

THE ASCENSION ANNOUNCER



Pastor Tom Vanderbilt

January 2012

So, in the aftermath of Christmas, I have to ask: did you get anything good? Did you get the toy you wanted? Did you get the new dress you asked for? Did you get the family around the table for the first time in a long time? Or, let me ask the bottom-line question: did you get what you wanted?

A stack of games doesn't mean anything without someone to play them with. A new dress doesn't mean as much unless there's someone to show it to. Sometimes the greatest things in life aren't things. Sometimes they won't fit in a box or under a tree. How do you wrap up love, time, or commitment?

One of the greatest gifts that a person can give another person is commitment. To summarize some of Jesus' teaching, (If a marriage is going to work,) "a man shall leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife." Love is never cheap. There's always a price that it is willing to bear for one another.

When God loved us, He let go of His one and only Son, and let Him be born for us. Jesus, too, because of His great love for us, let go of His life and willingly suffered and died on the cross. "No great love has anyone than this," Jesus says, "than he lay down his life for his friends." In a similar vein, Jesus said that, if we loved him, we would feed his sheep. We would pick up our cross and follow him in living our life for God and for serving others.

Our church is going to celebrate God's call to be in the ministry on Sunday, February 5th. We are calling this Sunday CONSECRATION SUNDAY, a day when we consecrate ourselves, our lives, and all that we have to the Lord. CONSECRATION SUNDAY will really be a celebration as we take a moment to be together and witness to our call to be God's people, a nation of priests, who live in service to our God. There will be a special luncheon after worship to celebrate this call.

Mr. Allen Helms, Executive Assistant to the District President of the Mid-South District will be the special preacher for the day. Please pray that God will use CONSECRATION SUNDAY to renew our faith and commitment to Him.

In Christ,
Pastor Tom

Highlights of the Church Council Meeting held on November 17, 2011

Pastor Vanderbilt reported that Ascension's baptized membership stands at 182 and her communicant membership is 135.

The Financial Secretary and Treasurer reported tithes and offerings of \$197,741 and expenses of \$201,105 through November 17, 2011, which is a deficit of \$3,274.

The Elders are working on policies for publications and the use of memorial gifts. All new policies will be made available to the Voter's Assembly on January 22, 2011. The Elders have also discussed and approved women for serving as Ushers and men may serve on the Altar Guild.

The Board of Christian Education noted that there will be no Sunday School on either Christmas Day or New Year's Day.

The Board of Stewardship is working on Consecrated Stewards, a stewardship program that will be presented January 15 through February 5, 2012.

Bob Hodgins, the newly appointed chair of the Board of Evangelism, had no report due to his recent appointment.

The Board of Youth announced that they will begin to look at the National Youth Gathering, which is scheduled for July 1-5, 2013 in San Antonio, TX.

Pastor Vanderbilt asked that his salary be divided as 70% housing allowance and 30% salary starting in 2012. There was no change to the total figure; only the division was affected. This will allow Pastor to take full advantage of current IRS code.

The Church Council approved a referral program from H&R Block which will give \$25 to Ascension for each new H&R Block client who provides Ascension's referral information.

The Church Council approved Pastor Vanderbilt's requests for a new computer for the Church Secretary and for a used digital projector for our Sunday School program. The total for these two pieces of equipment was \$650.

Memorial Gift Wish List

The Board of Elders and the Pastor maintain a list of items that they feel would benefit the worship life of the church and the general appearance of the congregation. The items currently on the list are:

- Candelabras & Candlesticks
- Banners
- Update Outdoor Sign in front of church (which still says "School.")

If anyone would like more information on the above items, please contact an Elder or Pastor Vanderbilt.

Even though January has a fifth Sunday, we will not have a Pot Luck Lunch due to the Consecrated Stewards luncheon on the 29th.

Tuesday Morning Bible Study will resume on January 17th.

SERVING ASCENSION IN JANUARY

	Lay Readers	Greeters	Acolytes
1-1	Bob Hodgkin	John & Frances Boggs	Samantha Golter & Corryn Schreiber
1-8	Trish LaLumondier	Ora Mae & LaVon Golter	Korryn LaLumondier & Kealey Terrell
1-15	Jennifer Meyers	Chance & Megan Terrell	Gordon Bradley & Ian Conner
1-22	Tim Hanusa	Grace Lehmann	Samantha Golter & Emily Kendall
1-29	Chance Terrell	Cherri Walker	Gordon Bradley & Ian Conner

The Serving Ascension Page will only be mailed to participants without email. Readers will still receive a copy of the bulletin. The Serving Ascension Page is available at www.ascensionmadison.com and it will be emailed to each monthly volunteer. If you are unable to serve please secure a replacement and call the church office at 868-2346.

