

The Witness

And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Matthew 28:18-20 ESV

Ascension Lutheran Church

LCMS

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June 2021

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“There are three conversions necessary to every man: the head, the heart, and the purse.” Attributed to Luther, though yet to be located in his vast writings, this statement echoes what Jesus taught about hearts and treasures. He said, “For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” (Matthew 6:21; Luke 12:34)

But which conversion comes first? I submit that the order is this: first the head, then the purse, then the heart. Let’s explore this topic.

Our Lord Jesus Christ dwelt among us to save us. He took on our flesh, fulfilled the demands of the law in our place, became sin for us, and suffered torture and death on our behalf. He did this in order that we would be free from sin, death, and hell. He gives us what He accomplished through Baptism, Absolution, and the Lord’s Supper. And so, He doesn’t just do it for us but gives it to us. He makes what He did ours by making us His. Thus, we are called by His name: Christians. We have a new life in Him.

Through the preaching of Law and Gospel, God grants us repentance, a changing of our minds. It is a conversion of the mind. We are called to turn away from our sins and turn toward Him for forgiveness, life, and salvation. For when God calls us away from something, He is, at the same time, calling us to something.

And thus, He calls us to a new life, with new deeds. This is the conversion of the purse. Jesus said that “it is easier for a camel to enter through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.” (Matthew 19:24) “For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” Notice that our hearts follow our treasures, not the other way around. As Christians, God calls us to invest our treasures in His Kingdom to ensure that the gospel is preached and the sacraments are administered. He calls us to share all good things with the one who teaches us the doctrines of Christ. He calls us to be generous in giving to the church, for it is more blessed to give than to receive.

So where is your treasure? If it is not invested in the kingdom of God, then the only response is repentance – a conversion of the heart – and to begin doing just that. And as our Lord promised, where your treasure is there your heart will be also.

This is not to say that you earn your way into heaven. It is simply to say that as Christians, those who have been made to be temples of the Holy Spirit, who have been given a new life in Christ, who are dead to sin and now alive in Him, we are actually to live – think (conversion of the mind), do (conversion of the purse), and be (conversion of the heart) – a new life in Him. And when you fail, know that God in Christ loves and forgives you and still calls you away from that and to Himself.

LCMS Stewardship Ministry
LCMS.com



by Rosalie Streng

The Lenten season and Easter are history in 2021. There were no midweek Lenten services this year, but a Lenten devotion booklet was available for private worship. Holy Week services were Maundy Thursday with Holy Communion and the stripping of the altar. There was also Good Friday, the service of darkness, culminating with crashing of the Book, and the silent exit from the sanctuary. Pastor Anderson held all services and we are grateful for his treks down from the Milwaukee area. And then it was Easter Sunday and the Alleluias rang out. We welcomed many we had not seen at worship for a long time. The Trumpet played and the organ soared joyously, the church bell called ALL to worship and to Praise the Lord for the Resurrection of His Son. We were pleased to see the entire Anderson family at worship, the three boys in pastel dress shirts, and Charlotte in a pretty Easter frock. And mon was there too. The cancel looked very festive with lilies, tulips, and other spring flowers. He is risen, indeed. ALLELUIA! We hope next year we will be able to revive the Easter breakfast/buffet custom.

Sometimes it is good and revealing to check out the Lutheran Church Charities web site. The official mail address is just up the road from us in Northbrook on Milwaukee Ave. Readers may already be familiar with LCC's Comfort Dog Ministry, which sends out handlers and their wonderful golden retrievers to sites that have experienced disasters, from shootings to weather related upheavals. LCC also sends out crews with chainsaws and axes to some sites. Trained volunteers do so much good. If you are a Thrivent Member, you have Thrivent Dollars which you can designate to LCC to help their ministry. What a kind and thoughtful thing to do for your neighbor!

