

The Church Mouse

Ascension Lutheran Church Newsletter



June/July 2014



Pr. Nancy Wright

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Dear Friends,

I enjoyed Synod Assembly, "Mission and Worship in the Age of the Spirit," which offered much food for thought and reflection. Below, is the Bishop's Report and in succeeding pages, the summary of the Resolutions. In the enews for week of June 9, please find attached the Pre-Assembly Reports, Resolutions, and Report on the Budget.

(FYI, we will host Bishop Hazelwood at Ascension on the evening of Friday, August 22, as part of his motorcycle ride for hunger. Ascension was chosen as the location for his visit to us and surrounding Lutheran churches.)

— Pr. Nancy

Bishop's Report to the Synod 2014

"What's one easy thing we can do to fix our church?" She was very serious, and wanted me to give her the answer, the key, the magic, the hocus pocus. She wanted to know, because she cared about her church. My answer was crisp and clean. "There isn't one easy thing." I could see the look on her face; it was a combination of disappointment as well as acknowledgement that she knew I was right.

+

There are a whole series of things that can be done, that must be done, and they all fall under one common theme. The local church has a bright future if it is intentionally externally focused. What do I mean by that? An externally focused church spends time around these questions: What do our neighbors think about us? What are the barriers we are putting up when people come to our church? How can we behave like the Christians we know Jesus longs for? How can we show the people in the five block (or half mile) radius that we really truly care about their well being? What could we learn if we interviewed a local school principal? Which is more important to us? Preserving our legacy or impacting our community?

These are the kinds of questions that externally focused churches spend time discussing, debating and acting upon. These are the focal points of church council meetings. This is what pastors are discussing with their leadership teams. If your church is internally focused, candidly, "you're toast." It's all over. Why? Because people are leaving internally focused churches. They are tired of silly debates about whether or not color of the napkins should match for coffee hour. They don't want to fight about whether the prelude should come before or after the announcements, whether or not the pastor's children make too much noise. They are leaving silly budget fights. There is no future for churches like that. I'm sorry but it's true. The club model of church life is over.

(continued page 2)

My 2014 report to the synod could wander down the typical pattern of numbers, budgets, and buildings. I could wax poetically about relationships, partnerships and cruise ships. But, “Frankly, Charlotte, I don’t give a damn.” In my view, I’m not convinced Jesus does either. We’ve got a hurting world all around us: domestic violence, poverty, war, lonely people, suicide, drug and alcohol abuse, housing crisis. We need to join God in the neighborhood, find others who are working on solving these problems, and get with it. Our mission and our worship are connected, or they need to be. The table of God’s grace is connected to the table in your home, the table at the school cafeteria and the table at the local fire station. I’ve spent nearly two years now visiting every single one of our congregations. Yup, by the time you walk in the doors of the synod assembly, I’ll have been to all the churches, plus all of our new mission starts, Camp Calumet, our seminary in Philadelphia, several hospitals and a few campus ministry sites. Here is the one key answer to all the questions:

“The church is the church only when it exists for others...not dominating, but helping and serving. It tells people of every calling what it means to live for Christ, to exist for others.” -Dietrich Bonhoeffer

*In Christ,
Bishop James E. Hazelwood*

(See Page 8 for Synod 2014 Resolutions)



Riding to a Place Near You !

Attend a gathering, hear about the ride, enjoy some refreshments & learn what the ELCA Hunger Appeal is doing in New England

!

June 16 Redeemer Lutheran, Woburn, MA 7:00 p.m.

June 17 Holy Trinity Lutheran, Newington, NH 7:00 p.m.

July 7 Redeemer Lutheran, Bangor, ME 7:00 p.m.

July 13 Holy Trinity Lutheran, North Easton, MA 9:30 a.m.

August 20 St. Matthew, Avon, Connecticut 7:30 p.m.

August 22 Good Shepherd, Rutland, Vermont 12 noon

August 22 Ascension Lutheran, Burlington, Vermont 7:00 p.m.

August 24 Community Lutheran, Enfield, New Hampshire 9:30 a.m.

August 24 Trinity Lutheran, Chelmsford, MA 5:30 p.m.

