



ALC Connections December 2011

LCMS Ascension Lutheran Church 2780 Haslett Rd. East Lansing MI

The Discipleship Chat MOST Ministries Expands Its Mission Opportunities

God's 14-14-14 Plan

The Gospel of Matthew begins with a Genealogy, of Abraham to the birth of Jesus. Matthew emphasizes that there are three segments of this history (things representing the Trinity always happen in "threes"): 14 generations from Abraham to King David, 14 generations from King David to the Exile (God's faithless chosen people being driven and exiled from the Promised Land), and 14 generations from the Exile to the coming of the Savior Jesus.

Some think this is too easy, that the Israelites should have seen it coming. I don't know – do you know what happened to your ancestors 14 generations ago? Do you even know who your ancestors were 5 generations ago (That's Great-great-Grandparents)? Usually, only those interested in Genealogy know that stuff, ie my Gr-Gr Grandfather Josiah Bilbrey was a Blacksmith in rural Tenn, and my Gr-Gr Grandfather Geo Elbert helped found the Lutheran Church in Leavenworth KS. But 14 generations? That's too many Winninghams ago. Long forgotten. But Matthew says that this was well planned, even orchestrated. God's plan of salvation, his 14-14-14 plan was unfolding even when folks weren't aware it was. Gal 4:4 says, "But when the *time had fully come*, God sent his Son, born of a woman ... to redeem those ..."

God had (has) a great sense of timing. When it comes to our salvation, providing for us, answering our prayers, coming to our aid – His timing is always good, even though we think He might be slow to answer. When the time is right! That's what we celebrate in Christmas; the right, appropriate, well-thought-out time – for God to save the world. We also await the appropriate, proper, right time for Jesus to return. Unlike the 14-14-14 plan, we don't know the time of His return. But it will be at just the right time. Until then ... "what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God." (2 Pet 3:11)

Have a blessed Advent and Christmas season.

Pastor Dave

Advent – **Wed Eve services 7 pm in Chapel.** Theme: The Visitors of Christmas (Shepherds, Magi, Herod's Soldiers, Angels of Heaven). Join us!

www.bethlehemstar.net This website presents some interesting studies on the possible origins of the Star of the Christmas account, from an astronomical viewpoint. Give it a perusal.

Christmas Caroling Sat Dec 17 @ 4 pm

Christmas decorating is Fri Dec 9 beginning at 4 pm. The congregation is invited; if you can't come at 4, come when you can. A light meal will be served by Parish Activities.

GOING DOMESTIC

Mission Opportunities Short Term (MOST), a Recognized Service Organization (RSO) of the LCMS, has offered men and women of faith opportunities for short term mission work for over 20 years. We began with requests from the field for construction and eyeglass clinics and have expanded the type of team projects that are offered to over 20 service, training and evangelism projects. Our newest initiative is a Clean Water project which provides clean water through inexpensive filters that team members assemble with Latin American families in their homes.

MOST Ministries is now offering domestic mission opportunities through partners in the 9th ward of New Orleans, Detroit, Alaska and Texas. These teams will provide humanitarian project as well as focus on the spiritual side of life. As with our international teams, the Gospel message will be the driving force behind these outreaches.

MOST Ministries will provide a pre- and post-event Bible studies, training and tools for having faith conversations comfortably. During the trip there will be evening devotions and debriefings and a post event follow up after the team returns home. One of the team members will be trained to act as the group leader and will be provided with the needed resources to successfully lead a team. Some of these resources include 24 hour support, a first aid bag, and nursing protocols for emergencies.

Because there won't be costly overseas flights, the domestic trips are within reach of those who would like to go on mission trips, but are not able to or prefer not to go internationally. For more information on mission opportunities, please visit our website at www.mostministries.org or contact Debby Suchyta at dsuchyta@mostministries.org or 734-994-7909 *begin_of_the_skype_highlighting* 734-994-7909 *end_of_the_skype_highlighting*.

Small Group Bible Study Fellowship – we will be beginning two more small group studies beginning in January – one in the afternoon, and one evening group. You can get in on one of these by letting Pastor Dave know of your interest.

Concordia University, Ann Arbor Christmas Concert, Fri Dec 9 at 8 pm in the Chapel of the Holy Trinity. Concordia is just off US-23 and Geddes Rd, to the west.

