



ALC Connections March 2016

LCMS Ascension Lutheran Church 2780 Haslett Rd. East Lansing MI

The Discipleship Chat

This Changes Everything

'Tis the Season ... That's usually a Christian phrase. But we're in the middle of the Lenten-Easter season. The Lenten Season is always a special focus on the Cross of Jesus. He suffered our punishment, so that we could be forgiven. The cross makes all the difference. And then He rose! The question is always: what do you do with a resurrection?

Have you seen the new movie **RISEN** yet? The basic premise is this: Pontius Pilate assigns the Chief of the Roman soldiers to investigate the stealing of the body of Jesus (since, of course, it must be theft!)

If you watch other films enough to recognize the actors and actresses, then it is a little strange to watch Martin Luther and Draco Malfoy team up as Roman soldiers! (Joseph Fiennes and Tom Felten, from Martin Luther and Harry Potter films). I was impressed that it was evident that effort was made not to contradict the Bible in any way. And this was the first movie I have seen that portrayed the nails of the crucifixion going through the wrist (more historically accurate) than through the center of the hand, and with washers on the nails (which kind of makes sense). Fiennes is quite convincing in his role as an investigator. In the end, the message is quite clear: if this Jesus did indeed rise from the dead, then **it changes everything**.

We are people of faith – faith in Jesus. We have been changed. But *how* are we **noticeably** changed? Do those who see us see someone who is *in the world but not of the world*? Do they see a *disciple of Jesus*? Do they see someone, who, like St Paul, wants to *model the Christian life* for all those whom they meet? Do they see someone who is *in the Word*? So they see a *man or woman of Prayer*? The Gospel of salvation forgives our sin and weakness, and encourages us to walk in the faith. We have a Savior who rose from the dead, and said, **“Because I live, you shall live, too!”**

This changes Everything!

Pastor Dave



LENTEN Midweek Worship March 9 and 16th.

Midweek Theme: **Persons of the Passion.**

6 pm Soup Supper, 7 pm Lenten Worship in Chapel

Maundy Thursday (March 24) in Main Sanctuary

Good Friday: 1 pm Chapel, 7 pm Sanctuary

Easter Breakfast at 9am

Easter Service at 10am

SPIRITUAL GIFTS. The Bible says that God gives each of his children special gifts (inclinations, abilities) to use in His service. In January, we heard a 2-week series on Spiritual Gifts. Coming after Easter, we are going to host some Bible Studies on Spiritual Gifts for the congregation to take part in. Learn more about them, and discover your Spiritual Gifts through a Spiritual Gifts Inventory (kind of looks like a test, but isn't).

Madalitso Magombo, the MSU student that we helped at



POTLUCK DINNER

Christmas, will be giving a presentation on her home country of Malawi today. We will host a potluck lunch with a short presentation to follow. Plan on attending this event and meeting Mada and her family.

Have you ever been interested in learning a few fancy dance steps but never been able to get around to it or get over the price of a dance lesson? On Saturday, March 12th, Ascension



Lutheran Church is excited to *host a semi-formal dance night* here in the church gymnasium! Starting off the early evening (and again later on) we have a special member of the **MSU Ballroom Dance Team** coming in to teach some basic ballroom two-step, waltz and foxtrot. Come in at any time between 3pm and 5pm to enjoy some light finger foods and a fun night of formal dancing.

Easter comes early this year, March 27. Traditionally, **Easter lilies** adorn the altar with support from the congregation. A lily may be donated in memory or honor of a loved one or simply donated. The donation is made by signing up on the sheet posted on the kiosk and writing a check to the Women of Ascension for \$8.50 per lily. You may put your check in the collection plate. Please do so by March 20, Palm Sunday. The lilies are supplied by the Bath Meijer. After the Easter service, you may take your lily home. It can be planted in your garden as a lasting remembrance.



ALC Connections

March 2016

LCMS Ascension Lutheran Church 2780 Haslett Rd. East Lansing MI

Church Council Update: In its February meeting your Church Council set a goal of sharing Ascension's Ministry Plan for 2016-2017 with the Voters' Assembly in April. With a mission of Growing Disciples of Jesus in the target areas of Study, Worship, Service, Fellowship, and Outreach goals and activities are being developed and coordinated into an on-going plan for our congregation. Please pray for God's direction in these plans and how He would lead you to be involved. All of us have Spiritual Gifts that He wants to develop for His Service.