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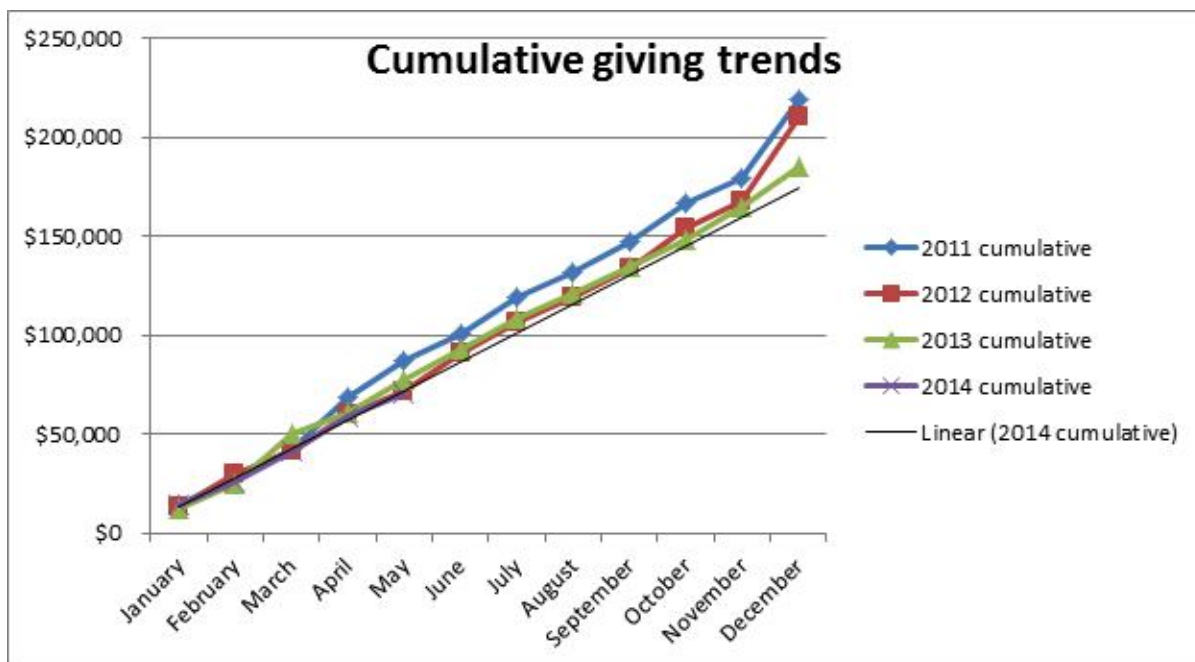
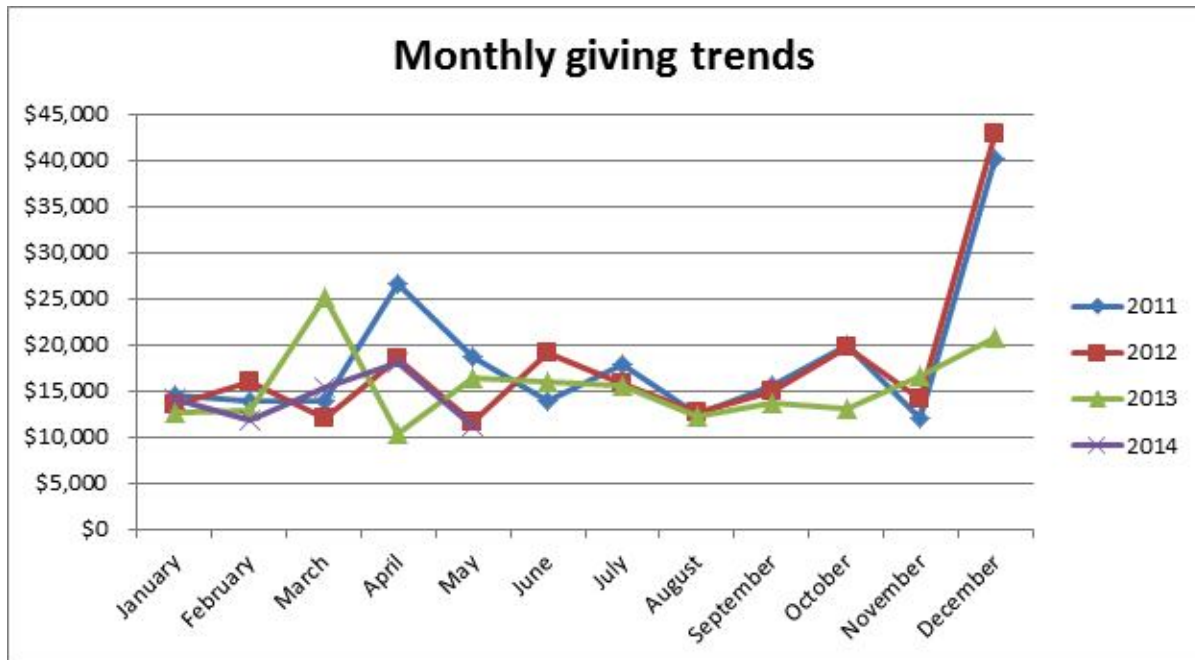
LOOKING TO JOIN THE RIDE?

