

SOCIAL OUTREACH COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2012

It was another busy, successful year for Ascension's dedicated parishioners performing God's work in Social Outreach programs for the local community:

The **Food Pantry** is located in our Undercroft and people in need in our local community can stop by Monday through Thursday to pick up groceries for their families. Food is donated by Ascension's parishioners, other churches, the local community, and the federal government. We are also fortunate to receive additional food from our local Wal-Mart. The food pantry serves 40-50 families per week and approximately 400 pounds per week are given away. Jess and Dana Davis, Joan and Dan Coleman, Irene Roth, Hilma Andrews, and Nancy and Newell Stiles all volunteer their time each week to ensure that people in our local community do not go hungry.

Soup-er Sunday is still going strong every Sunday at Ascension! This program was created by Dana Davis to ensure that people who might not have access to a hot meal on the weekend will have an opportunity to have a nutritious, filling dinner. The meals are prepared and served by Ascension's parishioners, as well as other civic organizations. Approximately fifteen guests are served meals every Sunday. Members of Ascension are fantastic chefs, and **dinners** continue to be provided twice a month for approximately twenty individuals staying at the Three Oaks Shelter.

Helpers Overcoming Problems Effectively (H.O.P.E.) is designed to aid people who are having difficulty paying their rent, electricity, or fuel bills. Our church provides office space for this charity in the Undercroft; monetary donations and volunteer help come from Ascension and other churches. The office is open several days a week.

The **AARP Tax Aide Program** held at Ascension trained 20 volunteer tax counselors in early 2012. This program was led by Dana Davis and once the counselors completed this course, they offered their expertise in the preparation of federal and state tax returns for low to moderate income taxpayers. This group of tax counselors filled out over 600 returns in 2012!

Central America Ministry: In March, parishioner Dr. Martin Barley led a medical and dental mission team to the companion Diocese of Honduras in the remote Mosquitia area. While there, the "Tooth and Toil" team provided dental and medical treatment for approximately 1,000 patients.

The **Guatemala Feeding Program**, a part of Living Waters International, is an "adoption" program whereby, for \$25.00 a month, a Quiche Indian child can be given two nutritious meals a week as well as Bible lessons and general education. Several members of our church support such children; one is supported by this committee, and another by the ECW.

Because of the generous donations of Ascension's parishioners, 22 local children in need were provided with brand new **bookbags** full of supplies when they started school in August.

The **Annual Coat and Winter Wear Drive**, organized by Kae Clarke, was held in October. This year, blankets and sleeping bags were also available for distribution and all items were given to families in need in our community. So many coats and winter wear items were donated by members of Ascension and other local churches and businesses; the entire family room, undercroft, and even our foyer were filled with tables and racks of clothes. At the end of the event, only a small portion of the undercroft was necessary to store the remaining items, which were then distributed throughout the next week to people visiting H.O.P.E. and the food pantry.

November was an extremely busy month for the Ascension family. Over 225 **Thanksgiving baskets** were filled and delivered to families in need by dozens of volunteers from Ascension and other local churches. Food for this program was donated by local Boy Scout troops, schools, and the community.

The **Community Thanksgiving Dinner** was a huge success due to the work of several dozen volunteers and the coordination efforts by Dana and Jess Davis. Over 160 turkey dinners “with all the fixings” were served on Thanksgiving Day.

The **WARM** (Wrapping Arms ‘Round Many) Program provides safe and warm overnight housing, dinner, and breakfast for homeless men and women during the cold winter months. In January, members of Ascension assisted St. George’s Episcopal Church in Valley Lee with meals, overnight monitoring, laundry, and general support during their host week. In November, Church of the Ascension had the privilege of becoming a host site for the guests. Tricia Kocka was the site coordinator and with the help of over 50 volunteers from Ascension and several other churches, 12-14 guests per night were sheltered in our family room for a week.

Mary Sothoron led the **Christmas Angels** program, which provided toys and clothing to children whose parents were unable to do so. A number of our parishioners participated in providing gifts for forty-seven children.

Respectfully submitted by,
Tricia Kocka