site address has been obtained for the preschool.

The preschool design allows for 16 three-year-old students from 9:00 – 11:00 four days a week. The design also accommodates 16 four-year-old students from 12:30 – 3:30 four days a week. The preschool will have a total of three staff members to meet the Iowa State requirements and the student to teacher ratios. The school will teach 32 students a year about Jesus while incorporating basic social and academic skills needed to be successful in further education and life. God’s creation is the basic training tool to be used in the Nature preschool.

The tuition income is based on \$85/week for a 3-year-old and \$80/week for a 4-year-old. These are median charges for preschool in Black Hawk County. Final staff pay cost will be determined as contacts are completed.

Estimated annual budget affect from the preschool – Based on full enrollment income

Tuition Income	\$112,480	
Total staff pay	-\$110,000	
Phone & Utilities	-\$1,865	(Based on cost/sq ft for current building)
Internet	-\$900	
Website	-\$400	
School Materials	-\$2,500	
Insurance	<u>-\$1,235</u>	(Quote from Insurance company)
Budget Impact	-\$4,420	(Ascension budget would increase \$4,420)

The preschool will have a minimal affect on the 2023 budget as it will not open until 2024.

The preschool design has 2,048 square feet with a projected cost of \$471,040 for a completed and furnished facility. A funds drive to provide money for the facility and scholarships for students was initiated in June of 2022. To date, a total of \$147,345 has been pledged and with an initial gift we received of \$26,000, we have a total of \$173,345 toward the project.

The Cares Act Challenge Grant is a matching grant to fund the construction and furnishing of facilities for Child Care. Preschools fall under Child Care in the State of Iowa. Our preschool building cost is estimated at \$471,040 so we would apply for a matching grant of \$235,520 from the Cares Act Challenge Fund. This means our match equals \$235,520. We have \$173,345 currently pledged from the funds drive which leaves \$62,175 needed to complete the match.

The Cares Act Challenge Grant is not currently taking applications. It is expected to accept them after the elections in November have been completed. The outcome of the election could influence the Challenge Grant. We asked Levi Architecture what documentation would be required to apply for the Challenge Grant if/when applications were being accepted. We need a site plan, rendering of the proposed building, and a Proforma document. The Proforma document is a detailed financial analysis of the proposed project. It will be used by the Challenge Grant committee to determine the viability of the complete project. These documents are currently being completed at Levi Architecture so we will be ready to complete the application for the grant when they are available.

We currently need to raise \$62,175 to provide our share of the match to build the facility.

A sincere Thank You to all who have given and pledged to the preschool!

If you would like to pledge toward the remaining amount needed, you will find funds drive flyers and pledge cards in the narthex by the gold box. The more of the \$62,175 we can raise, the less we would need from other sources.