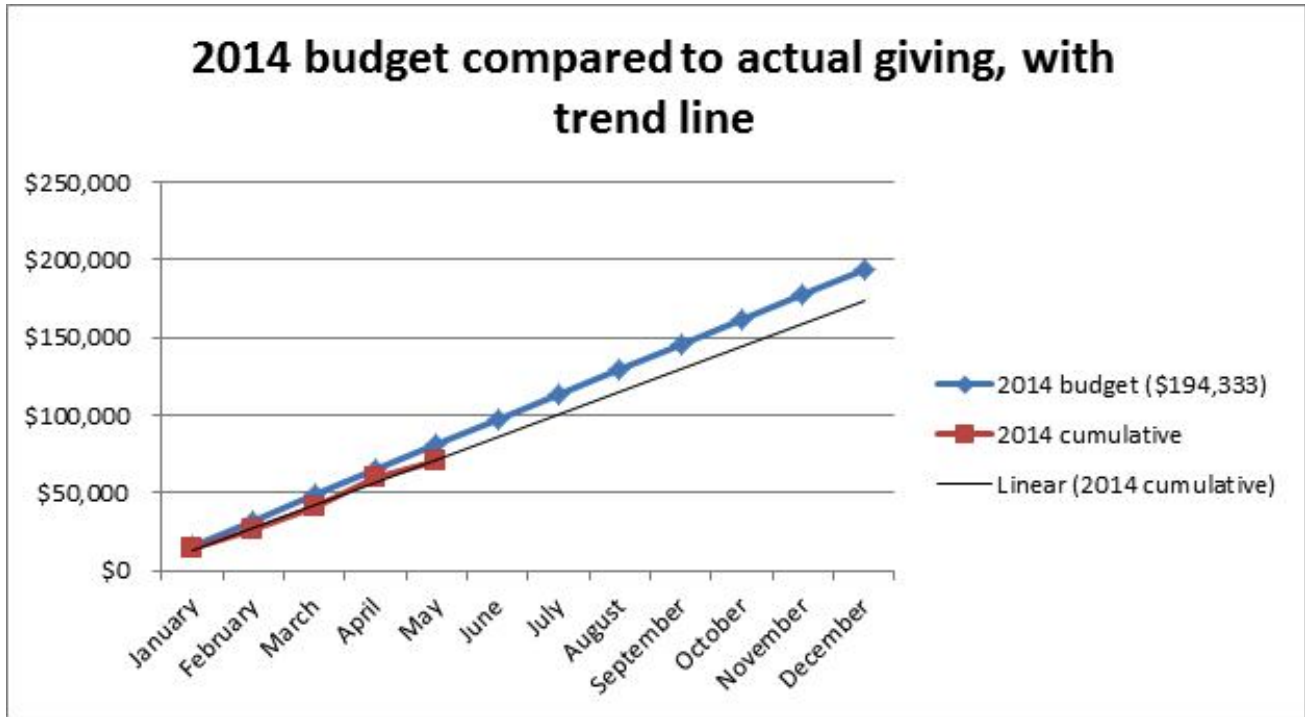
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***SIGN UP OR CHECK THE RIDE SCHEDULE ON
BISHOPONABIKE.COM***

Last November the congregation approved a budget of \$194,333 that was built on the assumption that by July 1 we would have a new renter who would provide the same amount of rent as Ascension Child Care. That assumption has not come to pass, and so a special congregational meeting was called for June 22 to discuss the likelihood of a budget shortfall, and what council will do about it. It is impossible to know with certainty what the size of the shortfall will be, but at its last meeting I alerted council that we may need to draw down on the \$22,815 in budget surpluses we ran in 2011, 2012, and 2013. The following slides are from the presentation at the special congregational meeting. In the first graph you will note that large increases in giving in December of 2011 and 2012 did not materialize in 2013. In the third you will see that a projection of total income for the church this year will be approximately \$10,000 short of the \$194,333 forecast in the 2014 budget.

