



THE MESSENGER

ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH

May 2021

WEEKLY EVENTS

- Sunday Worship - 8:30 & 10:30 AM
- Sunday School - Sunday at 9:30 AM
- NA Meeting - Wednesdays at 7:30 PM
- Spirituality Group - Thursdays at 7 PM
- AA Meeting - Saturdays at 10:00 AM
- Soccer Shots - Saturday mornings & Tuesday evenings (Spring-Fall)



2021 Ascension Church COUNCIL

Council Executives

- Jason Eager *president*
- Jeff Williams *vice-president*
- Clay Marnich *secretary*
- John Bielewicz *treasurer*

Council Liaisons

- Jerry Wessel *Christian Education*
- John Bielewicz *Youth*
- Jason Eager *Communications & Publications*
- Rudy Marnich *Social Ministry & Evangelism*
- Bob Thompson *Finance & Stewardship*
- Barbara Thompson *Worship & Music*
- Mark Thompson *Property*
- Jeff Williams *Mutual Ministry*
- Clay Marnich *Personnel*
- (Vacant) *Fellowship*

Next Council Meeting

Tuesday May 11 at 7:00 PM



Veni Sancte Spiritus!

From Pastor Murdy's Desk

Dear friends in Christ,

When you think of the Holy Spirit, what comes to mind? Wind, breath, a dove, breeze, vibrant colors, the unimaginable? The word we use for the Holy Spirit comes from the Greek (πνεῦμα-pneuma) and Hebrew (רוּחַ-ruach) words meaning wind and breath. There are moments as a pastor when I often give pause considering the Holy Spirit. The spirit of God is so omnipresent, and yet, elusive in our understanding at the same time. When I think of the Holy Spirit, I think of people who are hard to describe. We all have that friend or family member whose description falls short of words. I think the Holy Spirit can often times be beyond description. Thankfully, the Holy Spirit has caused hymns and poetry to be written which can provide words when words seem in short supply. In preparation for the great season of Pentecost and the day in which we commemorate and remember the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles and the church, I picked up my hymnal. Although we have several hymnals at our disposal, the one we primarily use is the Evangelical Lutheran Worship (ELW). What better way to experience the Holy Spirit as wind and breath than through song and hymnody?

If you look in our hymnal you might notice a few things. The first is that the first 150 hymns are the psalms, considered songs of praise, lament, worship and joy. This is followed by service music, which is followed by the remaining hymns. You will also notice that each hymn is assigned a season or theme. Of the 893 hymns in the ELW, only 13 are assigned specifically for Pentecost and the Holy Spirit. There are hundreds of other hymns that would also be appropriate in such celebrations, but 13 are set apart for the unique person of the Holy Spirit and that mighty day when the Spirit descended upon the church. Here, recorded in Acts, is that very moment when the Spirit came: "And suddenly from Heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind ..."
-Acts 2:2

God's people have always been singers. Long before the Psalms were written, God's people danced and sang. There weren't always words. It was a movement and a moment of praise that came from deep within and echoed out beyond our

The FEAST of the ASCENSION

Forty Days after the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, the *Acts of the Apostles* records Jesus' ascension into heaven. The Ascension is an important Christian holiday that attests to the reality of Jesus Christ, God and human, returning to the Father, to return again in the future second coming. The Ascension is the final component of the *paschal mystery*, which consists also of Jesus' Crucifixion (and related components like his suffering and death) and Resurrection.

Along with the Resurrection, the Ascension functioned as a proof of Jesus' claim that he was the Messiah. The Ascension is also the event whereby humanity was taken into heaven.

Finally, the Ascension was also the "final blow" so-to-speak against Satan's power, and thus the lion (Jesus) conquering the dragon (Satan) is a symbol of the Ascension. Early Christian art and iconography portrayed the Ascension frequently, showing its importance to the early Church.



CELEBRATE!

Join us on *Thursday, May 13th*
here at Ascension Church
to commemorate this feast and our namesake.
Our worship begins at 7 p.m.

