



ASCENSION LUTHERAN  
CHURCH & SCHOOL

# CONNECTIONS

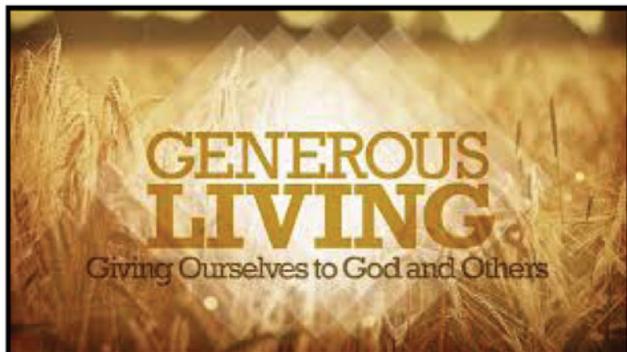
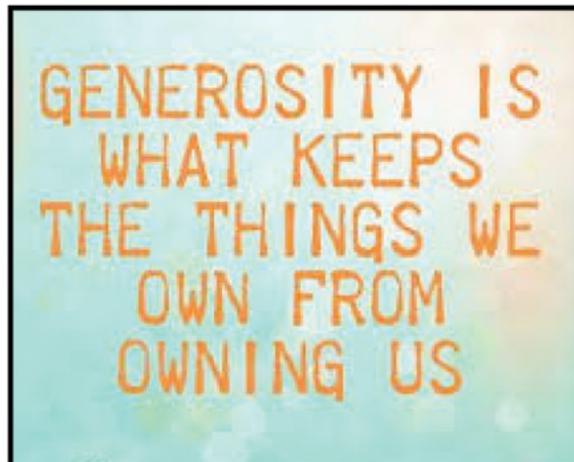
*Connecting all people with Jesus*

May 11, 2018 Issue

Come Experience the Power of Grace

## Living Generously

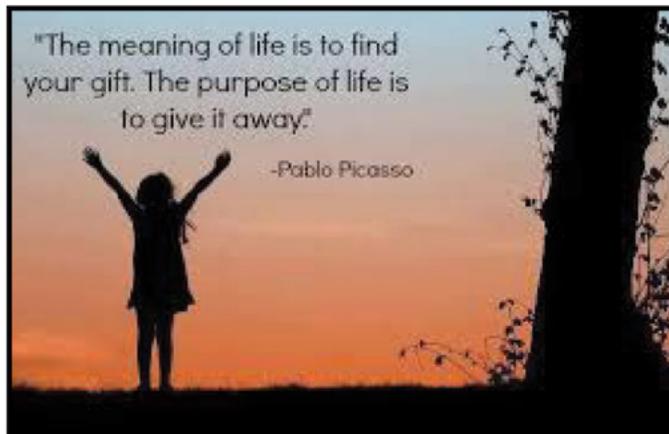
Generosity is a matter of action, intentions, and heart. One way to describe it is the grateful outpouring of gifts to others, out of our love for God. Outpouring is a terrific description, since the priceless treasure of the gospel (and all the gifts of covenant, relationship, and life that go with it) comes from God and is meant to be poured out, through our living, upon others. Paul states this directly in 2 Corinthians 4:5-7, when he says, "We have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us."



Whether for fancy purposes or everyday usage, the "unadorned pots of our daily lives" (as The Message puts it) highlight the fact that all of who we are and what we have comes from God and is to be used for God's purposes. God can use our uniqueness, even our limitations, weaknesses and eccentricities, to communicate God's powerful presence and love.

Generous living is not just about giving money, or even just about giving. It has to do with the whole of who we are and how we care for our neighbors. Each of us brings our heart, mind, soul, and strength. The Old Testament word for "heart" is literally the essence of our lives. We might call it our lifestyle or nonverbal witness. In other words, it is how we steward 100 percent of our lives, not just the "religious" sector or the percentage we give away.

So how do we lead stewardship in our local church? By nurturing generous living in our personal lives and in our life together as part of our congregation and Christ's interconnected, connectional church.