The Council is considering ways Ascension can support Rev. Steven and Martha Mahlburg and their 5 children in their call by the LCMS as missionaries to Macau, China. Would you consider regularly praying for this family who have served parishes in Michigan and are preparing to leave for China this summer? In addition to your prayers would you consider a monthly financial commitment? If so, mention it to Pastor Dave or a Council member listed on the back of the worship folder.

Men's Venue will be Tuesday, March 15th at Smokey Bones at 6pm. All men are invited to attend.

The Women's Venue will be on Thursday, March 17, at Bravo's in Eastwood, at 6 pm. All women of Ascension are invited.

Attention: March 31, 2016 deadline for Thrivent Choice Dollars Eligible members of Thrivent Financial, who have been designated Choice Dollars, must be sure to direct their designated Thrivent Choice Dollars by March 31, 2016. After that date, any undirected Choice Dollars will expire. Don't miss this opportunity to help support Ascension Lutheran Church or other charitable organizations that you choose. Go to Thrivent.com/thriventchoice or call 800-THRIVENT and state "Thrivent Choice."

The **Women of Ascension** met on February 20 and elected officers for 2016. Serving as President is Rebecca Baughan, Secretary, Carol Usitalo and Treasurer, Kenda Bultman.

Chosen as our Spring mission project is **Helping Women Period**. We will be collecting personal feminine hygiene products for women's shelters serving the homeless and as refuge for the abused. Among the charities served by **HWP** are Eve's Place, Haven House, Advent House and Hannah's House. Please check their website at helpingwomenperiod.org. Watch the bulletin for more information.

Our next meeting is Saturday, March 12 at the church.

As female members of Ascension we are all members of **Women of Ascension** and the **Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML)** of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod.

Please visit Ascension's website

(www.ascensioneastlansing.org) for all the latest news, activities, and schedules for the church! If you are a Facebook user then you will be pleased to know we have a Facebook page as well. Just type in Ascension Lutheran Church and "like us" to receive updates. Please see Laura Osminski, or contact the church office, if you would like to see something added to either the website or the Facebook page.

Want to Get Involved? The Properties Committee needs another member. Interested? Contact Carolyn Boger or Phil Peterson.

Flower chart for 2016 is on the kiosk in the Narthex. Be sure to sign up for your special date.

The **Men's Bible Fellowship** meets every Saturday at 8am (around coffee and donuts). Enter through the side furnace room/kitchen door. You are invited to join us as we study the Gospel of Matthew.

We welcome you to the **Thursday afternoon Bible Study**, 2pm in the classroom. We've been studying the great spiritual life lessons in I and II Samuel and I-11 Kings. We're currently at I King 23. Join us!



ALC Connections

March 2016

LCMS Ascension Lutheran Church 2780 Haslett Rd. East Lansing MI

The Gift of Life (the CEF Corner)

Think back to the time you were preparing for the birth of your first child. You worked hard to prepare. New paint in the nursery and getting the equipment you knew would be needed soon. How excited you were to discover what this new little part of you looked like. Then the day came and that amazing feeling burst all over you as you gazed upon that new life. New hands. New feet. New eyes and a mouth. What a miracle you have seen with all the intricacies of the body interconnected and working together. All of them never used before but in need of love and care to teach them to work properly.

Who gave your child these new parts? Who gave them the eyes to see, the hands to work and play or the feet to walk? What an amazing God we have! God made everything. The Creator of the universe does it again. But even in that wonderful moment we realize that more is needed. Something is missing.

The greatest miracle happens when that child is baptized. The imperfections of sin are forgiven, washed away by that same Creator who sent Christ into the world to pay the price in our place. That first miracle brought a new life into the world, but the second miracle reserves a spot for us in eternity. Just as you taught your child to speak, to walk, to eat, teach them to worship, to praise the Maker of the Universe. Encourage them to interact with the God that made them. Demonstrate how to pray and spend that quiet time with them learning about God's word. Ephesians 6:4 reminds us, "Fathers, do not make your children angry, but raise them with the training and teaching of the Lord." It secures their future and yours.

You may marvel at the miracle of new life. You may thank God each day for the miracle of Eternal Life. That is a miracle we can share with our children, our grandchildren and the world. As you look forward to the fulfillment of the greatest miracle, you can create your own little miracle. Plan for the time you go home. Communicate your faith and consider leaving a gift as part of your estate plan, to support the ministries that have so greatly impacted your life. It can help insure that your family or someone you haven't met, can become part of God's family and experience the miracle of Eternal Life.

Bill Burmeister
Church Extension Fund – Michigan District
800-242-3944 t bill.burmeister@mi-cef.org