

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

Phone: 847.647.9867

E-Mail: office@ascensionniles.com

Website: ascensionniles.com

FaceBook: Ascension Lutheran Church
Niles, IL

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May 2022

The Witness



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May 2022

Ascension: The Forgotten Festival

You're familiar with Santa Claus. You know all about the Easter bunny. These are symbols that show up around Christmas and Easter that help the world celebrate these holidays. You might have Christmas sweaters and Easter dresses. There are greeting cards, Christmas candy, Easter candy, and all kinds of trappings that go with these celebrations. But for you, there is a greater person involved. Jesus was born at Christmas and He rose from the dead on Easter. Each week, as you confess the creed, there is another celebration, too. After Jesus was born and after His death and resurrection, He ascended into heaven.

The world doesn't seem to care. There is no "Ascension character" (although the greeting card companies could start something, I suppose). There is no special clothing that goes with Ascension, and there is, sadly, no Ascension candy. But these things don't make a holiday. After all, what is a holiday but a holy day? And Ascension certainly is that. The world hasn't noticed, but for you and for Christ's Church, Ascension is a big deal.

It is on this day that Jesus lifted up His hands and blessed His disciples and went up to heaven. There, He sits at the right hand of God the Father and the crucified, risen, and ascended one rules all things. It is on this day when Jesus is just as present with His Church as before, but is no longer visible among them, teaching and performing miracles in the same way. Oh, the teaching and the miracles certainly continue. The presence of God with His people continues. But it's not the same. In fact, the Church begins to wonder what Jesus is doing during these days. The Church is tempted to doubt and despair.

This is a kind of "holy nostalgia." Just like you and I like to remember the days of our childhood and wish that things were just like that, or like grandparents might gladly reminisce about the way things used to be, the Church looks off into the distance and remembers how it was when Jesus called the twelve, when He taught as one with authority, when He performed miracles, and even when He Himself rose from the dead. "Why can't things be like that?" the Church asks. In these days following Jesus' Ascension, He hasn't left you. He hasn't abandoned you. He is still working. All the words that He taught are still being taught, just like He instructed. Disciples are being made in and of all nations by baptism and teaching. Jesus is present in His body and blood given for you for the forgiveness of sins.

The greeting card companies don't care, and the candy aisle won't be decked out for Ascension. But the Church celebrates the ongoing work of Jesus, who has a rightful place next to God the Father. But Jesus continues to work in His Church and He continues to work for you. Ascension isn't a forgotten festival, but a gathering of God's saints around His Word!

In Christ,
Pastor Matthew Uttenreither

(continued on page 3)

Saint of the Month: St. Bede, the Venerable-- Bede (673-735) was the last of the early church fathers and the first to compile the history of the English church.



Born in Northumbria, Bede was given by his parents to a monastery in Northern England at the age of seven. The most learned man of his time, he was a prolific writer of history, whose careful use of sources provided a model for historians in the Middle Ages. Known best for his book, *The Ecclesiastical History of*

the English People, he was also a profound interpreter of Scripture; his commentaries are still fresh today. His most famous disciple, Cuthbert, reported that Bede was working on a translation of John's Gospel into English when death came, and that he died with the words of the Gloria Patri on his lips. He received the title "Venerable" within two generations of his death and is buried in Durham Cathedral as one of England's greatest saints.

One of my favorite hymns is by the Venerable St. Bede. It is entitled, "A Hymn of Glory Let Us Sing" (LSB 493, TLH 212). It is a hymn for the Feast of the Ascension of our Lord, which will be celebrated on May 29th during our Sunday Divine Service.

Let us pray: Almighty God, grant us to enjoy, even as St. Bede whom we rejoice to commemorate this day, a steadfast faith in Jesus Christ, a cheerful hope in Your mercy, and a sincere love for You and for one another; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

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

Where Mites Go Propelling the Gospel

Grant: \$65,000

Lutheran Association of Missionary Pilots (LAMP) Ministry, Inc. has been using small aircraft to take the Gospel message to the Indigenous people in the most remote areas of northern Canada. Each year, hundreds of volunteer missionaries from the United States travel to teach vacation Bible school to thousands of children in remote northern communities. LAMP's ministry is highly dependent on the two aircrafts that they use in order to get their missionaries to these places so they can bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ to those who so desperately need to hear the Good News. The aircraft has evolved over the years, and upgrades must be made to ensure safety and the ability for LAMP's missionaries and pilots to reach remote communities only accessible by air. Avionic instrument upgrades in the aircrafts are a costly investment. The Garmin GTX 345 model works best, not only with classical ground-based radar systems, but it also provides ADS-B input and output for both the American and Canadian/Aireon systems.

Testimonies from Around the World: Philippines

When we knew that there were materials available at Pastor Solomon's church we got there early to pick some up. We were so blessed because it was not just some that I got, but many assorted materials for my member's spiritual growth.

Our children in the orphanage were also so blessed to receive Sunday School materials. We saw their big eyes and big smiles when we show the beautiful colored pictures. Teaching and preaching reference materials helped us a lot in ministering.