— Steve Snook





Summary Report submitted by Walter Grant, Treasurer

Ascension Lutheran Church
Summary Statement of Operations

Five Months Ended April 30, 2014
All amounts are in Dollars

Description	Actual 2014	Budget 2014	Variance Favorable (Unfav.)
TOTAL REVENUE	72,758	67,760	4,998
EXPENSES			
Pastoral Services	36,209	39,185	2,976
Administration	12,287	13,705	1,418
Worship & Music	3,677	4,645	968
Children, Youth & Family	491	270	(221)
Benevolence and Outreach	6,117	7,095	978
Church Property	25,162	21,325	(3,837)
Insurance	901	1,455	554
TOTAL EXPENSES	84,844	87,680	2,836
NET OPERATING GAIN (LOSS)	(12,086)	(19,920)	7,834

Spring Cleaning Day was a success! Many thanks to Bob and Suzanne Furst, Marilyn Johnson, Red Martin, Sam and Joyce Swanson, Aaron Fiore, Pastor Nancy, Marcia Gustafson, Mark Schroeter, Richard and Gail Butz, Nate, Jack and Ben Tylenda, Jo White, Joe Oppenlander, (and Charlie Cutting who worked during the week before.)

Together we cleaned and re-organized the kitchen, dug up and repaired a section of the drainage system, cleaned the storage closet in the fellowship hall, did some more work in the basement, swept and cleaned the roof and gutters, washed the east windows in the Sanctuary, began to attack the mold on the beams in the Sanctuary, weeded and cleaned up the yard and generally enjoyed the fellowship!

If you were unable to join us on the 7th and would like to help out there are still some jobs we were not able to complete. E.g. washing the windows in the fellowship hall, the narthex, and Sunday School room or burying a section of cable near the sign on Allen Rd. Talk with anyone on the property committee if you are able to take on a chore. Your help is ALWAYS appreciated!

Property committee:

- Bob and Suzanne Furst
- Mark Schroeter
- Bonnie Lombardi
- Charlie Cutting

On a beautiful Spring day the first week of May our new tenants, Prevent Child Abuse Vermont, moved their district office into a temporary space in the Nursery area of the Annex. Much—and very hard— work has gone on since to prepare a more permanent space for them, adjacent to the nursery. which should be completed by the end of June.



FOR CHILDREN ON SIX SUMMER SUNDAYS: JUNE 15, 22, 29 AND JULY 13, 20, 27, 10:00 A.M.

“HOLEY AND FRUITFUL SUMMER KIDS’ CAMP” Camp sessions will be held during the 10:00 church time. Camp begins with a morning snack (or breakfast) consisting of something with holes (e.g. mini bagels, or cheerios) and fruit followed by a reading of a Bible story children's picture book. Bible story based crafts or activities will follow. Campers will all receive communion or a blessing during the church service and then return to camp. Extra time will be spent outside, weather permitting. Parents of children with food allergies please make the teaching staff aware and bring an alternative option.

“God’s Backyard” Vacation Bible School 2014, Stories, Games, Snacks, Crafts, Music...

June 23-27, 8:30 –11:45 a.m. A shared offering at First United Methodist Church. Led by Rachel Stampul, with the participation of parents and other church leaders, including Pr. Nancy. Free and open to the entire community. Register on-line at <http://umcburlington.com/vbs>.

NOAH’S ARK
ON
CHILDREN AND YOUTH SUNDAY

UPDATE ON THE POSITION OF DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

As the congregation was alerted in the President's Report in the *Church Mouse* in March, the Church Council approved an upgraded position from Organist/Choir Director to Director of Music (please see the position description below). We had several excellent candidates, but for the final candidate, there was a conflict with our Wednesday choir night. The Mutual Ministry committee and Council will continue to advertise the position.

