

# 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

Phone: 847.647.9867

Ascensionniles.com  
office@ascensionniles.com

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7429 N. Milwaukee Ave.  
Niles, Illinois 60714

**February 2020**

# The Witness

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Volume 6 No. 2

*This year, Pastor Gunia will be writing on piety and spirituality. The intention is to help you live your life with increasing joy, closeness to God, and love for others. Don't take these as the Law, but rather think of them as suggestions from someone whose been working on his personal piety for quite some time now and who would love to see your faith grow stronger.*

Read the Holy Scriptures.

God's word is not like human words in two ways that are of particular importance to your spirituality.

First, when God speaks, his words call the thing of which he is speaking into creation. When God spoke of light in Genesis 1, light came into being. When God spoke the words "this is my body...this is my blood" over the bread and wine, they became his body and blood. Likewise, when you read God's words of forgiveness or peace or love in the Bible, God actually gives you these things. And when you read of Jesus, God actually gives you Jesus.

Second, when God speaks, he cannot lie. God can only communicate the truth to you. In the Scriptures are no mistakes, no attempts to deceive or mislead, no falsehoods. When God tells you of historical events like creation, the fall into sin, the details of a particular battle, or the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus, happened just as Scripture tells you. When God makes a promise to you, that promise is completely and totally trustworthy. When God bestows an identity on you, you are precisely who God says you are.

There is no better way to grow in your faith than by humbling yourself, clearing your mind, and listening to God's words as they are printed in the Scriptures, read in the Church, and proclaimed in worship. None. Absolutely none.

Exercise doesn't get you closer to God. Yoga or meditation doesn't get you closer to God. Working or classical music or creating art doesn't get you closer to God. These might touch something deep within you, but only God (working through his Word) can shape your soul as a potter shapes clay.

Further, all the other acts of piety I'm writing about this year all stem from the Word of God; without God's word, they are empty and of no value.

Last month, I wrote about giving generously. Without faithful obedience to God's word, trust in his promises, and trust that he makes your offerings holy, they are of no value.

If you were to pray apart from the Scriptures, how do you know to whom you're praying? How do you know you're praying in accordance with God's will? How do you even know that God hears your prayers?

It is the Word of God which turns bread, wine, and water into blessed Sacraments. It is the Word of God that calls people together in worship and makes them holy. God's words, spoken by human beings, forgive your sins.

All faith is rooted in God's Word. Therefore, read the Holy Scriptures.

1. Make a plan to spend time reading the Bible each week and stick to that plan. If you fall off the rails, just pick it up again as soon as you can. There is no race to see who can read the Bible the quickest or the largest amount of times. Reading the Bible is a daily discipline that allows God to work in you for your eternal good.
2. Find out what the readings for the next Sunday are and read those lessons. Since everything in a worship service flows out from those readings, you will get so much more out of the sermon, the prayers, the hymns, and other elements of worship.

3. Attend Bible study. I hold a Masters of Divinity degree. I wrote a 25-page paper on one psalm. I've translated entire books of the Bible from the original languages. And I always learn something from an observation made from someone else in Bible class. I would bet the same will be true of you.
4. Try carving out 5-10 minutes each day to read the Bible. Start with a very brief prayer, set a timer, read, and stop right where you're at. Say another brief prayer and go on with your day.
5. If you have a question, ask me about it. I actually like talking about the Bible. I'm never too busy to help you grow in your faith and understanding.

The Word of God calls us into being, forgives our sins, makes us children of God, and fills our hearts with every good thing. Therefore, we hold to God's Word and treat it as the most precious thing we own. Everything in your house will perish. You will perish. But God's Word endures forever and will bring you into eternity with it.