**HEALTH CONCERNS:**

Irene Ahl; Sharon Algar; Bill & June Amspaugh; Richard Ashbaugh; Carroll Boettcher; Julie Brainard; Heidi Buchholz; John & Joan Burns; Linda Cirelli; Moose Creighton; Larry Dahl; Richard Dahl; Susie Evenson; Dianne Ewald; Elaine Feller; Rev.Bob Feller; Harriet Feree; Cita Figueroa; Walt Goedecke; Richard Greene; Don Gremel; Bonnie Guiffre; Gizelle Hayes; Marilyn Jane Heine; Evelyn Horst; Annette Idso; Donna Koelling; Doreen Leikel; Philip Lenharth; Alice Masherella; Shirley Mattausch; Dale Mayer; Judy McCain; Donna McCullough; Greg Michael; Tom Mortson; Chris Murphy; Merrill Nelson; Tanner Nelson; Randi Nelson-Shiple; Skip Nugent; Dan Parks; Ben Petersen; Anne Pingo; John Pingo; Betty Plachy; Virginia Potter; Martin Radloff; Shirley Radloff; Antonia Rafter; Jill Reynolds; Esther Riesen; Evelyn Schroeder; Eugene Scott; Harold Schuchard; LuAnn Sjursen; Lois Skvarek; Julie Stewart; Joyce Sutton; Bud Umphryes; Marian Unruh; Terry Warhol; Dave Webster; Rob Weiss; Joe Wells; Jessie Wilson; Eleanor Wood; Marie Wood; June Zehe; Ila Schellpfeffer

**GOD'S BLESSINGS:**

We ask God to bless the new confirmands and ask Him to help them continue their walk with the Lord. We give thanks to the Blanket Circle for the quilts they have made for mothers and their babies at Hands of Hope and ask God to bless the mothers and their babies that will be receiving them. These mothers have decided to keep their babies from abortion.

**NEEDS:**

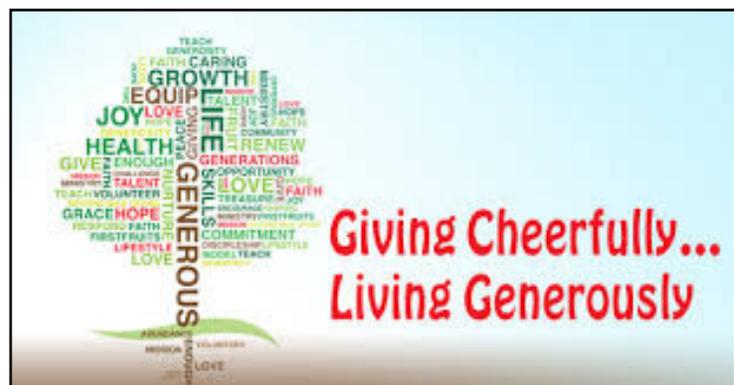
We pray for those who have needs and circumstances that only God can take care of—especially do we pray for the safe return of Luis & Kahmila Ramirez. We also ask God to give assurance and peace to the mothers who grieve over an abortion.

**CALLED HOME**

We give prayers of sympathy and compassion to family and friends of Mark Rockwell who entered the church triumphant.

**MILITARY:**

Chris Bartels (contractor); Isaac Jackson; Tim Mace; Steve Stuenkel.



**Return to the Lord - Joel 2:13**

It's been a month since the Return to the Lord envelopes were distributed. The posters in the narthex and Grace Hall are exploding into color! But there's still room for your story. If you're stuck or want to partner with another person, contact me [tsnazlib@hotmail.com](mailto:tsnazlib@hotmail.com).

Please deposit the stories in the brown boxes at each entrance so we can share these encouraging words.

**This is what the Lord has done!**

LWL Chemo Care bags, shoes for Jason, groceries for Sarah who needs our prayers in her trials with a brain tumor, spina bifida, and her pregnancy.

Two recent shopping trips benefited the veterans, with carts full of canned meat. They will be so happy!

International Dental Ministry provides services to Peruvians on their twice-a-year mission trips. After their first visit when they pulled 500 teeth, the second trip only required 250 teeth extractions; and now 12 years later, the IDM has equipment to fill more teeth and save more teeth, and children are more familiar with regular brushing!

Thank you to several for your investment in this mission!



