

History Snapshot of Ascension Lutheran Church Green Bay, Wisconsin

1961	In August, the Board of Missions authorized a general survey of Allouez area to determine interest in beginning a mission congregation.
1962	In July, Pastor Thomas Hammond arrived to serve as mission pastor. Shortly after, he and nine others met to discuss forming a new congregation.
1963	In January, Pastor Hammond led the first service at the Woodlawn Cemetery Chapel on Webster Ave. with 75 people worshipping. The mission began its ministry with ten Sunday School pupils. The first child baptized was Karen June Davie in April 1963; the first youth confirmed was James York in June 1963. In July, the mission moved to the "Little White Church" at 2330 So. Webster. The parsonage was purchased at 2461 Bittersweet. November 1963, 6.44 acres of land were purchased by the Mission Board at Libal and Broadview for the future home of Ascension.
1964	Pastor Hammond resigned for health reasons. Retired Pastor Samuel Roth from Neenah moved into the parsonage as interim pastor. He and Pastor Goetz, also from Neenah, served the church for about 3 mos. The status of the mission was uncertain for a few months. New Mission pastor, Rev. Roger Ganzel, arrived in June 1964. On October 26, Dr. Theodoore Matson, President of the Synod, officiated at the charter business meeting and the congregation was named, "Ascension Lutheran." On Nov. 1, Organization Day, Pastor Robert Wilch, Assistant to the President, was there to formally receive the new congregation. A banquet was held at St. John's Lutheran Church in De Pere. Pastor Ganzel was officially called as the first Pastor of the congregation on Nov. 14, 1964. He served Ascension until January 1968.
1965	Building of the church began in May 1965. (present North Hall). In November, the church was dedicated. The total cost of the 4,000 sq. ft. first unit including land was \$119,000.
1968	February, Rev. Donald Wandersee was installed as the second pastor of Ascension, and served about 18 months.
1969	October, the Rev. Howard Fintzen was installed and served for 5 ½ years.
1970	The second unit of the church was built and dedicated in September. Its size was 2100 sq. feet and cost \$33,941. The additional space was planned for parish education and administration purposes (what is now the kitchen and Middle Area).
1972	In the summer, a community project began: Resurrection Catholic Parish and Ascension decided to have Vacation Bible School together, and it was done successfully for many years.
1973	January, Ascension became self-supporting, and its status as a mission congregation ended.
1975	For 6 mos., Rev. Bryn Carlson, Chaplain at the Reformatory in Allouez, served Ascension as interim pastor. The parsonage was also sold in this year.
	September 1975 – Rev. Carl Engstrom was installed as the 4th pastor of Ascension. His wife, Charlene, directed the Joyful Noise and the adult choirs for many years.

1980	Easter, April 6 – the first worship service was held in the newly built sanctuary (present day Gathering Room). This addition of 6,500 sq. feet cost approximately \$442,000. The sanctuary, narthex, Fireside Room (library), offices and bathrooms were included in the building program.
1983	February, Barb Brumm begins as Christian Education Coordinator and eventually becomes a full-time Rostered Associate in Ministry.
1985	October, the 5th pastor to be called by Ascension was Rev. John Poffinbarger. In the spring, the church celebrated Pastor Poffinbarger's 25th anniversary of his ordination.
1989	In late summer, a customized tracker-action, oak and black walnut organ was installed, which should last 300 to 400 years. There were 732 pipes; 21 were visible. It was built by J.C. Taylor & Co.
1995	Pastor Jerry Kuehn served as interim pastor; Sept. 6, Pastors Lori & Luther Swenson begin their ministry at Ascension.
2000	Addition of the Education Wing: dedicated classrooms, bigger narthex, 2 handicap-accessible bathrooms, coat room, nursery & pre-school classrooms
2005	Congregational conversation meetings result in decision to begin the visioning process.
2006	Congregation forms a Vision Renewal Task Force and a Sanctuary Renewal Task Force - The visioning process includes congregation surveys, education and focus discussions.
2007	Congregation adopts a new vision statement and seven Ministry Priorities. Strategic Planning Task Force formed to determine implementing ministry priorities. Property Exploration Task Force formed. BSA Architects hired to assess the existing property and explore expansion options.
	Congregation becomes debt free. Home Sweet Home ministry begins.
2008	Master Plan Task Force formed to develop a property plan in alignment with church's Strategic Vision & Mission. Congregation votes to "pursue the development of a plan for the optimal utilization of our current property location through increasing the size of the sanctuary and facility within the limits of the existing property." Retained Groth Design Group to complete a detailed needs assessment including programming and schematic design and develop a long-range master plan for the property.
2009	Congregation approves a long-term Property Master Plan, one that can be built in phases. Phase One Building Task Force formed to determine scope, budget, and timeline of building construction project. Groth Design Group retained for developing/designing the sanctuary building addition. Firm Foundation Capital Appeal succeeds beyond expectations and raises over \$1,000,000 in gifts and pledges, this in the midst of the worst economic recession since the Great Depression.
2010	The Selmer Co. selected as construction manager and to assist with developing accurate cost estimates and refining our constructible design in order to fit within our existing budget.

2011	Congregation gives conditional approval for proceeding with the new sanctuary addition and accompanying property improvements. Conditions for proceeding having been met, Church Council grants approval in May to proceed with construction. Groundbreaking ceremony held on June 5. Construction site work begins on June 6.
2012	New pews, a refurbished organ and new sound/video equipment installed. First service held in the new sanctuary on March 18, 2012. Gathering & Welcoming Center Task Force formed to oversee transforming the old sanctuary into a new Gathering and Welcome Center. New Sanctuary Addition dedication on May 6 and an Open House on May 10.
2013	Gathering Room finished: sound panels, new carpeting, Welcome Desk.
2014	1,200 baptized members; 12 ChristCare Small Groups; active Youth Groups of all ages and active Sunday School; 15 Christian service outreach ministries; 200 homeless helped by Home Sweet Home in past 7 years; various music groups and styles. June 2014 – Steeple put up; August – lights installed. Sept. 28, 2014 – Jubilee Celebration – 50 years and still growing! Rev. Carl Engstrom preaching.