Pastor Gunia

## News and Views from Ascension

Ascension rose to the occasion when all were invited to join together with members and friends at the New Year's Day toast a bit late on January 5 after the morning worship service. Tables in the breezeway were loaded with goodies, from shrimp butter (YUM) to cocoa truffles and fresh fruit and cheeses. Jason helped with opening the bubbly bottles and Pastor led the toast to the New Year. Where will the Lord lead us in 2020? No one was carded as we enjoyed cider and juices. Thank you to all who brought things to nibble on and eat, and thank you to the setter-uppers and taker-downers, which included Pam and Carolyn, and Tom, and Sheila, et.al. What fun. People ate, and visited and enjoyed the crisp January morning. Happy New Year!

The Christmas season was somewhat confusing in 2019 by the dates in the calendar, and we had barely finished the turkey left overs before we were heading down the road to Bethlehem. The children's Christmas program was part of the service on December 22, and the choir sang two selections. Monty does his best with our little ensemble. Our tree was decorated that afternoon with the ceramic manger scene added to the display. Advent services were held on Tuesday mornings to accommodate the home school families as well. Tom Friedewald announced the annual PJ and sock drive for veterans, and the box for the contributions rapidly filled. Lilian Konozsi is package wrapper supreme. Under her guidance socks and pajamas for men and women veterans in our hospitals were prepared for giving in the most loving way. Thank you to those who supplied these items and to Tom for delivering them. The ungreening of the church took place the first week in January. We're so grateful for our younger members who willingly drag ladders and boxes up and down stairs to help store the tree for another year.

For several weeks a camera crew has been videoing events at church, from Bible class to regular services to one-on-one interviews with members, young and old. We'll be seeing the finished product later in the month on our website.

We feel much comforted with seeing the ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH sign now firmly affixed to the front of the church. Our silver cross will eventually be mounted in the meditation garden, a gentle reminder of our former school and our Lord's love.

We mourn with Martha Sichau whose sister was called home to her Lord in early January. The Sichau family, dedicated and "old school" members of their Lutheran churches, have contributed much to Ascension by their participation and presence.

Our intrepid Shirley Leparski will be undergoing surgery in January. We miss her at church and at GlenBridge where she has been the keyboard player for many months. In the meantime, Arletta Stuebe has ably filled in. The Wednesday morning services there continue with the Pastors Gunia, Browne, Klopke and Bruening officiating. The residents are so grateful to hear the Word each week and to sing a few familiar hymns. Our helpers include Karen Hepburn, Liliam Konozsi, Arletta Stuebe, and Rosalie Streng.

Congrats to Lois Marten, who became a Great-Grandma in early January. We and her family know she is a great grandma, so she really deserves the new title. Welcome Cora!

Rosalie Streng



**Lutheran Women's  
Missionary League**  
Lutheran Women  
In Mission

### **Bible Study**

Our next Bible study will be Monday, February 3rd at 7:00 pm in the lower level of the church. The topic will be selected from the winter issue of Lutheran Women's Quarterly so please bring your copy with you when you come.

### **Where Mites Go**

Native American Youth Program,  
Washington's Olympic Peninsula  
Lutheran Indian Ministries

Grant: \$18,000

By providing a supportive environment for listening and building relationships, Ben Maxson, serving Makah Lutheran, desires to offer Native teens in Neah Bay, Washington, a safe place to grow and flourish, enjoy food and fun, participate in worship, and learn from the Scriptures together. By offering what the community center doesn't, funds will be used to purchase games (shuffle board, dart boards, bocce ball, volleyball), musical instruments, a sound system and LCD projector to help furnish the new Cultural Arts Center, located on the grounds of Makah Lutheran Church, for a growing youth program where Christ is the anchor.

### **Love Packages**

Testimony from South Africa

We would like to express our sincere thanks for your support during our Women's seminar. Your generous donation of literature was made available to all the ladies who attended our event.