USHERS	ELDER
Jeff Meyers & Nathaniel Oehlkers	Dave Brown

ALTAR CARE
Linda Fritz & Trish LaLumondier

COFFEE HOUR	
1-1	None
1-8	Christine Schreiber
1-15	Sandy Bradley
1-22	Ora Mae Golter
1-29	Kathy Meyers

Happy Birthday

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1/1 Abdelseed & Alizabeth Aono Murran | 1/24 Russ Gullett |
| 1/2 Jeff Wright | 1/24 Brittany Summers |
| 1/7 Lance Foster | 1/26 Isabella Gerson |
| 1/7 John Smith | 1/27 Katherine Wright |
| 1/8 Jonathan Wright | 1/27 Liz Brown |
| 1/9 Zach LaLumondier | |
| 1/10 Linda Montes | |
| 1/11 Linda Fritz | |
| 1/15 Sophia Gerson | |
| 1/20 Alaliyah Elradi | |



Happy Anniversary

Carolyne & Cecil Willis—January 11

Angel & Lance Foster—January 28

If your birthday or anniversary is incorrect or has been left out, please call the church office so our records can be updated. Thanks.

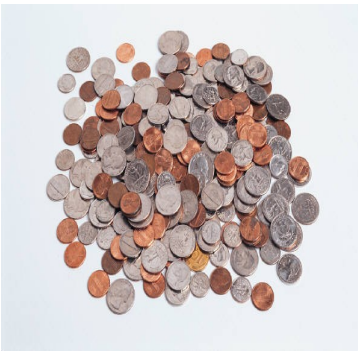


Please join the ladies at Ascension on Saturday, January 14
from 10:00 to 12:00 noon.

A light lunch will be served.

The program is entitled: "Winter Blahs, Fresh Starts."

Remember to bring your "Mighty Mites."



Did you know that people left behind more than a million dollars in coins in just a three (3) year period at the airports in the U.S. while going through security? A penny here, a nickel there, adds up to a hefty sum. It works the same way with our Mite contributions when we all pitch in! More than a 100 million dollars have been gathered by the LWML since its founding in 1942. What a blessing it is to be a part of this, and to help share the furthering of the gospel outreach. As we share our gifts...our Mites...for the Lord's work, the impact of our giving, by God's grace, is profound.

*Come and bring your ideas to our January meeting where
we will discuss future projects and fundraisers.*

We also want to see if there is enough interest to start off "slowly" in Quilt making for Lutheran World Relief. This could be such a fun project!

Ora Mae Golter,
LWML President

Be sure to visit the LWML website at:

www.lwml.org and www.midsouthlwml.org



Hope & Love Mixed into the Menu!

Monday – Beans & Rice and Sauce;
 Tuesday – Beans & Corn and Sauce;
 Wednesday - Beans & Rice and a Sauce (*again??*);
 Thursday - Beans & Corn and Sauce (*again??*);
 Friday - Beans & Rice and a Sauce (*again??*)

Monday – Beans & Rice and Sauce and HOPE!;
 Tuesday – Beans & Corn and Sauce and HOPE!;
 Wednesday - Beans & Rice and a Sauce and HOPE!,
 Thursday - Beans & Corn and Sauce and HOPE!,
 Friday - Beans & Rice and a Sauce and HOPE!

Did you notice the difference? The first series of menus would probably be spoken just as blandly in homes and schools in America - maybe you've had similar thoughts at your kitchen table when you've had a lot of leftovers after Thanksgiving dinner - or Christmas dinner - or, just plain, dinner and two other meals every day? However, the second series of menus is *looked forward to* by the children in schools in Haiti with Trinity/HOPE's meal programs! Those are their favorite foods, and sadly for some, that's their only meal of the day. The thankfulness and hope of the children is quite evident as they join in their meal prayers, and the volume of chatter rises around their little wooden plank desks and seats!

Why the difference? The difference is having food to eat - which can translate into hope for living another day, even in the poorest of conditions. When coupled together with the love of the Lord Jesus in the message with the meal, the children also know there's hope not only for tomorrow, but for eternity! Let's not forget the love and HOPE that is mixed into the menu by the Lord in whatever menu is prepared for our tables as well!

Thank you for giving that love and HOPE of Jesus in whatever way you are blessed by Jesus to give to Trinity/HOPE to meet the needs of the schools' meal programs. And spread the word - there are still many children in Haiti who are looking forward to (and praying for) their school being able to receive a meal program in the future! Pastor John Gierke, Peace Lutheran, Conway, AR

News From Trinity/HOPE!



What steps can I take when I really need to hear from God?

Throughout the Bible, we read of prophets and other men and women of God who implored their people to hear the word of the Lord. Obviously, God earnestly wanted His people to hear His voice. He still does. So how do we hear God when he speaks to us today.

Developing daily spiritual disciplines helps us to hear the Lord's voice clearly and seek His direction continually. Ponder the following basic steps you can take to enable you to hear the Lord when He speaks to you:

- **Read God's Word**...By diving every day into God's Word, we begin to see His established order for our lives. We learn about God's truth, mercy, love and forgiveness.
- **Seek Him in Prayer**...Bowing our heads is the best way to see God's face and hear His voice. In opening ourselves up before the Lord, we can honestly discuss our circumstances with Him, listening for His direction as we remain still. Prayer is more than just a wish list for God—it's a conversation in which we interact with Him.
- **Meditate**...Dwelling on what Gods speaks to our hearts is a great way to let His truths take root in our souls. Not only will what we read and hear from Him impact our lives, but by mediating on it, God has the building materials to lay an unshakable foundation in our hearts. The psalmist said to the Lord, "I have more understand than all my teachers, for Your testimonies are my meditation" (Psalm 119:99).
- **Listen**...Genuine listening is active, meaning that it puts the mind in gear and hears everything said, looking intently for the meaning. That's how God wants us to listen to Him—actively!



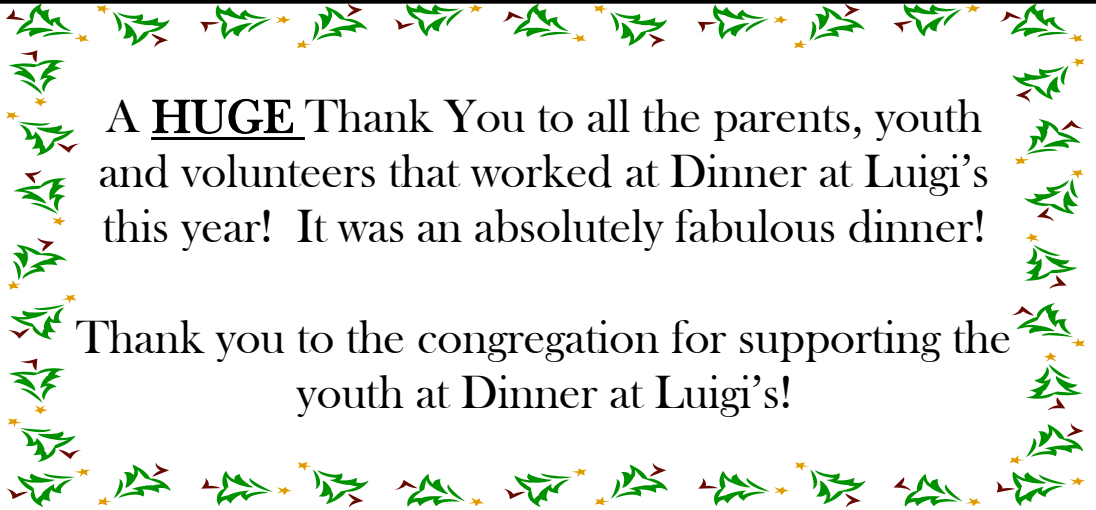
Sunday School



A HUGE Thank You to all the teachers and parents who helped with the Children's Christmas Program!



Youth at Ascension



A HUGE Thank You to all the parents, youth and volunteers that worked at Dinner at Luigi's this year! It was an absolutely fabulous dinner!

Thank you to the congregation for supporting the youth at Dinner at Luigi's!

National Youth Gathering Information Meeting



Any Youth grades 7-12 plus Parents are invited to an information meeting on Sunday, January 15, after church. (Confirmation will follow this meeting)

Lunch will be served and we will review the information about the upcoming Youth Gathering in 2013.

Confirmation Activities

Confirmation Class

- Grades 7-8
- Time—after church on Sunday

High School Youth Activities

Sunday Morning Bible Study (Discipleship)

- Grades 9-12
- Time—9 am

Mark your calendars for the Mid-Winter Youth Gathering on February 10-12, 2012. Registration forms are in your mailbox—deadline is Jan. 18

Contact Sara!

Here is all of my contact information

Phone #: 615-672-5259

E-mail: sara.vanderbilt@hotmail.com