**HELP SAVE OUR KIDS**

**BECOME A MENTOR**

**MENTORING TUCSON'S KIDS**

is a Christian organization working to have a positive influence on youth facing tough life challenges through one-on-one relationships. We've been matching caring adults with youth since 1995.

Make a friend, Make a difference to a young boy or girl who needs someone like you in their life! A relationship with a caring mentor provides youth with the capacity to grow in their personal relationships with God, their family, and their community.

Mentors are matched with a child for a minimum of one year; spending an average of 3 hours per week together. Weekly activities build a close bond between the mentor and the child, which helps build the child's character.

for more information, Visit [mentoringtucsonskids.org](http://mentoringtucsonskids.org) or call 624-4765.

*Philippians 4:9 "The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you."*



Many thanks to Jeff Soderstrom for leading our Lutherans for Life Film and Bible Study last week. Also appreciation to the Brauns for hosting a home study.

Please join us for the Lutherans for Life meeting, Saturday June 2 at 11am, in Grace Hall to share all the excitement and ideas that were generated from this study. If you missed the film, it is available for loan. Please call 742-2882 if you would like info. We look forward to your input regarding how we can support those who are grieving because of the abortion in their lives.

### A Mother's Story

Mom, Mommy, Mother are all names I go by. When I stop and think about what it means to be a Mother I am still speechless at the responsibility the Lord gave me to serve in such a special, sacred role. My husband says that Moms make houses homes and infuse love into everything they do. They balance out Dads who are fun and adventurous and kiss boo boos when those adventures turn into scraped knees. Moms also tend to broken hearts and provide guidance along the journey of life's ever turning paths. Moms wipe away tears, pray, hug and hold.

I am a Mother of 3 and my oldest just turned 18. If you are a parent you understand how fast it goes. I remember the day I found out I was pregnant with him. I was young and afraid and wondered if I could actually "do Motherhood". The relationship I was in was not going well and I was still living a questionable lifestyle to say the least. Who would be there to support me as a single Mom? Could I really care for another human being? What if I failed him... hurt him... disappointed him? Could my part-time job really make ends meet? All of these questions combined with fear of the unknown led me to walk through the doors of the abortion clinic. But by the grace of God, along with support offered to me by friends and family I didn't go through with the abortion and was able to celebrate my son's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday this year. Sadly, this is not the outcome for many women in similar situations and my heart breaks for them this Mother's Day. For most, Mother's Day is a day of joy and celebration, but for many women with abortion in their past the day can be full of grief, shame and regret.

The reality is that today women in our community are faced with the same fear I expressed, unsure if they should continue with their pregnancy or have an abortion. Today, real lives of children hang in the balance and they need you to intercede on their behalf. When you give to Hands of Hope you can actually give women considering an abortion the gift of Motherhood.

If you are already struggling with a past abortion decision please know that you are not alone. You are loved. Help starts here at Hands of Hope, 520-321-9765.

Alisa Medina, Executive Director

The Beautiful Feet Lutherans for Life Team at Ascension is grateful for the life-saving and redemptive ministry of Hands of Hope and encourage your financial support of them.

## 40 People & 40 Days

I've been doing a lot of reading, thinking, and praying. And for me at least, my thinking and praying sometimes seems disjointed... Yet somehow God seems to always bring it together and make it clear.

In Ephesians 5:15-17, Paul is speaking to one of the earliest churches, "So be careful how you live. Don't live like fools, but like those who are wise. Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days. Don't act thoughtlessly, but understand what the Lord wants you to do."

What are we here for—Ascension... you and I? What does the Lord want us to do? What does God want for us and from us? And how do we KNOW? What should be the measurement of progress in a church? Is it time again for another Long-Term Strategic Plan? Will that help us determine God's direction for us? How do we change this trajectory that we have been on for many years (declining attendance and giving)? Is that even what God wants at Ascension? As God is speaking to me about this, do I even have the ears to hear him? Do you?

Many of these questions and more have come from several books that I have been reading. Through prayer, it became oddly clear to me to ask for 40 people. It almost seemed random but yet very clear—40 people. In fact, it wasn't until I began penning this that the Biblical significance of the number 40 occurred to me.

Nowhere specifically does the Bible assign any special meaning to the number 40. Mentioned 146 times in Scripture, the number 40 generally symbolizes a period of testing, trial, or probation. But each one also ends with a blessing or the fulfillment of a promise.

So you must be wondering, 40 people for what? 40 people to read a book on your own—a specific book, *Who Broke My Church?* by Kent R. Hunter. Here is the hard part for me. I want to tell you what a great book it is and why you should read it. That's just what I do. But in this case, God has told me "No." I believe I am supposed to ask for 40 people... .

God did at least allow me the satisfaction of a timeframe—40 days. This will be first appearing in the Connections on the weekend of May 12 and 13. This means that 40 days will be complete on June 22.

All you need to do is order the book and contact me. After all, I will have no way of knowing if we have 40 people if I don't hear from you. The two most convenient ways for you to contact me is either phone or email. You can call my home anytime, 520-888-9144. My personal email address is [noelrobinson@myexcel.com](mailto:noelrobinson@myexcel.com).

I look forward to future conversations as we look to honor God together.

Noel Robinson,  
Servant of God and Congregational President

**PENTECOST SUNDAY, MAY 20, 2018**  
**BIRTHDAY OF THE CHURCH CELEBRATION**

It's a birthday party!

Come celebrate the birthday of the Christian church (Acts 2) in Grace Hall after each worship service. Join us for birthday cake and worship.



Please Join Us in Supporting

## Ascension Lutheran Preschool

Thursday, May 17th  
5pm-8pm  
10% All Sales Donated

Culver's at Thornyside  
6905 N Thornyside Rd.  
Tucson, Arizona 85748  
520-797-9277



**CONGREGATIONAL MEETING:**

Update on where we are mid-year. May 19 at 9a.m. and May 20 between the 8:45 and 10:31a.m. services. The staff will provide updates on their goals and a financial update report will be given. Please join us in Grace Hall.



Volunteer needed to make Coffee and pick up donuts for Sunday morning Fellowship between services in Grace Hall. Coffee and donuts will need to be ready to serve at 9:45. You will serve three times a year, on the first Sunday in January, May and September. There are 16 people you can call to trade days with, if you are unable to serve on your day. Please call Ruthann Stults 219-1527 or email [stultsruthann56@gmail.com](mailto:stultsruthann56@gmail.com).



## Water Wars (BRING YOUR WATER GUNS!) and Worship

Saturday May 12th  
Fun from 10-1  
10am Worship  
Then...Food and Fun  
Riverfront Park  
551 N. Lambert Lane  
Oro Valley

## Calling Ascension to Prayer!

AFTER THE 5PM AND 10:31AM SERVICES  
MEET IN THE SW CORNER OF THE SANCTUARY

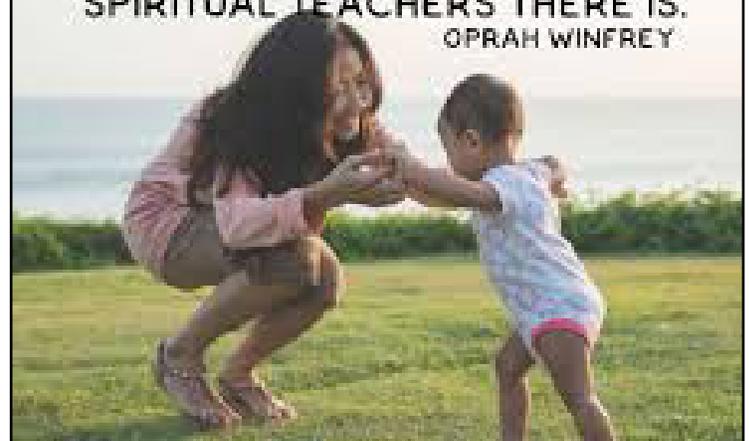
AFTER THE 8:45AM  
MEET IN THE CHAPEL

15 MINUTES  
LEADER WITH SUGGESTED TOPICS



*A reminder, the Chapel is open for prayer every day of the week, not just on Sundays. It's a quiet, reflective, meditative place to meet with God.*

I BELIEVE THE CHOICE  
TO BECOME A MOTHER  
IS THE CHOICE TO BECOME  
ONE OF THE GREATEST  
SPIRITUAL TEACHERS THERE IS.  
OPRAH WINFREY



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