Please check out the publication rack in the breezeway for a new Devotions for Young People, and a recent NID newsletter and the latest copy of the LUTHERAN WITNESS. You are invited to take the LW with you for further reading. Articles by noted LCMS pastors, even the Presidents of the Synod or of the Seminaries enlighten Bible texts and synodical happenings plus a list of ordained and commissioned members of synod who have gone to heaven. Moreover, there are announcements of various church anniversary celebrations countrywide. It's amazing how many of our churches are more than 100 years old. Please be sure to return the LUTHERAN WITNESS to the rack for others to enjoy. The devotions are there for the taking. Please do!

Our Monty is learning how to function using crutches as a broken ankle mends. The crutches made going to the organ loft somewhat challenging. We're glad he can master the stairs, and we wish him well. (The pedals are another matter, we understand, but Monty is a trooper.) He graduated to a BOOT this past week, so walking was easier. Get well, Monty!

We are invited to save the date of Saturday May 15 for a music event in our sanctuary. We don't know what Monty has planned, but we can be sure it will be worth a visit, and certainly a welcome diversion. We've missed so much special music this year because of the pandemic. Yes, masks will be required.

Do you know a five letter word for peace?

(Jesus is the answer. Did you guess it?)



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

**Where Mites Go
LCMS Deaconess Ministry**

LCMS Office of International Mission
\$39,523

LCMS Deaconesses are women who are full time professional church workers, trained to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ through a ministry of works of mercy, spiritual care, and teaching the Christian faith. The LCMS Deaconess Ministry program will provide LCMS students the opportunity to become a church professional, learning and training to understand the diaconal leadership, the work of deaconesses as applied to body and soul ministry. This grant will provide educational and financial support to our partner churches who introduced deaconess training programs within their church bodies like the Philippines, Latvia, Liberia, Indonesia, Malaysia, and India.

**Testimonies from Around the World:
Ghana**

Reverend Steve, to confess Ghanaian Churches needs exactly what you have been shipping to us. So many people who have been hungry and thirsty for God's Word has gotten what they need from you. Many Bible students starve and find it difficult to pass through the Bible colleges. Thank God for Love packages who has been a special help to these students. Love packages have been given to over a thousand Bible students. Many new churches have been planted through the free literature form Love packages. Thousands of churches which were dying have come back to life this year through your special shipments. You are exactly what Ghana needs to populate heaven. We are so so much grateful.

Music & Liturgy Workshop in the Congo

Sacred music educator and missionary Phillip Magness recently returned from three weeks in the Republic of Congo, where he led an intensive workshop on hymnody and liturgy at Paroisse Wittenberg (Wittenberg Parish) in Pointe-Noire, consulted with church leaders on future projects, and worked with the musicians at St. Augustine Lutheran Church in Brazzaville.

The workshop in Pointe-Noire involved a variety of participants who came in three "waves": pastors and seminarians, elders and choir members, and children, with the first group attending all three sessions each day, the second the latter two, and the children coming after school. Attendees worked on learning key stanzas of core hymns by heart so that the Lord's song would dwell in them more richly and so that they would be equipped to share good hymns without hymnals. They also learned some new hymns from *Liturgies et Cantiques Lutheriennes (LCL)* (the French-language edition of *Lutheran Service Book*), developed music literacy using both music from *LCL* and from prayer and praise music in the local Lingala language, and grew in their understanding of the Word as various scriptural allusions in hymns were explained.

The work in both Pointe-Noire and Brazzaville also included some practical instruction to pastors and musicians, encouraging them to work together and practice transitions before services so that the liturgy can flow more smoothly and better lead the congregation. For example, when a hymn is sung in an a capella setting, the key and tempo must be established. Typically, this is done by the pastor, who sings a phrase and then counts off a beat to bring the people in. It is important that songs not start off too high or too low for the assembly, so worship leaders were encouraged to consider the contour of the melody before starting to sing.

The Rev. Joseph Mboundou of Pointe-Noire was one of many who expressed gratitude for the teaching received, saying, "We are very happy because the whole parish keeps singing these hymns. My brother Phillip has sown a lot, and now we will reap much in the ministry that we share together in Christ."

