



PILGRIM LUTHERAN CHURCH

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*A Congregation in Mission, Community and Service*

# *PILGRIM'S PROGRESS*

**MAY 2023**

PASTOR: Rev. Ben Eder

SUNDAY SCHOOL: 9:00 AM

EDITOR: Mary Werth

TUESDAY BIBLE STUDY: 9:30 AM

ASSOC. EDITOR:

WORSHIP: 10:00 AM





Thursday, May 18<sup>th</sup>, is Ascension Day. On that day, we celebrate the Ascension of our Lord into heaven.

Forty days after he rose again from the dead, Jesus ascended into heaven. What does his ascension mean for us in the Church today?

First, it means that he rules in power and glory. By ascending into heaven, Jesus returns to the place from which he came. Jesus left heaven to assume our human nature and to live a holy, righteous life in our place. By doing so, he fulfilled the requirements of God's Law by submitting to the Law's demand for justice, which meant shedding innocent blood for the sin of the world.

When Jesus rose again from the dead in victory over sin, Satan, and the power of death, his entire Person rose. It was not merely a spiritual resurrection; it was also a physical resurrection.

On Ascension Day, the entire Person of Jesus went into heaven. His ascension into heaven is a bodily ascension.

The bodies of other religious leaders and philosophers still lie in their tombs. Not Jesus. Christ is risen! His tomb is empty!

So, that answers the question "Where is the body of Jesus?" Jesus is not dead, but living. His resurrected body is alive and well in heaven!

Although the resurrected Person of Jesus is in heaven, this does not mean he is restricted or limited to heaven. This was the argument between Zwingli (and later Calvin, the Reformed leaders) and Luther. Zwingli taught that since Jesus is in heaven his body cannot be present in the Lord's Supper (he argued it remains only bread, and Jesus is present only in a spiritual way). Luther, on the other hand, insisted that there is no limit to what God can do, and since Jesus said "This is my body" and "This is my blood" in connection with the bread and wine we must take him at his word. He is truly present "in, with, and under" the elements of the consecrated bread and wine for our forgiveness.

That brings me to the other highlight on the church calendar in May: the Day of Pentecost on Sunday, May 28<sup>th</sup>. Ten days after Jesus' ascension into heaven, the Holy Spirit came upon the Church. In doing so, he brings the presence of Jesus to anyone who calls upon his name in faith.

Although the ascension may seem like a sad day for the Church, it was for our good that Jesus left: thanks to the Holy Spirit, Jesus abides in the hearts of all who trust in him. He is with us now through his Word and the Sacraments, and will return in the fullness of his glory on the Last Day!

He who ascended into heaven will return in the same way.

Many blessings to look forward to in the month of May!



Carolyn Alessi

May 8

Tyrone Bryant

May 9

Jim Miller

May 16

Mark Eder

May 18



**Jokes only a mother could love**

**Why is a computer so smart?  
*It listens to its motherboard.***

**Why did you chop the joke book in half?  
*Mom said to cut the comedy.***

**Why do mother kangaroos hate rainy days?  
*Because their kids have to play inside!***

**What did the mother rope say to her child?  
*"Don't be knotty."***



## **ESTHER CIRCLE**

Our meeting this month will be **IN PERSON** at church on Monday, May 8th. at 12:30 pm. Women of Pilgrim are welcome to attend. We will be finalizing the plans for Linda's luncheon on Saturday, May 20<sup>th</sup> and discuss activities for the summer months and future fundraisers.

**REMINDER:** Dash's receipts go to Sue Holway; cancelled stamps to Sharon McGuan; old ink cartridges to Pat Watkins and mites (loose change) to Karen Smith. These collections all help support various mission projects. Thank you!

May is the month of Mother's Day! Let's give thanks and prayers to our dear mothers and all the mothers for their support and guidance throughout the years! God Bless!

Carol Obot & Sue Holway



## **Special dates**

National Day of Prayer, *May 4, 2023*

Mother's Day, *May 14, 2023*

Ascension Day, *May 18, 2023*

Armed Forces Day, *May 20, 2023*

Victoria Day (Canada), *May 22, 2023*

Pentecost, *May 28, 2023*

Memorial Day, *May 29, 2023*

**Order Now for Mother's Day !**



Terrilyn's premium nuts, decadent confections, savory snacks and tempting mixes are unlike anything you will find at your local grocery store. There is a range of 38 products to pick from.



All profits are used to support local charities such as Ken - Ton Meals on Wheels, Local Church Food Pantries, Lutheran Bible Translators, Lutheran Hour Ministries plus many others.

