

The Witness

You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth. Acts 1:8

Ascension Lutheran Church

LCMS

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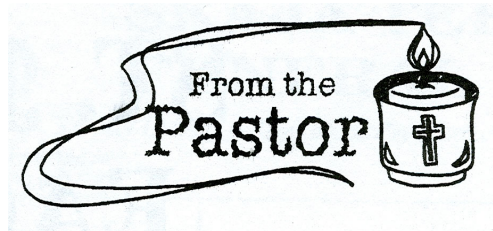
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August 2020

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Volume 6 No. 8

Dear friends in Christ,

This letter is to inform you that I have decided to accept the call to serve our brothers and sisters at Trinity Lutheran Church in Ironwood, Michigan. I ask for a peaceful release and transfer of membership from Ascension Lutheran Church in Niles to Trinity.

As you are all well aware, a divine call is a serious and sobering matter. I have been in prayer, sought counsel from many people, and considered this choice thoroughly. I do not come to this decision lightly.

I have been greatly blessed to have served in Niles for the past eight years. We have merged two congregations, undertaken extensive remodeling work, written a church constitution with bylaws, engaged our community in new ways, and supported the mission of the Church locally and in new lands.

The people of Ascension have shown me extraordinary love in your prayers and support as we welcomed two new children into our family, grieved miscarriages, mourned Kathy's father's death, and otherwise allowed us to share our lives with you. You have consistently responded to us in love. We do not take this love for granted.

Most importantly, Jesus has remained among us at all times. Jesus was always present to hear our prayers, strengthen our faith with the Word, unite us to himself in Holy Baptism, and grant us forgiveness in the Sacrament of the Altar. We exist and are sustained because of Jesus alone.

Even still, I believe that God would have another man serve Ascension in the pastoral office that you may love him and that he would continue to care for your souls. I also believe that the Lord would have me serve His people in Ironwood at this time and care for their precious souls. I do not know what my time in Ironwood will bring, but I know that Jesus will be present to teach us, guide us, sustain us, and forgive us.

While our relationships will change during the next several months – saying good-bye to some and meeting others for the first time – we rejoice that we are united by virtue of our faith in Christ Jesus, who died for us and rose again for us that we might be with him always.

It is always Jesus who cares for His beloved Church. I am humbled to serve as one of His under-shepherds.

God bless you all,

Pastor Matthew Gunia

From the Mission Field: COVID-19 International Updates

Africa

Your LCMS missionaries of the Africa region continue to joyfully and gratefully serve. While some of our team members needed to return to the U.S., missionaries in Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya and Ethiopia remained in the field. Restrictions in those places vary, but most include suspension of international travel, localized restrictions on movement, curfews, closures of schools and seminaries, and prohibitions of worship services and seminars.

Your Africa missionaries are using this time of pause, this forced Sabbath, to undertake deferred work and special projects, to extend knowledge through online courses, and to identify and engage the new opportunities the Lord is opening for ministry.

We are encouraged and fed by daily online team devotions and weekly online worship. The LCMS has issued more than 20 grants related to the novel coronavirus to our partners in Africa to address food insecurity, sanitation and education, and radio broadcast opportunities to proclaim the Gospel to those who cannot otherwise be reached or gather for worship.

We see clearly, despite the circumstances, that the work of the church continues — spreading the Gospel, planting Lutheran churches and showing mercy.

The Rev. Shauen Trump, regional director for LCMS Africa

Asia

Your LCMS Asia missionaries remain hard at work in their fields of service, where you have sent them, and where you allow them to live and labor. And where they are glad to be!

We had two families who returned to the U.S. because they were in high-risk categories and in places where decent medical care was not available. The vast majority of our LCMS Asia personnel opted to stay in their assigned countries, in the places where they have made their homes. Borders out here are closed everywhere, and so we responsibly find community with our neighbors and via remote visits.

Sri Lanka was subject to particularly strict lockdowns, with our personnel enduring days-long curfews. We also continue to monitor the situation in Hong Kong, which has protests in addition to virus concerns — something with which we know Americans are familiar.

Our teaching conferences may have been put on hold, but the development and translation of resources continues at a rapid pace. God bless you all for your continued interest, support, prayers and love.

The Rev. Charles Ferry, regional director for LCMS Asia



Lutheran Women's Missionary League

Lutheran Women
In Mission

LWML NID Convention Goes Virtual

Singing, fellowship, worship, Bible study, a servant event, speakers, and elections are normally all part of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML) district convention. But 2020 has been anything but normal! So, to protect the health and safety of our LWML convention attendees and comply with state and CDC guidelines, the LWML NID Executive Committee voted in May to hold a virtual event on Saturday, September 12, 2020 (instead of a live event on September 11 -12). The Committee went right to work, discussing options and planning for such an event. More details will be available later this summer.

Voting, which would have been done during the convention, will now take place on the weekend of August 29-30 so results can be shared on September 12, 2020. Two delegates from each congregation, along with other eligible voters, will register at lwmlnid.org. Voting will be completed using an electronic program from a personal device where email is normally received so no one needs to leave home to cast their vote. Accommodations will be made for those who do not have email access. Decisions to be made include election of officers, Pastoral Counselor, and a new nominating committee. The new Mite Goal will be adopted, along with new grants that we will support with our mite offerings. Changes to some of our bylaws will also be approved.