The **Director of Music** works under the direct authority and supervision of the Pastor and cooperatively and responsibly with Parish staff and leaders to further the work and mission of the Parish.

The Director of Music will:

Provide music and musical expertise at the regular Sunday service of the Parish, for Holy Week, Christmas and other such services are part of the Parish's liturgical custom and cycle. (Usually one Sunday of the month is Contemporary service, for which the organist/choir director is not responsible). Plan the service music in conjunction with the Pastor, relevant committees, and other individuals as the Pastor may include in liturgical planning activities. Suggest and select preludes, offertories and postludes that contribute to the worship experience and are appropriate to the particular service and lessons of the day. Build up the church choirs for all ages; recruit, train, and rehearse singers and instrumentalists; and lead congregational training sessions as may be required; Attend meetings as may be necessary for the conduct of the Parish music program. Make necessary arrangements for the care and maintenance of the instruments in the Parish. Provide or arrange for the provision of music at weddings and funerals to be conducted in the Parish. Shall inform the Pastor in advance of proposed absences and diligently endeavor to see that persons performing substitute duties are completed, informed as to the liturgical needs and routines of the Parish, and rehearsed in those duties.

Position Requirements:

Professional experience and formal training in playing an organ/keyboard and in choir leadership. A degree in music would be an advantage. A Lutheran or is willing to learn the Lutheran traditions and liturgy. A professional who is able to play and lead a variety of musical styles (e.g., a Taize service), exert a positive influence on the congregation during each service, reflect the best standards within the musical heritage of the church, and upgrade skills in response to annual review. Hourly requirement, including practice time, is 18-20 hrs./month.

Personal Requirements: A person knowledgeable about church music, who pays attention to detail, is a team player with others in the congregation; flexible; and who has good interpersonal skills.

14-01 Resolution on becoming a synod of Experimentation, Innovation, and Creativity

BE IT RESOLVED that the New England Synod in assembly establish this synod to be a place of experimentation, innovation and creativity in order to further the mission which God in Christ has called us; and BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the New England Synod in assembly encourages congregation councils and other congregational leadership teams to spend at least 20% of their time focused on innovation and experimentation and encourages them to share the results of this focus (both successes and failures) with others throughout the synod.

14-02 Resolution Allowing Pastors from Denominations in Full Communion with the ELCA Who are Serving ELCA Congregations to Serve as the Dean of a Conference

BE IT RESOLVED that the New England Synod Assembly adopt the following changes to the bylaws of the New England Synod (changes in italics): S12.01.01.i. In consultation with the bishop of this synod, the conference shall elect a dean who shall be a rostered pastor of the conference, and an ordained minister on the roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America *or an ordained pastor from a denomination in full communion with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America who is currently serving an ELCA congregation in the conference*. The term shall be two years. The dean shall be an ex-officio member of the conference council. The dean shall serve as an extension of the bishop's office at the bishop's discretion. The dean's oversight and administration shall be among the rostered leaders clergy, Associates in Ministry, and their families for fellowship and support. Duties of the Dean may more definitively be outlined by the conference assembly with the approval of the Bishop. *If the pastor serving as dean ceases serving a congregation in the conference, that pastor shall also cease to serve as the dean.*

14-03 Resolution for "Showcase Your Ability Sunday"

BE IT RESOLVED that the second or third Sunday of September in 2014 and 2015 be designated as "Showcase Your Ability Sunday" within the New England Synod; and BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the congregations and special ministries of our Synod that day offer prayers, litanies, sermons, and/or lessons that highlight the capabilities, gifts, joys, and concerns of those with disabilities; and BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we lift up synodical ministries like All Right Ministry, (working with congregations to encourage the church to recognize people of all abilities as full and active members of the body of Christ), and Lutheran Social Services of NE, (providing support for independent living to people with disabilities), as well as national and international ministries like MOSAIC, an ELCA ministry that partners with people with intellectual disabilities to create a meaningful life, in a caring community, giving a voice to their needs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that congregations be encouraged to use ministry resources like "Rejoicing Spirits", an offering of Mosaic that works with parishes to embrace and involve people with varying abilities, or similar resources available through All Right Ministry; and BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that congregations invite those with disabilities to serve in leadership positions within that Sunday's worship services and within the life of the congregation that day and on other occasions as appropriate to witness to the unity we share in Christ.