All the ladies were blessed by your generosity and have been further empowered to go out and share what they have learned with their families, churches and communities. We pray that God would continue to bless your ministry as you trust Him and work to serve Him through your lives and resources. We pray that God would meet your needs as you continue to spread His truth. We had meetings last week at New Stock Road. After the preaching at the campaign, 46 people gave their lives to Jesus and we gave them the Christian material that we got from you and also the little booklet of John and Romans. It was a great time of joy. Love in Jesus Name.

Arletta A. Stuebe, President

### **Money principle #11: Leave A Legacy**

A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children, but the sinner's wealth is laid up for the righteous. *Proverbs 13:22*

Here's a good example of a passage that helps to clarify money's place in life. The writer of Proverbs tells us that a good man will leave an inheritance for not only his children, but also his grandchildren.

One has to amass a certain amount of wealth and understand how to invest it for that to be able to happen. Scripture supports wise and strategic uses of money.

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# Time & Talent

## Altar Guild

### Deacons

February

Judy Darville  
Gail Bujnowski

February 2	John Stuebe
February 9	Jonathan Schultz
February 16	Tom Friedewald
February 23	Jim Jenne
February 26	John Stuebe

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### Ushers

February 2	Ron Albrecht Nick Giannopoulos Jim Jenne Bonnie Schultz
February 9	Tom Friedewald Steve Galka Sarah Lindahl John Stuebe
February 16	Lance Ahlgrim Tom Ahlgrim Bonnie Schultz John Stuebe
February 23	Ron Albrecht Nick Giannopoulos Jonathan Schultz John Stuebe
February 26	Lance Ahlgrim Tom Ahlgrim Tom Friedewald Jim Jenne



February 26, 2020  
Worship with Holy Communion  
7:00 pm

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### Greeters

February 2	Judy Darville Rosalie Streng
February 9	Pam Hrajnoha Lois Marten
February 16	Judy Darville Gail Bujnowski
February 23	Lois Martin Rosalie Streng
February 26	Judy Darville Pam Hrajnoha

## Voters Assembly

Our next Voters Assembly will be February 23rd following our worship service. We will discuss the business of Ascension. Mark your calendars and plan to attend.



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

February 1	Bode Herrnreiter
February 2	Rev. Matthew Gunia
February 4	Ruth Perzentka
February 14	Monty Gabor
February 17	Kaylin Moy
February 23	Sandy Friedewald
February 26	Shirley Leparski



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

February 21	Rev. Stanley & Pat Zyskowski
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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.

## The Person Down the Road

In thirty, forty, or fifty years you will meet a person down the road. Whether that someone is kind or gentle or selfish and demanding depends on what you do today. If you live only in terms of what you can get out of life, this person will be crabby, self-centered, and spiteful. But if you live a Christ-centered life and open your heart to others and live as a giver, this person will be kind, open, and generous.

This somebody whom you meet down the road is you. The person you will be tomorrow depends on the life you live today. Make sure the person you are becoming is someone you'll enjoy being around for the rest of your life.



## ASCENSION 2020 BOARD MEMBERS

<b>President:</b>	Tom Friedewald
<b>Vice President:</b>	Jim Jenne
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Coby Mueller
<b>Secretary:</b>	Audrey Schultz
<b>Financial Secretary:</b>	Sandy Friedewald
<b>Board of Deacons:</b>	Jim Jenne (Chair) Hal Downs Tom Friedewald Jim Jenne Jonathan Schultz John Stuebe
<b>Board of Mercy, Missions, Spiritual Growth</b>	Lois Marten (Chair)
<b>Board of Trustees:</b>	Jason Romano (Chair)
<b>Board of Youth:</b>	Sarah Lindahl (Chair)

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### **OFFICIAL ACTS**

#### **Funeral**

Elsie Sichau  
January 17, 2020

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!**

CHURCH NAME AND ADDRESS

Ascension Lutheran Church #106244  
7429 Milwaukee Avenue  
Niles, IL 60714

TELEPHONE

847 647-9867

CONTACT

Audrey Schultz

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EMAIL

office@ascensionniles.com

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