From Pastor Murdy's Desk (continued from pg 1)

human lips into the heavens. Angels sing, creation sings, and so the church responds with praise and song.

For this month, as we prepare for the day of Pentecost (May 23rd), I would like to invite you to mediate with me on a few verses from some of our Pentecostal hymns. As you read a verse, try to sing it. Don't know the melody - make it up. Sing from the heart. Say the words slowly, almost at a whisper. Shout the words, let the neighbors hear! Share the words with a friend, co-worker, family member or stranger. Hear the words, feel the words, **be** the words.

"You sang in a stable, you cried from a hill, then you whispered in silence when the whole world was still; and down in the city you called once again, when you blew through your people on the rush of the wind."

396, v.3 Spirit of Gentleness

"Loving Spirit, loving Spirit, you have chosen me to be - you have drawn me to your wonder, you have set your sign on me." **397, v.5 Loving Spirit**

"God of blazing, God of burning, all that blocks your purpose purge! Through your church, Christ's living Body, let your flaming Spirit surge! Where deceit conceals injustice, make us one in Christ our Lord, make us one in Christ our Lord." **400, v. 2 God of Tempest, God of Whirlwind**

"Like the murmur of the dove's song, like the challenge of her flight, like the vigor of the wind's rush, like the new flame's eager might: come Holy Spirit, come." **403, v.1 Like the Murmur of the Dove's Song**

"Veni Sancte Spiritus. Veni Sancte Spiritus. Holy Spirit, come to us. Holy Spirit, come to us." **406 Ostinato (repeated continuously)**

~ Pastor

LESSER FESTIVALS & commemorations

May 1

Philip and James, Apostles

Philip was one of the first disciples of Jesus, and called Nathanael to “come and see.” Little is known of James, the son of Alphaeus, called “the Less” to distinguish him from another apostle named James.

May 2

Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria, died 373

Best remembered for defending the teaching that Christ was fully God against those who taught otherwise, Athanasius was an influential church leader around the time of the Council of Nicea. He was banished from Alexandria five times for his forthright views.

May 4

Monica, mother of Augustine, died 387

Monica was married to a pagan husband who was ill-tempered and unfaithful, but whom she helped bring into the Christian faith. She repeated the influence on her son Augustine, who went on to become one of the greatest church teachers.

May 8

Julian of Norwich, renewer of the church, died ca. 1416

When she was about thirty years old, Julian (or Juliana) reported visions that she later compiled into a book, *Sixteen Revelations of Divine Love*, now a classic of medieval mysticism. The visions declared that love was the meaning of religious experience, provided by Christ who is love, for the purpose of love.

May 9

Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf, renewer of the church, hymnwriter, died 1760

When he was 22, a group of Moravians asked permission to live on Zinzendorf’s land. He agreed, and eventually worldwide Moravian missions emanated from this community. Zinzendorf participated in these missions, and is also remembered for writing hymns characteristic of his Pietistic faith.

May 14

Matthias, Apostle

Matthias was the apostle added to the Twelve after Jesus’ resurrection, as a replacement for the dead Judas Iscariot. He had traveled among the followers of Jesus throughout the Lord’s ministry. Formerly commemorated on February 24, Matthias’s celebration is moved to May 14 in agreement with most Western calendars.

May 18

Erik, King of Sweden, martyr, died 1160

Erik is considered the patron saint of Sweden. As king of that nation, he tried to bring peace in the region, and to spread Christianity in Scandinavia. He was also known for his attempts to make fair laws and to protect those who were poor or sick.

May 21

Helena, mother of Constantine, died ca. 330

Influenced by her son to become Christian, Helena (or Helen) lived an exemplary life of faith. She is also remembered for traveling through Palestine building churches on the sites she believed to be associated with Christ’s life.

May 24

**Nicolaus Copernicus, died 1543;
Leonhard Euler, died 1783; scientists**

These two men were both scientists who helped to explain the wonders of God’s universe. Copernicus is best known for promoting the idea that the sun, not the earth, is at the center of our solar system. Euler was one of the founders of pure mathematics, and contributed to many other fields.