14-04 Resolution for Establishing Safe Haven guidelines for Children, Youth and Adults Within Each Congregation in the New England Synod.

BE IT RESOLVED, that each congregation will be encouraged to create a Safe Church Team and to establish basic Safe Church guidelines, unique to each congregation's context and ministry; and BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that each congregation will train the adults including all rostered leaders who work with children and the vulnerable in one's midst, to practice these Safe Church guidelines regularly; and BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that each congregation will hold youth, young adults and adults accountable to the Safe Church guidelines created by that congregation and unique to that congregation's context and ministry; and BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that each congregation will seek out ways to support families and educate new members related to the Safe Church guidelines established by that congregation.

14-05**Resolution for the Drafting of Guidelines for Mission Support within the New England Synod**

BE IT RESOLVED that the New England Synod Assembly empower the newly formed Macedonia Team of the New England Synod to develop guidelines to help congregations determine their 'proportionate share' for mission support and propose them to the 2015 Synod Assembly.

With a tremendous thank you to Kay Antos, our campaign for the ELCA Hunger Appeal ended on Palm Sunday without a lot of fanfare. Some donations came in both before and after Palm Sunday, and our total contribution was \$725--once again demonstrating the generosity of our members. This amount will garner a match from Thrivent, thanks to the tireless efforts of Jake Hansen. Thank you, thank you for your support of this important ministry!

— Marcia Gustafson

JULY IS JUMP FOOD BAG MONTH!!

July is our annual food bag month for JUMP. We hope you will help us fill at least 50 bags this July. Food bags are in the narthex, lists are in each bag, and you can bring them in any time in June and July. If you cannot, or wish not to, shop yourself and want me to shop for you - just let me know. My grandchildren and I will go shopping for you - just give us the money! You can leave cash or checks in my box in the office. Each bag is about \$25 or so. A sample bag of the "family bag" and of the "homeless" bag are in the narthex for you to see. Please help us feed families this summer. Anyone providing bags and wanting an official value donation can get one, just give me a copy of your receipt and name and I will see that you get an official document stating your gift to JUMP. Also, save your receipts for us to use for grants. Please leave the receipt, or a copy of it, in your bag or in my box in the office. Thanks so much for all your help.

SPRING CLEANING?

If you clean out books this summer and find children's books in good shape, please consider donating them to JUMP. In the past 10 years we have given out at least 10,000 books to JUMP families. The gift of literacy is one that can't be measured. I often need baby and toddler books, so those are especially needed. I sometimes buy these if needed. If you want to donate to a baby book buy, let me know, I will shop for you.

SHAMPOO

JUMP gives out shampoo every week - an average of 40 bottles a week! Please continue to bring bottles of shampoo to church on Sunday. I will take them weekly. Thanks for all your help.

FAIR TRADE COFFEE, TEA, AND OLIVE OIL.... Fresh supplies of French Roast Drip Coffee, Earl Grey Tea, Cashews and Olive Oil have arrived. Check with Donna Pittman, the Coffee Lady!

And remember, your purchase benefits farmers and their families in developing countries around the world.

Water Conservation Matters

Why conserve water in a wet environment like the Lake Champlain basin? Wasted water contributes to lake pollution. Sewage treatment plants remove phosphorus and other pollutants from the water that leaves our homes and businesses but the efficiency of that removal decreases when sewage is diluted by leaked tap water. Also, municipal drinking water systems often add a phosphorus-containing compound to drinking water to prevent lead from leaching from old pipes. This compound must then be removed from wastewater before it enters Lake Champlain. Removal is not 100 percent efficient, so wasted water leads to additional lake pollution.

Wasting water also wastes energy. The biggest use of electricity in many communities is supplying water and cleaning it up after it's been used. A lot of energy is consumed to collect, transport, treat and deliver water and wastewater. Water must be pumped from its source to its end use in houses, apartments, businesses and institutions then collected again for treatment. Reducing water use and fixing leaks saves money and lessens demands on the energy-intensive systems that deliver, treat and heat water.

Source: Lake Champlain Committee. May 2014 E-News.



TIP of the month:

Twist on a faucet aerator to save water without noticeably decreasing flow.