The Chapel will be open the first Saturday of the month from 10:30 am to noon for special **PRAYER TIME**. You can pray on your own; or, there will be an Elder there to assist you, if you desire it. This is a special trial initiative from the Ascension Board of Elders.

Next Prayer date: this Sat Dec 3rd. 10:30 am – Noon.



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Be strong in the Lord; put on the armor of God; be prepared to give an answer ...

Michigan District LCMS presents ... Theological Conferences on Apologetics. Three sites in 2012: Jan 28 in Troy, Feb 18 in Saginaw & Feb 25 in Jenison, will host the Conference on understanding and defending your

Daily Advent Devotions – you can read daily Advent Devotions online from the Lutheran Hour Ministries at this web address:

<http://www.lhm.org/dailydevotions.asp>

Also go to www.lhm.org to see many other offerings from the ministry of the Lutheran Laymen's League and Lutheran Hour Ministries.

Meijer Community Awards. Did you know that with your Meijer purchases, you can also contribute to the ministry of Ascension? Ascension is registered with Meijer Community Awards program, so all you need is a **Meijer 1 Card** (also works with Meijer credit cards, but you don't have to have a Meijer credit card – just a Meijer 1 Card). When you swipe the Meijer 1 Card with your purchase, a small percentage of your purchase goes to ALC (those small percentages can add up!) You can get info on the Meijer 1 Card at: http://www.meijer.com/mcr/choose_card.jsp or call 800-962-7011.

Jan 2012

Jan 7 Parish Planning Workshop
MOST Ministries – trips
LAMP – trip?

Great Commission Convocation Sat Jan 21 at Christ Our King, Saline church. Features 20 small sectionals on mission and ministry of the church, and ideas for outreach.

Thank You to all who joined the **ALC Prayer Team**, and receive periodic Prayer Lists (updates) and keep Ascension and her needs in Prayer. God gives us some great promises and invitations in Prayer, and encourages us to pray together, and for each other. If you would like to join the ALC Prayer Team, call the office, or take with Pastor Dave. We want to lift up each other in prayer.

The Children's Christmas Program will be Sunday, December 11. Rehearsal for all children participating is Saturday, December 10, from 10:30 until noon.

Please remember to bring your wrapped gifts for the Giving Tree family to the church by Sunday, December 11.

From Our President:

As of this writing, November 29, the tags on the Giving Tree are pretty much taken for the family of five. This is a blessing.

We have another tree down the hall by the chapel which is the Mitten Tree, put up by the Sunday School. The congregation is asked to decorate the tree with scarves, mittens, gloves, and hats which will be given to nearby needy children.

There should be a third tree. It would be the church tree. I'll let you in on a secret--like the stores which thrive on the sales from Black Friday, Ascension's budget thrives on the extra giving the congregation contributes to the collection plates in November and December.

Black Friday was a huge success for the retail stores, a big boost to their sales. **Unfortun[e]ately**, all puns intended, Ascension did not see a bump up in collections in November. In fact, Ascension is frightfully behind its already sparse budget. So let's decorate that imaginary third tree for Ascension. Imagine there are 70 tags on the tree. Each tag is a Giving Unit. [A giving unit is a household. Some giving units are 2, a couple; some giving units are more, such as 3 or 5, a family; some are one person.] Each tag, or Giving Unit, is worth \$100, minimum. However, those Giving Units who wish to give more than \$100 are certainly encouraged to do so! Those who cannot afford \$100, as much as can be afforded is appreciated, of course.

Please keep Ascension on your prayer list and your gift list.

God's blessings this Christmas season,

-Carolyn Boger, Vice President

If you would like to buy a **poinsettia** to decorate the altar area this Christmas, please sign up on the sheet on the kiosk or call the church office (337-9703) by **December 11**. Please put your check for \$8.50 in the collection plate or mail it to the church. The check should be made out to "Women of Ascension". You may purchase a poinsettia in honor or in memory of someone special and that will be included in a bulletin just before Christmas.

December 11 is a busy day! There will be a **Voters Assembly** following the service. This is a Very Important assembly as Ascension will be setting the budget for 2012 and voting on officers. With support from others and prayerful consideration, Judi Stroemer is a candidate for Outreach/Assimilation.

The Hand Bell Choir will perform at the service December 18th.