**ACTS –** Aurora Church

Together Strategy

June, 2017

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Area Congregations:

* All Saints Lutheran Church
* Bethel Lutheran Church
* HBKP Montclair
* St. Mark’s Lutheran Church
* St. Matthew Lutheran Church

Our Mission:

Together we proclaim and embody God's unconditional love for the sake of the World by:

1. Claiming our gifts
2. Equipping our Leaders
3. Connecting in Ministry and Witness
4. Accompanying one another into God's future

# ‑We’ve Changed our Name!!

For the past 18 months we have been known as the Aurora Area Ministry Strategy. We wanted a name that would more clearly identify our ministry. Our new name is- “ACTS” – Aurora Church Together Strategy.

## Deacon Cindy’s Notes:

ACTS is a group of congregations in the community of Aurora working together on a strategy to be “Church Better Together”. The congregations that are actively working together today are St. Matthew, St. Mark’s, Bethel, All Saints and HKBP Montclair. These four congregations are currently listening to God, to each other and the community. The congregations are beginning to experiment with new ways of doing ministry together in the community of Aurora. There have been several partnerships beginning to develop within the local community and the greater metro Denver area. It is becoming very clear that the mission that God has for us in this place is one that we can clearly not accomplish alone. God is working in this community in so many ways through the non-profit organizations, other ecumenical partners and within our Schools and local government and we are beginning to discern together how we might participate in what God is already up to in our community and our neighborhoods. We are going to be hosting several block parties throughout the summer at each congregation in an effort to build relationships with our neighbors and our non-profits already serving the community. September 10th for God’s Work Our Hands Sunday we will be working together to serve our neighbors and our communities and end the day with a joint worship service in one of our neighborhoods outside in a parking lot. As a way of committing to our work together and becoming a new ministry together, we will celebrate a covenant in October around the Reformation as a reminder of this new life together.

 **DID YOU KNOW…**

St. Mark’s has started an ESL program and Bethel and St. Matthew’s are planning ESL Programs to begin soon. All Saints has helped train teachers for the programs.



**St. Marks’s** volunteers provide and serve a meal for the homeless every Wednesday. A hot meal is served to all who come – from 8 to 40 people are served each week!! They have served meals to over 600 people and over 1,000 meals have been served

All Saints:

Patti Mather

Rosie Jacobs

Rebecca Weiner

St. Mark’s:

Laura Cote

Claudette

Gilbert

Bethel:

Pastor Barb Lemke

Tiffaney Brooks

Patti Schoenfeld

St. Matthew:

Pastor Marcel Narucki

Erwin Gebers

Betty Tavidian

HKBP Montclair:

Purnama Hendrick

Rocky Mountain Synod:

Rev Judith VanOsdol (DEM)

Congregational Contacts for ACTS

**St. Matthew’s** church building has been gifted to The Village Exchange Center and is now a community center. St. Matthews’s congregation still worships in the building.



**All Saints** is having a Community Carnival on August 5th from noon to 4 p.m. – free to everyone!!

**St. Mark’s and Salvation Army** are hosting a Block Party on August 11th from 4 – 7 pm. FREE!!

God's Work Our Hands – September 10

Plans are under way for God's Work Our Hands Day. St. Matthew and the Village Exchange Center at 16th and Havana have offered their church and the block for a day of serving people who are homeless and Immigrant and Refugee Community. We will be partnering with many other Non-profits and Ecumenical partners for the day.

We hope to provide several mobile services this day, such as a food bank, clothing bank, and free immunizations, health checks. We also hope to take a collection of socks and underwear and hats and gloves. We hope to have members of all our congregations involved in the planning and implementation of this event. A committee will be formed to plan the Mobile Ministry and another committee to plan the worship service where Bishop Gonia will be there to preside/preach. Check with your congregational contact person to see how you can be a part of this amazing day of service and building relationships.

ESL – English As A Second Language

383--- Wowsers! That’s the number of people All Saints served in our ESL program in the spring term this year. That number includes all the volunteers, students and children that came through our doors for the last 8 weeks of English classes.

This past year was our 9th year of offering English classes, and we’re very excited that we’ve seen a big increase in our numbers! We’re off on summer break right now, but we’re already thinking about making changes to make our program even better. One thing we’re doing is working with the Aurora Area Ministry Strategy to coordinate our program with other Aurora ESL programs.

The model of our instructional time is a mixture of one-on-one and large group time. Students have 15 minutes at the beginning and the end of the 90-minute class time to speak with a native English speaker — asking questions, previewing vocabulary for the lesson and socializing. Then everyone participates in an interactive lesson. The lesson is multi-level and multi-cultural; everyone participates on their own level, students and volunteers alike.

This past year we’ve served students from Mexico, Iran, Venezuela, Morocco, Haiti, Taiwan, Russia, South Korea, Chile, Uzbekistan, Cuba, the Philippines, China, Peru and Vietnam.

We use the Oxford Picture Dictionary (OPD) as a reference book. We give each student a book to take home and ask for a $20.00 donation to cover the cost. Some students donate the money and some don’t.

We meet twice on Mondays, 12:30-2 and 6-7:30 p.m. We offer free child care for the evening session.

We have 3 terms every year, Sept.-Nov., Jan.-March, April-May. We try to coordinate our terms with both the Aurora Public Schools and Cherry Creek Public Schools calendars.

At the end of each term, we have some kind of celebration. We do an international potluck or a tea party, or something similar. Sometimes we have some musical entertainment, and our participants always like to dance. It’s always a lot of fun to eat some different foods and meet the students’ families. At the last party of the year in May, we give out certificates to the students and volunteers.

One of the keys to the program is all the great volunteers who spend their time as conversation partners and mentors to the students. Volunteers do not need to speak another language (It’s helpful once in awhile for an absolute beginner, but usually it’s encouraged to only converse in English!)

Submitted by Joyce Pollock-Nelson

All Saints Lutheran Church