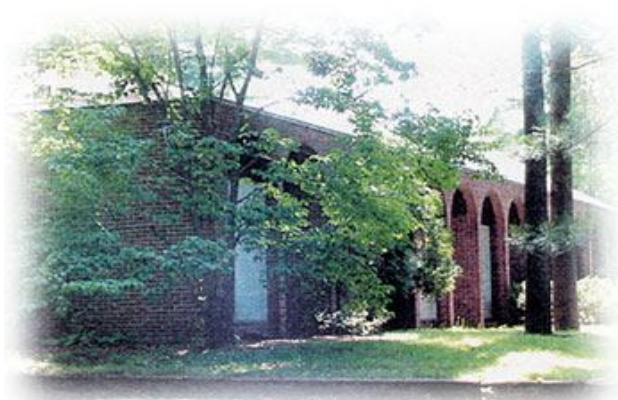
They cost only a few dollars at the hardware store and don't need a plumber to install.

WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS FOR THE MONTH OF JULY

	JULY 6 10:00 A.M. HOLY COMMUNION	JULY 13 10:00 A.M. HOLY COMMUNION	JULY 20 10:00 A.M. HOLY COMMUNION	JULY 27 10:00 A.M. HOLY COMMUNION
CELEBRANT	Pr. Nancy Wright	Pr. Nancy Wright	Pr. Ann Larsom	Pr. Ann Larson
ALTAR GUILD	Barbara Sponem	Lydia Wisloski	Johanna White	Jean Fahrenbach
COMMUNION ASSISTANT	Bob Furst	Marcia Gustafson	Johanna White	Julie Valliere
LECTORS	Marilyn Johnson	Donna Pittman	Jim Wilhite	Richard Butz
ORGANIST	Charles Child	Charles Child	Charles Child	Charles Child
USHERS	Sharon Sturm and Harriet Richards	Richard and Gail Butz, Jake Hansen	Marcia Gustafson, Doug Dreibelbis, Jim Wilhite	Jim Wilhite, Paul and Bonnie Lombardi

JULY 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednes- day	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
					HAPPY FOURTH!	
					NO MEALS ON WHEELS	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
10 a.m. Contemporary Worship No Summer Kid's Camp	3:00 p.m. Mutual Ministry	6:00 p.m. Property				
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
10 a.m. Worship Service 10 a.m. Holy and Fruitful Summer Kids Camp		Pr. Nancy	Vacation			
					→	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
10 a.m. Worship Service Pr. Ann Larson Preaching 10 a.m. Holy and Fruitful Summer Kids Camp		Pr. Nancy	Vacation			
					→	
27	28	29	30	31		
10 a.m. Worship Service Pr. Ann Larson Preaching 10 a.m. Holy and Fruitful Summer Kids Camp 7 p.m. Stones Cry Out:Voices of Palestinian Christians at Merrill'e Roxy Cinema	5:30 p.m. C,Y,F At L.Wisloski's home					



The Church Mouse
 A Good News Letter From Ascension Lutheran Church
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 95 Allen Road, South Burlington, VT 05403

WORSHIP SCHEDULE
WORSHIP
10:00 a.m. Holy Communion
9:00 a.m. Sunday School (youth and adult)
will resume in the fall
 On the first Sunday of each month
 Holy Communion is celebrated with Contemporary Praise.

Subscribe to our Weekly E-News Here: <http://eepurl.com/t3-qz>

Attached is a QR code for subscriptions.



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 If you DO NOT wish to receive a hard copy please contact us via
 phone at 802/862-8866 or email at Church.office@alcvt.org so that
 we might cut down on paper and cost. Thank you.

Staff and Lay Leaders

Rev. Nancy Wright	Pastor
Elizabeth Wirls	Office Manager
Charles Child	Organist
Denise Puisto	Organist
Jeri Bergdahl	Director of Bell Choir
Kelli Tylenda	Web Master

Officers

Steve Snook 802 497-0089 Stephen.snook@tetrattech.com	Council President
Kelli Tylenda	Vice President
Sarah Gottschalk	Secretary
Gene Heyerdahl	Financial Secretary
France Leblanc	Treasurer

Council Members

Walter Grant	Sarah Gottschalk	Alison Hampson
Gene Heyerdahl	Jane A'Lee Heyerdahl	France Leblanc
	Joe Oppenlander	Steve Snook
Kelli Tylenda	Lydia Wisloski	Pr. Nancy Wright



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 LUTHERAN CHURCH**



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