May 27

John Calvin, renewer of the church, died 1564

John Calvin began his studies in theology at the University of Paris when he was fourteen. In his mid-twenties he experienced a conversion that led him to embrace the views of the Reformation. His theological ideas are systematically laid out in his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. He is also well known for his commentaries on scripture. He was a preacher in Geneva, was banished once, and then later returned to reform the city under a theocratic constitution.

May 29

Jiri Tranovský, hymnwriter, died 1637

Tranovský is considered to be the “Luther of the Slavs” and the father of Slovak hymnody. Trained at the University of Wittenberg in the early seventeenth century, Tranovský was ordained in 1616 and spent his life preaching and teaching in Prague, Silesia, and finally Slovakia. He produced a translation of the Augsburg Confession and published his hymn collection *Cithara Sanctorum* (Lyre of the Saints), the foundation of Slovak Lutheran hymnody.

May 31

Visit of Mary to Elizabeth

Sometime after the Annunciation, Mary visited her cousin Elizabeth. This occasion is sometimes referred to simply as “The Visitation.” Elizabeth greeted Mary with the words “Blessed are you among women,” and Mary responded with her famous song, the *Magnificat*. Luke’s gospel tells that even John the Baptist rejoiced and leapt in his mother’s womb when Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting. On this festival two women are seen: one, seemingly too old to have a child, bears the last prophet of the old covenant, and the other, quite young, bears the incarnate Word and the new covenant.

Source: www.sundaysandseasons.com

BEST WISHES . . .

MAY BIRTHDAYS!

Date | Member

- 2 Charlotte DeCola
- 3 Rudy Marnich Jr
- 4 Amy Reckner
Melissa DeCola
- 6 Debbie Rose
- 8 Bobby Brown
- 9 Paula Tomchak
- 10 Bob Bryan
- 14 Johnathan Endes
- 15 Abbey Rose
- 17 Nathan Reckner
- 20 Dale Cerar
- 23 Janey Zoltun
- 24 Bob Thompson
- 30 Mike Kinney
Paul Tomchak
Emilia DeCola
- 31 Jill Lescalette
Jacob Lescalette



MAY ANNIVERSARIES!

Date | Members

- 22 Debbie & Bill Whitfield
- 25 Cindy & Bob Stathers



. . . and blessings to all

got NEWS?

Let us hear from YOU !

If you have pictures, articles, or ideas to submit for the **JUNE** Newsletter, please contact the office or Pastor, or email office@alcpgh.com.

UPCOMING . . .

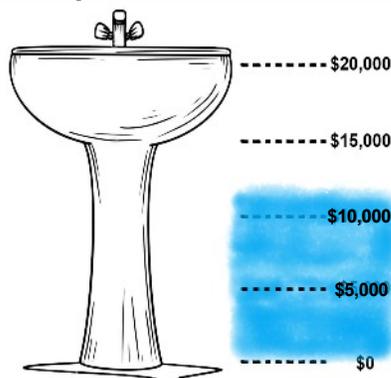
SUNDAY, MAY 2 - We return to **OUTDOOR WORSHIP** at **10:30 AM!** Should we be blessed with rain, the service then would be celebrated in the sanctuary.

Congregational Meeting Sunday May 2

At this meeting, a motion to begin work on the bathroom renovation will be presented. Our constitution requires that the congregation approves the expense if it is over a certain amount. The amount projected for the bathroom renovation is \$12,000. Please note that the total amount currently saved and reserved for the bathroom renovation is \$14,235; \$10,957 has been contributed by members and the remaining amount is what was left over from when our fellowship hall flooded. We still need your support in order to furnish the bathrooms once the work is complete.

Thank you for your continued support.

Keep those "OTHER" contributions flowing



The **Bathroom Renovation** offering has collected over **\$10,950** so far. Our goal is \$20,000.

Thank you for your continued generosity!



'CRUISIN WITH THE OLDIES'

. . . or the never-too-oldies!