**Pilgrim Lutheran Church Terri Lynn's Webstore is contactless, safe, and easy!!**

<https://pilgrimesthercircle.terrilynn.com>

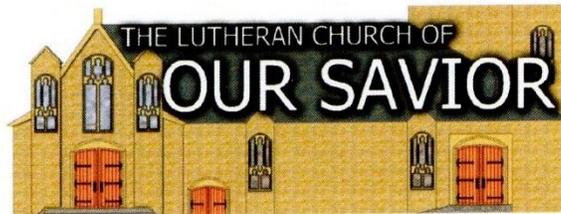


**2023 SUNDAY COUNTERS SCHEDULE  
Monthly Rotation**

	<b>MAY</b>
<b>LEAD COUNTER</b>	Carolyn Alessi
<b>COUNTER</b>	Ruth Whitmer
<b>COUNTER</b>	

**We still need a few more congregational members to help count offerings after Sunday Service, on a Monthly rotating schedule.**

**If you feel the calling to do so, please contact  
Carolyn Alessi, Dianne or Mike Wuerch.**

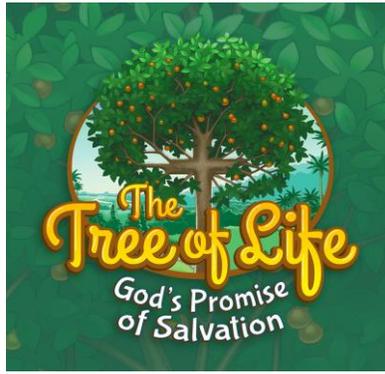


Our Savior Lutheran | 26 Brunswick Blvd Buffalo 14208

We are collecting donations to send monthly. The offering plate is on the bulletin table behind the back pew. All donation amounts are welcome.

**Saturday & Sunday Services or Online**

<https://secure.usaepay.com/pay/9nkt6jj6js3wnvhgb/2ZOkgt3>



## May Tree of Life Celebration

The final Tree of Life Sunday will be held on May 21st, beginning with Sunday school at 9:00 followed by worship and fellowship, instead of May 14th. We will be studying Revelation chapter 21 where God reveals more about the beauties of heaven, our eternal home. We learn about the place where the Tree of Life “flows from the throne of God and the Lamb, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month, the leaves of the tree for the healing of the nations.” Rev 22: 1-2

The VBS committee is praying that the Tree of Life series has been a blessing to those who attended the sessions and those worshipping on Tree of Life Sundays. Please plan on joining us at the Tree of Life!



## Come as you are

As a young pastor, Stan Purdum de-husked black walnuts one Saturday, not realizing his hands would be badly stained. They looked filthy, he recalls, and the marks would not wash off; they'd have to wear off. Then Purdum realized he'd be serving Holy Communion the next day.

Before distributing the elements, the pastor apologized to congregants, explaining that his hands were washed but just stained. Years later, Purdum reflected: “Now that I have a fuller grasp of theology under my belt, I think a better thing for me to say would have been, ‘Nobody comes to Communion with clean hands.’”

We're all unworthy to receive Jesus' body and blood, but that's exactly why he offers it. Thanks be to God for redeeming and forgiving us — wiping away the stain of our sins!

—adapted from *The Wired Word*

## Always with us

Forty days after Easter, we celebrate Jesus' ascension into heaven. This occurred 10 days before Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit descended on Jesus' followers, as he had promised.

Jesus' ascension reminds Christians that although his body couldn't remain present everywhere, we can universally experience his spiritual presence. In fact, Jesus' final words to his disciples — and to us — contain this key promise: "I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20, ESV).

### The Ascension challenge

Ever wonder what it might have been like to be a disciple when Jesus ascended into heaven? He gave them the monumental task of making disciples of all the world. Plus, they'd have to do it without relying on Jesus' physical presence, as they had until then. Were the disciples overwhelmed, uncertain, afraid?

Maybe, yet they went on to spread the gospel throughout the world nonetheless. They rose to the challenge because they fixed their gaze above as they watched Jesus disappear into the clouds.

When we follow that example, offering ourselves as willing servants and keeping our eyes trained on Jesus instead of our circumstances, there's no limit to what God can accomplish through us.

### Assurance of the Ascension

After the Resurrection, the risen Lord instructed his followers not to leave Jerusalem. It was there, Jesus said, that they would receive "the promise of the Father" (Acts 1:4, NRSV). What was that promise? It was that they would be baptized not with water but with the Holy Spirit.

Shortly after that utterance, Jesus was "lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight" (v. 9).

The Ascension reminds us that even though Jesus isn't physically present on earth, as the living Christ, he is as near as we allow him to be.

Jesus' Ascension offers us the assurance that God is now available to all people all the time. He lives as a guiding, loving Spirit in our midst.

## Prepare to be empowered

Contrary to common perception, Jesus' disciples weren't frightened and hiding during the 10 days between Ascension and Pentecost. Instead, they were actively preparing for the promised gift of the Holy Spirit. They "all joined together constantly in prayer" (Acts 1:14, NIV) and took steps to replace Judas.

After that inward focus, the disciples were ready to boldly burst forth on Pentecost, empowered and "enabled" (Acts 2:4) by the Spirit. They proclaimed Christ's death and resurrection, leading 3,000 people to faith that day, now known as the church's birthday.