Time & Talent

Greeters

June 6	Judy Darville Rosalie Streng
June 13	Pam Hrajnoha Lois Marten
June 20	Gail Bujnowski Rosalie Streng
June 27	Pam Hrajnoha Lois Marten

Deacons/Ushers

June 6	Jim Jenne Tom Friedewald
June 13	Jim Jenne Jonathan Schultz
June 20	Tom Friedewald Jonathan Schultz
June 27	Jim Jenne Tom Friedewald

Altar Guild

June	Linda Bauschke Lilian Konozi
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District Grants Support

After-school Programs, ESL Classes

At Walcamp in Kingston, Illinois, Northern Illinois District grant funds have been put to use to purchase large tents to create outdoor “classrooms” for the camp’s E3 program.

E3 stands for “E-learning Enrichment Experience.” Children ages 5-12 from five school districts come to Walcamp on their “e-learning days” for an enriching and stable work environment. Normally, the children would be at home with no in-person contact with other students or teachers.

Though the tents have been put away for the winter, the program continues to bless children. When students are not e-learning on their devices, Walcamp staff engage them in activities that allow children to learn and build friendships, all while following proper social-distancing guidelines.

“The consistency of having a place to go every day is just immeasurable. My goal is, down the road, when [the children] look back at this year, and everyone is saying, ‘That year stunk,’ they can say, ‘It wasn’t that bad, man—I went to Walcamp for a whole year!’” says Bill Indelli, Executive Director. “It’s providing good mental health and [social time]. They’re getting all those things that they’d be lacking, had they just been remote.”

Some of the activities include snowshoeing and cross country skiing, raising tadpoles from scratch, and caring for the camp lizard.

Another grant provided funds for an English as a second language (ESL) class put on by congregations St. John’s, Union and Zion, Marengo.

Members from Zion approached St. John’s hoping to begin Hispanic ministry. St. John’s has hosted ESL classes for ten years, but many of the students live in Marengo. They decided to partner together, moving the classes from Union to Marengo for the convenience of the students.

Currently there are twelve students in the class, four instructors, and one person in charge of childcare. Normally the group would share a meal before the class, though the ability to do that has been limited by COVID.

Pastor Jonathan Ripke expressed enthusiasm that Zion and St. John’s are working together. “When we can communicate and share life with one another, God opens up possibilities for friendship and deeper connection with our neighbors. In all things, we want to share the love of Jesus, and this is part of how we do that—both with those whom we serve in the ESL classes, and with our congregations working together to show our communities that we have one heart and love for our Lord.”

It is that love and heart for our Lord that, nourished by the gospel and overflowing with the life of the Spirit, bears witness to Jesus Christ for His sake and the world’s salvation.

* * *



A Father's Day Prayer

Lord, THANK YOU for fathers and their special place in the life of the family. Grant that the fathers of our church and our nation shall learn and accept the unique role You have given to them. Give them the spiritual discernment to lead their children to know God as Father through faith in You. We pray that fathers will have the wisdom to express Your truth in such a way that their home will be a heaven on earth because You are in it. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

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

- June 6 Katherine Gordon
- June 7 Jill Gregorio
- June 12 Sheila Kolbe Ahlgrim
- June 18 Jonathan Schultz
- June 22 Gideon Aguilera
- June 29 Scott Darville
- June 30 Jason Romano



Sunday, June 20, 2021



Altar Flower Update

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

None on record

You may have noticed the new greenery behind our altar. Due to the rising cost of fresh flowers, the cost to sponsor two bouquets on a Sunday morning would be \$50 (\$25 per bouquet). Therefore, the Altar Guild and Church Council have made the decision to use silk greenery behind the altar. We have found an independent florist who is willing to provide bouquets for \$20 each, but cannot commit to every Sunday. Therefore, you can still sponsor flowers for a special event, birthday or anniversary but you must notify Lois Marten at 857/965-6255 or the church office at 847/647-9867 **TWO WEEKS BEFORE THE DATE YOU DESIRE.**

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.

2021 ASCENSION COUNCIL BOARD MEMBERS

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

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OFFICIAL ACTS

Funerals/Memorials

Coby Mueller
May 2, 2021

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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