After a very satisfying (*as in "I ate WAY too much"*) Lunch Bunch trip in April to the La Cucina Restaurant in Weirton, W.Va., the eleven "Bunchers" attending decided to build upon their success (and their waistlines) in May. So, on **Thursday May 20**, all who wish to embark on another culinary adventure will cruise to the Island (Neville Island, that is) for lunch at Carmody's Grille starting at 11:30 a.m. The totally renovated restaurant (formerly the old Neville Hotel) has received great reviews. If you would like to join the "cruise," please let Nancy Schreiber or Jerry Wessel know by May 15 so that your spot may be reserved. There's always room for more (but usually not much room for dessert) so c'mon and give us a try!

~ Jerry Wessel

Mother's
Day
Sunday,
May 9
Thanks, Mom!



ALC Council Meeting Highlights

Council meeting was held Tuesday April 13, 2021

- Yard sale and VBS to be discussed in June.
- Motion to hire Sophia Eager to replace Christie as church cleaner 01 May. All in favor. Jason (dad) abstains.
- Motion to move forward with engaging in the legal process to draft the necessary paperwork in order to bring the proposed merger of Good Shepherd with Ascension, pending council approval, to the congregation in order to work towards a congregational vote on the merger. 8 yes 2 abstains
- Motion to go to congregation with request for Wm. Rusnak proposal for bathroom renovations at \$7,810.00 material and labor. Total project cost not to exceed \$12,000.00. All in favor.
- **Congregational Meeting:** Sunday, May 2nd after the 10:30 service.
- **Next Council Meeting:** Tuesday, May 11 - 7pm



Happy 61st Birthday, Ascension Church!

Please join us
after the 10:30 service
on Sunday, May 16

as we celebrate
Ascension's birthday!

Cupcakes and drinks will be provided.



Ascension Choir - 1970s

Check out pages 6 & 7 of *The Messenger* to see more historic moments in the life of ALC!

REMINDER:
The last day of
Sunday School is
Sunday, May 23



Remember those who gave all



MEMORIAL DAY - MAY 31, 2021

CELEBRATING 61 YEARS

Oh - happy days at Ascension



On Sunday, June 4, a special "Mortgage Burning" dinner was given in the church Social Hall at Ascension Lutheran Church. Robinson Township. Sponsored by the Ascension Youth Group, the dinner, attended by members and friends of Ascension, celebrated a long-awaited event in any church—the official burning of the mortgage, signifying the retirement of the church's loans, and nearly only debt. As a special honor, charter members present at the dinner each had a hand in the mortgage burning by adding a piece of the mortgage to the continuing flames.

The retirement of the mortgage debt comes several years before it was actually due to be paid because of a special Mortgage Reduction program developed by the church's leadership a few years ago and backed solidly by the members' financial commitment. Deciding that the interest expense saved would be utilized for other development programs to minister to community needs, the program received overwhelming support through to its successful conclusion.

Ascension Lutheran Church, located at 300 Silver Lake, Robinson, was officially begun on May 22, 1960. Isaac Robinson, was the first pastor. The present building was with 109 charter members. The present building is the completed in late 1964 with major renovations to the

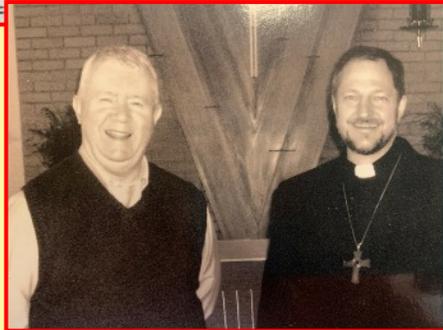
Continued on page 7

Marie Feitzg, Charter Member (1960) pictured burning Mortgage of Ascension Lutheran Church.



of Faith, Family, Fellowship, Fun!

Ken Maur - Forest Grove Lutheran Mission





*To be Christ's Disciples,
nurture our faith, serve God,
welcome our neighbors,
and joyfully share in His love.*

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PLACE
STAMP
HERE