"A great wave of faith and love swept through this newborn community," writes Suzanne de Dietrich in *Free Men*. "These Christians could not keep silent. Their joyful liberty had broken down all the walls behind which people would like to keep them; no prison could silence them."

## A shared experience

What comes to mind when you hear the word *Pentecost*? Many people think of a mighty wind, tongues of fire and multiple languages. But Acts 2 begins with another detail that's just as key: Jesus' disciples "were all together in one place." Because they were together physically and spiritually, the early believers didn't miss the life-changing, world-changing birth of the Church.

The pandemic, while changing our definition of gathering, also highlighted our need for interaction. If Jesus' first followers hadn't been assembled on Pentecost, they would've missed the outpouring of God's power and the indescribable joy God had for them. Think about what believers today might miss if we neglect to worship with other friends of Christ. Who would want to miss God's blessings, promises and joy?

## The wine of the Spirit

"No one puts new wine into old wineskins," said Jesus (Luke 5:37). Drawing on this statement, a preacher in sixth-century Africa proclaimed in a Pentecost homily:

"It was with good reason, then, that some people, when they heard the apostles speaking in every tongue, said, 'They are filled with the new wine.' For they had become fresh wineskins, they had been renewed by the grace of holiness, so that when they were filled with the new wine, that is, with the Holy Spirit, they spoke with fervor in every tongue. ...

"Celebrate, then, this day as members of the one body of Christ. Your celebration will not be in vain if you are what you celebrate, if you hold fast to the church which the Lord filled with his Holy Spirit."

Fifteen centuries later, may that call still resonate with us. May we be so renewed by God's grace as to be worthy vessels of the new wine of the Holy Spirit — and to share it with the world.

# Reaching the Homebound with God's Word

Lutheran Ministries Media, Inc. (DBA Worship Anew)

## About This Mission Grant

Lutheran Ministries Media reaches the homebound and aging with the life-saving message of the Gospel through the weekly broadcast ministry of Worship Anew. With an aging population, the need exists to have accessibility to faithful teaching and understanding of the Bible as taught in our creeds and Lutheran confessions. The broadcast currently reaches areas of New York, Georgia, Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, and Iowa. Lutheran Ministries Media wants to expand their broadcast area by securing on-the-air broadcast time on a new nationwide station and also enhance their online presence. The grant funds will be used to pay the broadcast fees and the internet expansion.



*Worship Anew has six regular pastors who appear on Worship Anew plus guest appearances from church leaders and the speaker of The Lutheran Hour. These homilies are about 10 minutes and bringing a message of comfort to those who hear. We find ourselves in extremely tumultuous times. It seems so easy to be filled with anxiousness and uncertainty. For those unable to attend church, this ministry is a source of great comfort. And even for many who still attend church, it is another great opportunity to be built up in the faith. This is why, even with the significant growth and success of Worship Anew, there is still an incredible challenge to reach people in many other areas around the United States, where the program does not currently go. Support from the LWML will be vital in ensuring thousands more each week will hear God's Word proclaimed on Worship Anew.*



*Worship Anew has come alongside many people in 2020 to proclaim the Gospel and thus strengthening faith through the work of the Holy Spirit. In these unique and trying times, viewers find such comfort in hearing the beautiful and much loved hymns as shared every week on Worship Anew. Pictured here is a men's chorus, another form of choir our viewers love to hear. And since every program is closed caption and all the songs are sub-titled, viewers also love to sing along to their favorite hymns if they are able.*



*Worship Anew is recorded at a state-of-the-art media center on the campus of Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana. In October of 2003 Ken Schilf, formerly the minister of Christian education at Holy Cross since 1985, became the executive director of Lutheran Ministries Media. Although Holy Cross Lutheran Church (Fort Wayne, IN) had been home to the ministry for more than two decades, the ministry's growth soon necessitated a move to a larger facility. An \$800,000 construction project soon began on Concordia Theological Seminary Campus in Fort Wayne, Indiana, funded by major donations from the Rossman and Wolf families, the Lutheran Foundation, and a Worship for Shut-Ins Global Mission Fund. On April 28, 2009, Lutheran Ministries Media broke ground on their new facilities: the Elsie Rossman Media Center and Wolf Chapel. The opening of the facilities was celebrated in October of 2010.*



## SHARING THE GOOD NEWS IN CHILE

A South American country nestled between the Andes Mountains and the Pacific Ocean, Chile encounters numerous social, economic, and political issues as well as high rates of anxiety, sadness, and safety concerns among its people. **LHM—Chile** uses a variety of programs and resources to share the Gospel with tens of thousands throughout the country.

- The potential reach through cell phones is huge. Through *SMS Messages of Hope*, LHM—Chile reaches hundreds each day. Patricia, a visually impaired woman whose children read the messages to her, says, "Thank you for these messages. They are incredibly wise and precise, often arriving at times when I needed them most." