



# The Messenger

Ascension Lutheran Church

Vol. 32, No. 2

February 2011

## MINISTERS

ALL MEMBERS OF THE  
CONGREGATION ARE CALLED  
TO BOLDLY MAKE CHRIST KNOWN

## STAFF

DENISE GUNDERSEN, PASTOR  
BOB ALDRICH, EDUCATION COORD.  
DON ARNDT, MUSIC MINISTER  
DAWN DALTON, CUSTODIAN  
JENNIFER DICKIE, SECRETARY  
SARA GREGOR, PARISH NURSE  
JEANNIE HAMILTON, CUSTODIAN  
CHERYL HUEBNER, SECRETARY

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STEVE HAUPT, VICE PRESIDENT  
JOHN NELSON, TREASURER  
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## WORSHIP SCHEDULE

SUNDAYS 8:00AM & 10:30AM  
SUNDAY SCHOOL - 9:15AM  
WEDNESDAYS 7:00PM  
  
HOLY COMMUNION:  
1ST AND 3RD SUNDAYS AND  
EVERY WEDNESDAY

PHONE (989) 781-2170  
FAX (989) 781-2408  
ASCENSIONLC@SBCGLOBAL.NET  
WEBSITE - WWW.ASCENSIONLC.ORG

## A Message from Pastor Denise

Dear Members and Friends of Ascension  
Lutheran Church:



Valentine's Day is coming. Usually in February, we talk about the beginning of Lent and preparing for Easter, but Easter is April 24<sup>th</sup> this year and Lent doesn't begin until Wednesday, March 9<sup>th</sup>. This year we have time to talk about love.

We hear the word love so much – I love your shoes. I'd love to take a vacation this winter. Let's pass over these over done uses of the word to expressions of deep feelings – I love my husband. I love my children and grandson. God in his wisdom has put a well of emotion in us so that we care for and nurture our families. In practice, Valentine's Day celebrates this gift of family - most Valentine's cards, gifts and flowers are given not to sweethearts but to Mothers.

One year I said, "Happy Valentine's Day" in an office full of women and was actually booed by all the disappointed sweethearts and wives. It was a real eye opener. Many people don't hear "I love you" often enough: Children who grew up hearing – "Good night, I love you." – move away and live alone; divorced parents who don't hear their children's voices every day; widows and widowers suddenly alone; folks in families who don't use their words; people struggling through life and feeling unworthy, unable, unlovable. We all need to hear "I love you" a lot.

So while we're not yet into Lent and its traditions, let's focus on love. God has poured out his Holy Spirit on us who believe in Jesus. Paul taught us the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness and self-control. Let your love show this month. Say it with words and notice their grateful eyes. Say it with flowers if you want, but kindness and kind words don't break our budgets. Say it with a Hallmark card or just an email or maybe with a handwritten note that will be a keepsake for the receiver.

(Continued on page 2)

*(Continued from page 1)*

Let me be the first to wish you a Happy Valentine's Day – I love you. With all Christ has put in my heart, I love you because Jesus loves you.

Go now and give the gift of love all this month. Do it with Jesus. Do it for Jesus. Do it in memory of Jesus. Do it in honor of Jesus. Do it because after awhile it feels right and good and appreciated. Love everyone without exception just like your Father in heaven does, even if you have to pray real hard to do it and even if you have to fake it at first. Jesus will be so proud of you.

Love, Pastor Denise

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### **BIGGEST LOSER – CONFESSIONS OF A WANNA BE**

Okay, it was easy to assume I would get serious about working toward better health – increased strength and stamina, lower cholesterol and the fun of doing activities that I enjoy – walking, hiking, biking, stretching, even some cleaning. But a week has passed, and I'm just getting going. I've just eaten a cinnamon bun – it was good too. Somehow, someday I will one day reach my weight goal; and you probably don't want to hear about this forever. So this wanna be loser is seeking support – you can still bring in cinnamon buns, but warn me off before I look at them. You can ask me how I'm doing. You can invite me to a fun activity to burn calories with you. You can pray for me. You can encourage me. You can share your success story. And I bet you can think of other ways to support me, and I'd sure appreciate it.

Love, Pastor Denise

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is published monthly by:  
Ascension Lutheran Church  
8695 Gratiot Road  
Saginaw, MI 48609-4808

Deadline for the  
March 2011 issue is  
**February 17th --12:00 noon**  
Articles may be emailed or  
dropped off at the church.

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# STEWARDSHIP

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## **SPIRITUAL GIFTS WORKSHOPS - COME AND SEE**

**Saturday, February 19<sup>th</sup> at 12:30 p.m.** in the **Fellowship Hall** is our first **Spiritual Gifts Workshop** – join the Council and Vestry as they take the workshop together. The next workshop will be **Sunday, March 6<sup>th</sup>** after the late service. (There'll be one a month at different times for a few months, and then twice a year until Christ returns.) The workshop takes about an hour and fifteen minutes. I've conducted this workshop for 14 years and found it invaluable to the happiness and success of the church and the members and friends.



The goal of using spiritual gifts workshops is to base all our ministries on spiritual gifts – so people with the gift of teaching are empowered to teach, people with the gift of intercessory prayer are called on to pray, so that people with the gift of leadership are asked to plan and recruit, people with the gift of hospitality are empowered to decorate, greet, cook, serve and hug... and so on.

Have you ever heard a choir sing off-key? Have you ever seen a frazzled man or woman struggling through leading a Vacation Bible School class? Have you heard the sad tales of the counter who never balances the Sunday offering? We all have. How did it happen? The singers were leading VBS, while the gifted teachers were counting the offering, and the trained mathematician was singing off-key. All the needed spiritual gifts were present, but the members were serving in the wrong ministries. And they were not happy and fulfilled, even though they were working very hard.

Have you seen people serving with joy and ease and experiencing deep satisfaction in their ministry and growing in their faith? Yeah, they are the blessed ones! They have the spiritual gifts for the work, they are motivated, their role matches their spiritual maturity and their personality. Our mission is to boldly make Christ known; and our goal is to do this with joy, with ease, with all the needed gifts, with all the needed ministers.

I understand Ascension has done some work in this area, but have not found the blessing yet. Please don't let that experience inoculate you – that is keep you away from our more comprehensive, strategic plans for spiritual gifted ministries. This workshop will be different on several counts:

For you personally,

- In addition to discovering your primary spiritual gifts, you will also discover what motivates you to use your gifts, how ready and able you are to use them, and how your personality impacts how you use your gifts.
- You'll learn what ministry opportunities are right for you and when to say: No. We'll practice saying the N word because folks who can't say No get trapped in the wrong ministries.

As a congregation,

- We'll create a database of the spiritual gifts workshops, that council, boards and others will use to invite the gifted, motivated, able and personally suited into ministries.
- Assuming that the survey takers are a fair representation of the whole congregation: We'll learn who God is motivating us to serve. We'll learn how able we are to move ahead or if we need to attend to our spiritual growth first. We'll learn which spiritual gifts are strongest among us, and who has the rarer gifts so we can find and empower their use. We'll learn about our collective personality - We learn how comfortable we are as pioneer and innovators or if we are more traditionalists and developers. We'll learn whether we are more playful or serious in our ministries.
- We'll learn who has professional or hobby skills and would like to use them to bless the ministries of the church.

Love, Pastor Denise

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## ASK THE PASTOR

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### ASK PASTOR DENISE

All questions are good questions! Here are several that have come across Pastor Denise's desk recently, and how she responded to them....



**Question:** Good morning, Pastor. Just testing to make sure this email address works, and see what the response time would be. Are you the only one who will see this? In your email address, does “pr” stand for pastor or private? P.S., we’ve had e-mail problems before.

**Pastor’s Response:** Good morning. The “pr” stands for pastor and it is also private--my eyes only.

Response time? Usually, I check my email first thing each morning Monday through Thursday. Friday and Saturday are my days off (well, at least one of them will be) and Sunday is all face time. I’ll probably check my email once a day on Friday to Sunday, but you can’t count on it.

Day or night, most people find my cell phone is the best way to reach me. If I’m engaged, I’ll send you a busy signal and return your call and/or message when I get free. If I don’t get back to you, it could be that my cell phone stayed home in my bathrobe. So, you might want to call the church or home number.

Thanks for asking. Love, Pastor Denise

**Question:** Good morning, Pastor. With all due respect, why doesn’t the 8:00 a.m. service begin at 8-o-clock? Two years ago, it did. We drive several miles, and always manage to be there 10 minutes early. I’m 73, and I can read and memorize all the announcements that are played on the big screen. Also, people can read them in the handouts. Why read them all out loud? These little things and a few bigger things have caused some of our friends to leave Ascension. Thank you.

**Pastor’s Response:** Good afternoon. Announcements--you either love them or hate them. Those who love them know that verbal announcements generate better participation. Those who hate them are good readers who find them redundant as you do.

I could say announcements are hospitality to the non-readers. But actually, to communicate effectively, we have to use multiple forms--newsletters, Sunday bulletins, the big screen, posters, print ads, street signs, emails, phone calls, visits, announcements, and best of all--word of mouth, a good buzz about what’s happening. All of this so people are talking about church, about Ascension, about their faith in Jesus, about God and inviting others to learn more about Jesus.

My goals in doing announcements are:

- To graciously direct people toward the other forms of communication so they can get all the details they need.
- To helpfully highlight among all the messages people are receiving that here are the items that require a response this week.
- To honor and support the efforts of the Ascension’s hard-working leaders and help our ministries succeed to boldly make Christ known.

*(Continued on page 5)*

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## ASK THE PASTOR

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*(Continued from page 4)*

Announcements are indeed redundant--as with the Gospel of Jesus Christ we will keep on repeating ourselves until Christ returns, making every effort to be about His work when he comes.

I am indeed sorry that people you love and cherish no longer worship at Ascension. Regardless of the reason, every member who leaves the community is greatly missed and it is important not to drive people away needlessly or carelessly.

Thank you for asking me about this matter. I'd be happy to continue this discussion over a cup of coffee. I look forward to hearing from you again.

Love, Pastor Denise

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## COUNCIL NEWS

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### **VESTRY/STAFF RETREAT**

There will be a **Vestry/Staff Retreat** on **Saturday, February 19<sup>th</sup>** from **9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.** The Retreat will be held in our **Fellowship Hall** with a light lunch provided. Please mark your calendars. All those involved will soon be receiving a letter with more details, including the agenda.



### **ANNUAL MEETING**

#### **Annual Meeting of the Congregation of Ascension Lutheran Church**

Sunday, February 27th  
In the Sanctuary following the 10:30 a.m. worship  
(Approximately 11:45 a.m.)

*All Confirmed Members of Ascension Lutheran Church  
are highly encouraged to attend  
as we review our year in ministry in 2010  
and attend to any official business.*

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## WORSHIP AND EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

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### WORSHIP THEMES IN FEBRUARY FROM PASTOR DENISE

Inspired by Valentine's Day, *relationships* will be our theme for worship in February. Reflecting on our lifestyle of stewardship, we'll ask ourselves: "How am I doing as a steward of the relationships God has given me with the world, my family, my neighbor, God and my church?"



The Gospel for **February 6th**, includes Matthew 5.14a, 16 - "You are the light of the **world**. Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven."

The Gospel for **February 13th** includes Matthew 5.23-24 - "So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your **brother or sister** has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift."

The Gospel for **February 20<sup>th</sup>** includes Matthew 5.43-45 - "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your **neighbor** and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous."

The Gospel for **February 27<sup>th</sup>** includes Matthew 6.33-34 - "Strive first for the kingdom of **God** and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today's trouble is enough for today."

The first lesson for **March 6<sup>th</sup>** includes Isaiah 58.6-7 - "Is not this **the fast** that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin?"

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### LENT BEGINS

On Ash Wednesday, March 9th, Lent begins. Lent is a season of repentance. But for many of us, "repentance" is an offensive word. It sounds so remorseful.



In reality, it isn't remorseful at all. The root word for "repentance" is the Greek word metanoia, from which our word "metamorphosis" comes. The great image of this is the butterfly emerging from its cocoon; the caterpillar being transformed into new life.

No one is remorseful about that! Nor should we be with repentance, which involves leaving the past and emerging into new life.

Please look for Lenten devotional booklets available soon at the Welcome Center in the Gathering Area. Devotionals will be available for both individuals and families.

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## WORSHIP AND EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

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### Sunday Morning Adult Bible Study

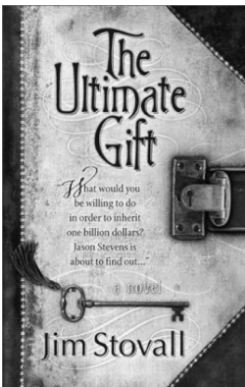
9:15 a.m. - 10:15 a.m.  
Church Library



Join us in reading Bible stories in a sort of sequence that reflects God's personality in various settings, times and places. Seeing His story unfold through the generations allows you to see how gracious and merciful God has always been and how it leads to the ultimate showing of grace and mercy when Jesus dies on the cross. Yet, there are surprises along the way that still make you ask, "Why did God do that?"

Larry Nuechterlein is facilitating this Bible Study. Please contact Larry if you have any comments or questions.

Hope to see you there!



### CONGREGATIONAL BOOK READ AND MOVIE NIGHT

Now that we have had an opportunity to read *The Ultimate Gift*, let's get together and watch the movie. The Christian Education Board invites you to a movie and discussion night on **Friday, February 25th**. The movie will begin at **6:30 p.m.** with a discussion to follow. If you have any questions, please contact Bob Aldrich.

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## YOUTH

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### FIRST BIBLE CLASS

We will be offering a **First Bible Class** for our **2nd-graders** and their parents during the Sunday School hour (9:15 a.m - 10:15 a.m.) on **Sunday, March 27th** and **Sunday, April 3rd**. One parent is asked to attend the classes with their child. When the class is completed, the children will be presented with their own copy of the Study Bible at the 10:30 a.m. worship service on Sunday, April 3rd. This year, we will be using a new Study Bible; so please contact Bob Aldrich if you plan to participate to ensure we have the needed number of copies.

### CONFIRMATION CAMP

Plans are underway for Confirmation Camp on **July 17th-22nd** at **Stony Lake**. This camp is open to any 6th-through 8th-grade ABI student. Please contact Bob Aldrich for more information.

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## CHURCH LIFE

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### *Valentine's Dinner and Game Show*

**Friday, February 11th**  
**5:30 p.m. Seating Open/6:00 p.m. Dinner**  
**\$25 per Couple/\$13 Single**



Limited Seating Available!  
Childcare Available - Dinner Provided

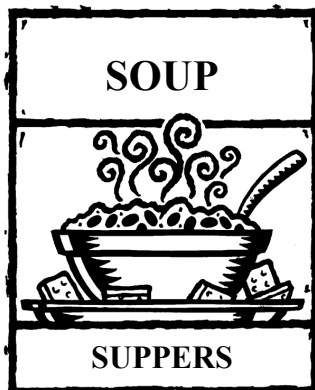
*Menu: Salad Bar, Choice of Chicken Breast or Roast Beef,  
Potato, Vegetable, Rolls, Dessert, Coffee, Tea and Lemonade*

Please sign-up on the Kiosk by Sunday, February 6th.  
Information is also on our Facebook page - Saginaw Ascension Lutheran Church

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### **50TH ANNIVERSARY WORSHIP AND POTLUCK**

Please join us to celebrate Ascension's 50th Anniversary on **Sunday, February 20th at 10:30 a.m.** (*One worship service only this day.*) A slide show of Ascension's past 50 years will be presented, and a fellowship potluck will follow the service. Sign-up on the Kiosk indicating how many will attend, and the dish you plan to bring. The meat for the potluck will be provided. Please contact Tanya Blehm with any questions.



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**Lenten Soup Suppers**  
**Wednesday's - March 16th - April 13th**  
**Fellowship Hall**  
**6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.**  
*(Before the 7:00 p.m. Worship Services)*

Please see the Church Life section  
of the Kiosk to volunteer.

*Free-Will Donation*

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## HEALTH HIGHLIGHTS

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Submitted by Sara Gregor, RN, Parish Nurse

### ST. VALENTINE DAY

“Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.” John 15:13



St. Valentine was a priest around 270 AD in Rome. Tradition says that he refused to worship the Roman gods, Jupiter and Mercury. St. Valentine was arrested for helping Christians escape from prison and by performing Christian marriages. When St. Valentine was asked at trial what he thought of the Roman gods, he stated they were false gods. He told them the God that Jesus called Father was the only True God. Because of his faith he was put in prison. While there, he ministered to the prisoners and guards. The emperor was angry that St. Valentine continued to worship God and convert prisoners while in prison. He had St. Valentine beheaded. St. Valentine gave his life to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ our Savior. Valentine’s Day is about sacrificial love—maybe not our life but real, genuine love for others.

### FEBRUARY IS HEART MONTH – TAKE CARE OF YOUR HEART!!

**Heart Attack Warning Signs:** Some heart attacks are sudden and intense, but MOST of them start slowly with mild pain or discomfort. Here are the signs that can mean you are having a heart attack:

- Chest discomfort—a squeezing pain in the center of the chest that goes away and comes back for a few minutes or longer
- For women, there may not be chest pain BUT feeling extremely tired or exhausted
- Discomfort or pain in one or both arms, the back, neck jaw or stomach
- Shortness of breath with or without chest discomfort
- Other signs: breaking out in a sweat, nausea or lightheadedness

If you or someone you’re with has one or more of these signs, **call 911**...Get to the hospital right away!

**You know the risk factors for heart attack and stroke, right?** High blood pressure, smoking, high cholesterol, physical inactivity, obesity and diabetes—**these you can control!!** Those risk factors you can’t control but should be aware of are: increasing age, gender, race, family medical history and a previous heart attack or stroke. Take good care of yourself!

“...I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you even as your soul is getting along well.” 3 John 1:2

*Health Highlights* are brought to you by the Parish Health Committee whose members are Sara Gregor, Parish Nurse, Sharon Boyd, John Cavendish, Linda Drayton, Peggy Darling, Jennifer Richardson, and Lynn Schomaker.

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## HEALTH HIGHLIGHTS

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### AGING ENRICHED NETWORK – LUTHERAN HOMES OF MICHIGAN

Do you have an older relative or know an older adult that is needing help? This one stop for Senior services is available for easy access to information, expertise and referrals. They listen and help you connect with businesses and services that you or the senior that you care for, can trust. Contact them at 888-652-8359 or [www.LiveAgingEnriched.org](http://www.LiveAgingEnriched.org).



### CLEANING FOR A REASON - PASS IT ON!

If you know any women currently undergoing chemotherapy, please pass the word to her that there is a cleaning service that provides FREE housecleaning - once per month for up to four months while she is in treatment. All you have to do is sign up at [www.cleaningforareason.org](http://www.cleaningforareason.org) and have her doctor fax a note confirming the treatment. Cleaning for a Reason will have a participating maid service in her area arrange for the service. This organization serves the entire USA, and currently has 547 partners to help. Be a blessing to someone, and pass this information along!

### THANK YOU, USHERS AND PASTOR DENISE

On Saturday, December 11<sup>th</sup> a training session for the usher staff was held. This was primarily to discuss how to manage medical emergencies that might happen during worship services. There was a handout of suggested ways to care for a member who becomes ill and also a review of using our Automatic External Defibrillator (AED). Other usher duties were discussed as well. So many attended the session. Thank you for giving up a Saturday morning—a very busy time for all of us since it was so close to the holidays.

Lynn Schomaker and Sara Gregor, Parish Health Committee



### BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENING

Mark your calendar for blood pressure screenings by the Parish Health Committee. They will be held on the second Sunday of each month. The next one coming up is **Sunday, February 13th**. Screenings will be available after each worship service.

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## OTHER

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### ATTENDANCE CARDS

Attendance Cards are located in the slots in the pews for your convenience. Please make sure to fill out one card per family, and place in the offering plate. In order to keep the cost to a minimum, please refrain from using the cards for uses other than attendance.



### DEADLINE FOR MARCH 2011 NEWSLETTER

The deadline for articles for the March 2011 Messenger is **Thursday, February 17th at 12:00 noon**. Please submit your articles to the Church Office or e-mail them to [ascensionlc@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ascensionlc@sbcglobal.net).

Thank you for your help in publishing the newsletter on time. Your contributions are greatly appreciated!

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## THANK YOU

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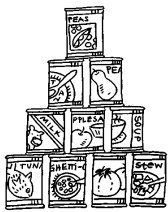
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Thank you for all of your thoughts, prayers and cards during the recent loss of some family members. May God bless you all!

Maggie Priess and  
John and Carol Schroeder



A special thank you to our cleaning staff for taking the extra time to disinfect surfaces during the cold and flu season! We appreciate your efforts in keeping us all healthy!



**FOOD DRIVE**

We want to thank all who donated food and non-food items for the Annual Food Drive. The donations were distributed to Metro Ministries and First Presbyterian Food Pantry. Many families needed the assistance during the holidays, and the donations were well received. Thanks for all your help and kindness.

The Stuart's and Gregor's

Thanks, Thanks!! The donations for the women at the Emmaus House were humbled to receive Christmas trees and decorating items, clothing, jewelry, personal hygiene items, etc. These donations helped the rehabilitated female prisoners to establish a holiday celebration with their families. In fact, our generosity made such an impact, we were asked to continue this ministry. Praise the Lord! We sincerely thank you for your help and kindness.

Marie Stuart

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## MEMBER NEWS

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### SYMPATHY

Our Christian sympathy is extended to the family of **Billy Shephard**. Billy passed away on January 3, 2011. A funeral service was held at Ascension on January 7, 2011.



Please keep the following families in your prayers as they have recently lost loved ones:

- The Clifford Family (Mike's mother recently died)
- The Gregor Family (Sara's Brother, Mark, died unexpectedly in North Carolina on January 3rd)
- The Priess Family (Maggie's Step-Daughter, Brenda, died on January 5th)

May God comfort all who mourn with His assurance of eternal life.

### BAPTISMS

**Jackson Myers Holmes**, son of Peyton Barrell and Evan Holmes, was baptized on Sunday, December 26th. Jackson's sponsors are Caitlin Holmes, Jeremy Sims and Jazzlyn Vasquez. Richard and Marie Myers are congregational sponsors for Jackson.



**Aidan James Smaley**, son of Amanda Apodaca and Michael Smaley, was baptized on Sunday, January 16th. Aidan's sponsors are Melissa Munoz and Carmen Vermeulin. Patty Hamilton is the congregational sponsor for Aidan.

May God bless Jackson and Aidan with His gift of grace.

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## OUTREACH AND ACTIVITIES

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### WORSHIP AT SWAN HAVEN MANOR

Worship services at **Swan Haven Manor** will continue on the **fourth Saturday of each month**. If you are interested in assisting Pastor Denise and Charlene Boland with the services or would like to attend, please contact Pastor Denise.

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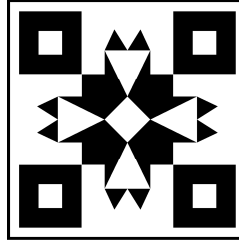
## OUTREACH AND ACTIVITIES

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### HABITAT FOR HUMANITY 10<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL QUILT SHOW AND AUCTION

April 8th and 9th - 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.  
April 10th - 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.  
At Our Saviour Lutheran Church  
Hemmeter at Weiss, Saginaw, Michigan 48603  
Co-Chairs: *Linda Grindahl and Jane Werner*



Please help make this year's Tenth Anniversary Show and Auction a big success! Come by and view the magnificent quilts on display and, perhaps, bid on one.

We also appreciate any support from quilters that wish to donate quilted items for the Show and Auction. All profits will go to help Saginaw Habitat for Humanity.

Submit items ASAP after February 1st...no later than March 22nd.  
Safety-pin a label to each item with full name & phone number.

Options for submitting your items:

- Drop at church on Tuesdays from 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon (address above) at side corner steel door off parking lot (look for sign on door)
- Drop at church office by appointment (call 799-5470 )

Contributing items to the Show and Auction, visiting the show and making a bid are wonderful ways to help build or renovate homes in Saginaw.

Please call or e-mail one of us for more information.

Linda Grindahl

Jane Werner  
989-326-1192  
[werner6@juno.com](mailto:werner6@juno.com)

#### Donation Tips

Please consider donating:

- Quilts of all sizes
- Quilted clothing
- Quilted bags
- Quilted wall hangings
- Quilted throws
- Baby/child quilts
- Quilted pot holders
- Quilted placemats and table runners
- Vintage quilts welcome but please consult us first
- Quilt or patchwork items using other techniques but reflecting quilting or sewing themes, such as stained glass, counted cross stitch, paintings and wood work or carvings

Please avoid donating:

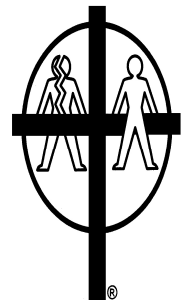
- Commercially made items
- Knit or crochet items

Please submit only clean items in very fine or excellent condition.

### STEPHEN MINISTRY NEWS

Why Lay Ministry for Caregiving? Stephen Ministry is based on the idea that all Christians are ministers. The responsibility for passing on God's love is for all Christians, not just for a few. God has given us all gifts for ministry and called us to put those gifts to use. Stephen Ministry is a way people with special gifts for caring ministry can use those gifts to bring Christ's love to people in need.

For more information, call Kathy Bonn (297-0075), Sara Ostrander (781-2481), Pastor Kathleen Basner (792-7135) or Nancy Scott (792-5817).



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## OUTREACH AND ACTIVITIES

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### **BABY PHOTO CONTEST WINNER!**

Thanks to all that participated in the Baby Photo Contest! Ginny Whelton was our winner with 23 correct guesses. Congratulations, Ginny...she won a Bob Evans gift card. We will be posting the names on each photo located on the bulletin board outside of the Sanctuary doors. Make sure you stop by and take a look.

The Evangelism Committee

### **OUR LUTHERAN SISTERS AND BROTHERS IN HONDURAS THE BAD NEWS...NOW BETTER NEWS**



From: Stephen Deal, Pastor, ELCA Global Mission representative in Central America  
To: Our Synod Churches and friends of the Lutheran Church in Honduras

Late in December, we (Bill and Sara Gregor) had news from Honduras, particularly about the neighborhood of La Union where the Lutheran Church El Buen Pastor (Church of the Good Shepherd) is located. The following is from an e-mail sent by Stephen Deal. There had been more than 6 months of uninterrupted peace until a dramatic turn for the worse on Christmas Eve, literally minutes before their church service. A gun battle broke out between the two rival gangs vying over the La Union neighborhood where the church is located and where most of the church members live. The result, in the words of their Pastor, Hernon, a “massacre” that left 7 gang members dead (4 from one side, 3 from the other), including two who fell dead directly in front of the main entrance to the church. A 4-year old who belonged to their Sunday School and an adult were killed, also. Because of rumors of another possible confrontation on Dec. 31<sup>st</sup>, the church was forced to suspend activities over the holidays. Also, a number of families (including some church members) were forced to temporarily abandon their homes in order not to get caught in the crossfire.

BETTER NEWS - Rumors to our Synod (a companion Synod with them) were that that the Church would celebrate their last service on Dec. 31<sup>st</sup> and close. That is not so. Stephen says there is a strong consensus among the pastor, church council and majority of the members that the active functioning of El Buen Pastor is more important than ever for the neighborhood. They plan to continue—and celebrated their first worship service of 2011 on January 9<sup>th</sup> with an overflow crowd and a special lunch afterward.

Because of the “off and on” violence experienced in the neighborhood of El Buen Pastor, a difficult task lies ahead. Participation of children in youth and church activities will not be as before. Also, they will likely add measures to minimize the security risks for those who participate in the worship and other church activities. Please, please keep these faithful Christians in your prayers—for their safety and for their ability to continue Christ’s ministry in that neighborhood.

Sara Gregor, Health for Life Mission Team  
North/West Lower Michigan Synod

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## OUTREACH AND ACTIVITIES

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### REAL PEOPLE, REAL FOOD, REAL HOPE

The Synod Hunger Team of the North/West Lower Michigan Synod of the ELCA will host a hunger gathering, *Real People, Real Food, Real Hope*, on **Saturday, March 19th** from **9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.** at **Immanuel Lutheran Church, 320 S. Bradley in Mt. Pleasant**. The keynote speaker and workshop presenter will be Dr. Craig Nesson, Professor of Theology at Wartburg Seminary. Please see the Kiosk in the Gathering Area for more information.

Please see Pastor Denise if you would like to join her and Gundy for dinner at the Mountain Town Brewing Station prior to the gathering.



### ALTAR FLOWERS FOR FEBRUARY

- February 6th**     *Flowers Needed*
- February 13th**    In Celebration of Jacob's Birthday  
by Lynda Goward
- February 20th**    In Honor of John A. and Joan Fay Nelson's Anniversary  
by Joanne & Janet Nelson
- February 27th**    Given to the Glory of God  
by Delila and Jack Colpean



The Flower Chart for 2011 is posted in the Gathering Area near the Usher/Acolyte Room. Cost is \$20 per arrangement. A payment envelope will be mailed to you. These arrangements are placed in the Sanctuary each week for worship and offer an opportunity to remember loved ones' birthdays, anniversaries, baptisms and other special occasions. The flowers may be picked up after the late service on Sunday morning.

### COMPLAINT DISSIPATED

A woman called a newspaper office to complain that her Sunday paper hadn't arrived. Trying to calm her, the man at the office pointed out that the paper hadn't arrived because it was Saturday.

After a brief silence, the woman said meekly, "Well, that explains why there was no one in church today."

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## SERVING IN FEBRUARY

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**Head Ushers--8:00 a.m./10:30 a.m.**

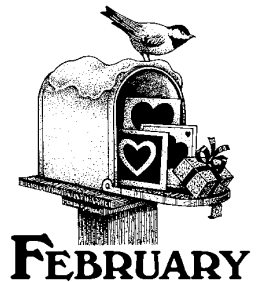
- 6 Edna Bell/Dale Caverly
- 13 Dave Witker/Andy Friend
- 20 Tim Wilson/Jim Stuart
- 27 Joan Ford/Dave Aden

**Readers--8:00 a.m./10:30 a.m.**

- 6 Heather Wicke/Tammy Haupt
- 13 Dave Witker/Judy Carr
- 20 Edna Bell/Linda Luplow
- 27 Charleen Boland/Larry Preston

**Acolytes--8:00 a.m./10:30 a.m.**

- 6 Jarrett Thomas/Hunter Turner
- 13 Alec Preston/Alex Wallace
- 20 Meredith Friend/Johnny Whelton
- 27 Lauren Huebner/Larissa Crook

**Nursery - Call Tammy Haupt to Volunteer - 799-8498**

- 6 *Volunteers Needed*
- 13 *Volunteers Needed*
- 20 *Volunteers Needed*
- 27 *Volunteers Needed*

**Sound Board Operators--8:00 a.m./10:30 a.m.**

- 6 Tom Bailey/Mason Friend
- 13 Tom Bailey/Rusty Van Marter
- 20 Jenny Richardson/Bob Aldrich & Libby Schroeder
- 27 Jenny Richardson/Mason Friend

**Friendly Callers**

- 6 Bonnie Cavendish
- 13 Sue Bailey
- 20 Maija Preston
- 27 Dick Schomaker

**Hospital Callers**

- 6 Carol Lange
- 13 Bettie Lyle
- 20 LeRoy & Sandy Graham
- 27 Rick Hamilton

**Children's Time--10:30 a.m.**

- 6 Craig Ford
- 20 Angelica Espinoza

### WEDNESDAYS

**Head Ushers**

- 2 Hayes Mack
- 9 Bill Gottlieb
- 16 Ruth Schomaker
- 23 Mike Clifford

**Readers**

- 2 John Schroeder
- 9 Ellen Burchfield
- 16 Mike Clifford
- 23 Chris Howe

**Sound Board Operators**

- 2 Bob Aldrich
- 9 John Schroeder
- 16 Bob Aldrich
- 23 John Schroeder

*Thanks to everyone who participates in these important ministries.  
If you are unable to serve on your assigned day,  
please make sure to secure a replacement to take over your responsibilities.*

ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH  
8695 GRATIOT ROAD  
SAGINAW, MI 48609-4808

“ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED”

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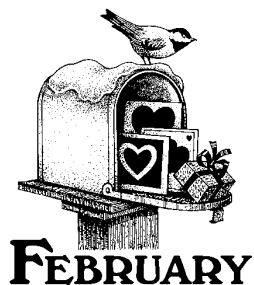
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## Love conquers all

The love for equals is a human thing – of friend for friend, brother for brother. It is to love what is loving and lovely. The world smiles.

The love for the less fortunate is a beautiful thing – the love for those who suffer, for those who are poor, the sick, the failures, the unlovely. This is compassion, and it touches the heart of the world.

The love for the more fortunate is a rare thing – to love those who succeed where we fail, to rejoice without envy with those who rejoice, the love of the poor for the rich .... The world is always bewildered by its saints.

And then there is the love for the enemy – love for the one who does not love you but mocks, threatens and inflicts pain. The tortured's love for the torturer. This is God's love. It conquers the world.

–Frederick Buechner,  
*The Magnificent Defeat*