The materials like CD you sent us were a big help for me now that I'm a pastor. I have a series of lessons to offer to the members. And it helped me to easily understand the lessons because of supporting books. I have been praying to have reference materials for our Bible studies and for me also. God answered my prayers through you.

Living Sacrifices



Stewardship is not just about giving money to the church. It includes this, to be sure, but it is not limited to it. Stewardship involves our whole life – everything we have and everything we are.

Let us not, though, fall into the trap of thinking that because we give of ourselves in one area then we can neglect giving in another. Stewardship is not stealing from Peter to pay Paul. It is not a game that we play whereby we justify ourselves in not giving a tenth of our income because we have given in some other way.

This is why our Lord warns: “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others.” (Matthew 23:23) We are given to do both – tithe of ourselves and what we have.

And so it is that St. Paul makes his appeal to us: “I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.” (Romans 12:1–2)

We are to present our bodies as a living sacrifice to God. We are not to have the mind of the world, where we exchange equal weight of this for an equal weight of that and think that we have done what God has required. Our whole life is given over for service in and for the Church of God. This is to be done in thanksgiving for what God in Christ has accomplished for us. This is our spiritual worship, the reasonable response to what He has done for us. Not one for the other but all in all.

But what does this look like? St. Paul never lays down a general principle without also giving us some practical application of what shape that principle is to take concretely. He gives the general principle that our bodies are to be living sacrifices to God. And, after admonishing those who have been given particular gifts of grace to serve the church, St. Paul then speaks generally of what is expected of all. He says:

“Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.” (Romans 12:9–13)

This is what it looks like to present your bodies as living sacrifices. This is how we live out the grace of God here in time.

Let us then heed the apostle’s teaching. Let us present our bodies – everything that we have and everything that we are – as living sacrifices to God, our reasonable response to what God in Christ Jesus accomplished for us by His death and resurrection. Through this, we have forgiveness of sins, a new life in Christ, and eternal salvation. And through this worship, the grace of God is made manifest in His saints – for the church and the world.

LCMS Stewardship Ministry



Joy is a term that appears many times in many translations of the Bible; but what does joy really mean? In the *Winter 2022* issue of the Ministry Update, we bring to light the joy we see as members of the LCMS Northern Illinois District.

Let us go forward with Joy! We asked Congregational Chairpersons from around the District to share with us the Joy! they have in serving their congregations. You will find their responses as diverse as their ministries:

While serving as the president of Faith Lutheran Church in Lake Forest, I have indeed experienced joy. The joy is not set in the context of blessings or achievements, for which we have had our share and are thankful for, but rather from the continued opportunities to serve Christ faithfully despite the turmoil and chaos in the world in recent times. I am reminded that we need to serve as light, a beacon to the world; and in doing so what better way to show this than to emanate joy from our hearts.

Jeff Change,
Faith Lutheran Church, Lake Forest

Time & Talent

Deacons

May 1	Jonathan Schultz
May 8	Tom Friedewald
May 15	Jim Jenne
May 22	Jonathan Schultz
May 29	Tom Friedewald

Greeters

May 1	Judy Darville Rosalie Streng
May 8	Pam Hrajnoha Lois Marten
May 15	Gail Bujnowski Judy Darville
May 22	Pam Hrajnoha Lois Marten
May 29	Pam Hrajnoha Lois Marten

Altar Guild

May:	Gail Bujnowski Judy Darville
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We congratulate the following members of Ascension as they celebrate their **birthdays** in May.

May 1	Michael Powyszynski
May 2	Robert Galka Charles Schwenn
May 9	Jacob Darville
May 12	Karen Aragosa
May 14	Steven Galka
May 19	Tom Friedewald
May 22	Harold Hasselman



We also congratulate the following couples as they celebrate their **wedding anniversaries** in May.

May 10	Rev. Matthew & Amy Uttenreither
May 16	Marc & Audrey Schultz
May 19	Michael & Janice Fleck
May 29	Harold & Janice Hasselman
May 31	Tom & Kim Giannopoulos

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.

Around Ascension

He is Risen!

The season of Lent concluded with Holy Week services and the joyful resurrection of our Lord on Easter morning! Ascension Women's Circle hosted an Easter breakfast while the children enjoyed an egg hunt in the meditation garden. Thanks to the ladies for the tasty breakfast and to Sarah and Bonnie for filling all those eggs!

We are still collecting food for local food pantries. There are many families in our community who need help providing food for their families. Thanks to all who faithfully bring donations each Sunday!

Ascension Women's Circle meets at 11:00 am on the first Wednesday of the month (September through May). They will meet on May 4th and then take the summer off, but hope all the ladies of Ascension will join them in September! Remember to keep collecting your mites . . . there will be a Mite Sunday near the end of May.

Just a reminder: Due to Memorial Day weekend, our next scheduled Voter Assembly will be on Sunday, May 22nd. Please plan to be there!



Ascension Day Sunday
May 29th
9:30 a.m.

2022 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 (Emeritus) 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)

* * * * *

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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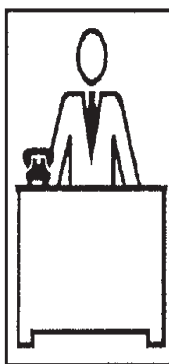
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