Those of us who attended the LWML NID Lenten Inspiration on March 7 had no idea we would not greet each other face to face in September. Praise the Lord we have the opportunity via technology to provide a "substitute" event and means of voting. We are also thankful that God is with all of us and that, while the world around us is ever-changing, He is our Fortress and Sure Defense!

From the Treasurer's Desk...

Although we are experiencing some very different times during the Covid 19 Pandemic, praise be to our Lord for the many members of Ascension who have recognized the need for continued contributions and have faithfully remained good stewards of God's gifts to them.

Expenses for salaries, insurance, utilities, etc. continue, even though we have essentially been "closed". Contributions are still needed, and we ask for all members to continue or resume regular giving.

Thank you!



Worship Services

As of this writing, we are holding worship services each Sunday morning at 10:00 and 11:00 am. All services are limited to 25 pre-registered people. Masks MUST be worn at all times, and members MUST sit where instructed by an usher.

If you wish to be assigned a worship time, please call the church office at 847/647-9867 to reserve your time. You will keep this timeslot each week. As each service is limited to 25 reserved members, according to State of Illinois and Niles guidelines, NO others can be admitted.

Please bear with us as we navigate these difficult times. If you have any questions, feel free to call the church office.

Time & Talent

Deacons

August 2	TBD
August 9	TBD
August 16	TBD
August 23	TBD
August 30	TBD

Ushers

August 2	TBD
August 9	TBD
August 16	TBD
August 23	TBD
August 30	TBD

Altar Guild

August Lois Marten



Called to Glory

Ruth Perzentka
June 13, 2020

Clinging to God's Certain Promises

By Kevin D. Robson | Lutherans Engage: Summer 2020

We waver, we flinch, we doubt, we're frightened. Is God's promise — His hope — lost in the middle of pandemic and pandemonium? Never. He gave you everything (Rom. 8:32) in order to keep His promise to you, to give you all things, that you would never be separated from Him. To that end, even in the face of what seems impossible, He is working that His will be done.

In every time and place, Jesus Christ is the foundation of genuine courage in confession. He is God's truth, "our confidence alone" (*Lutheran Service Book* 909:1), the guarantee of life in the secure, blissful joy of His risen and ascended presence. These things shall have no end. They cannot possibly be bound by time or limited by worldly orders to shelter in place or work from home.

You and I are heading to our real home! We do not place our faith in created things, for they are passing away. What came in the beginning, then from Sinai, from Calvary, from the mouths of God's spokesmen, from countless altars where the body and blood of Jesus was distributed, from the time and place where you were baptized, is a beautiful sacred mystery of being one — in Christ, with Him, with you and me and all the saints who have gone before. This blessed unity presses forward to the day when all are filled with the fullness of God, when the mortal has put on immortality (1 Cor. 15:53) and every voice is lifted in genuine praise at the triumphant feast of the Lamb of God. "Forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, [we] press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:12–14).

In Christ,
Rev. Kevin D. Robson
Chief Mission Officer, The Lutheran Church—
Missouri Synod



We congratulate the following members of Ascension as they celebrate their **birthdays** in August.

- | | |
|-----------|------------------------------|
| August 11 | Audrey Schultz |
| August 16 | Josie Herrnreiter |
| August 19 | Arletta Stuebe |
| August 20 | Rosalie Streng |
| August 21 | Sally Parison |
| August 23 | William Uffenbeck (Jr.) |
| August 28 | Vivian Gunia
Marc Schultz |
| August 29 | Arlene Koprivnik |
| August 31 | James Jenne |



And we congratulate the following couples as they celebrate their **wedding anniversaries** in August.

- | | |
|-----------|-----------------------------|
| August 2 | Mark & Melinda Plucinski |
| August 8 | Jonathan & Kristina Schultz |
| August 15 | Richard & Sandy Schultz |
| August 21 | Sarah & Bradley Lindahl |
| August 25 | Nick & Christina Aguilera |

These are the **birthdays** and **wedding anniversaries** recorded in our church records for the coming month. If any birthday or anniversary was omitted, please notify the church office.

Money principle #16: Provide For Your Family



But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.—*1 Timothy 5:8*

This is a strong statement. The fact that Paul considers not providing for your family as worse than being a nonbeliever is profound. First of all, even near-eastern Gentiles provided for the needs of their immediate family and aging parents. Secondly, the explicit implication here is that by not providing for members of your household, you are in essence denying your faith.

* * * *

ASCENSION 2020 BOARD MEMBERS

President:	Tom Friedewald
Vice President:	Jim Jenne
Treasurer:	Coby Mueller
Secretary:	Audrey Schultz
Financial Secretary:	Sandy Friedewald
Board of Deacons:	Jim Jenne (Chair) Hal Downs Tom Friedewald Jim Jenne Jonathan Schultz John Stuebe
Board of Christian Ministries	Lois Marten (Chair)
Board of Trustees:	Jason Romano (Chair)
Board of Youth:	Sarah Lindahl (Chair)

* * * * *

OFFICIAL ACTS

None on record

Do you have an announcement to share about your family such as a birth, death, engagement, graduation, etc., **let us know! We'd love to hear from you!**

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SOFTWARE

MSPublisher 2016
Adobe Acrobat Standard DC
Windows 10

PRINTER

HP Photosmart 7510

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TRANSMISSION TIME

Tuesday 2:00pm

NUMBER OF PAGES SENT

1 through 8

NEWSLETTER DATE

August2020

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

of copies: 200

Expected delivery: Thursday, July 23, 2020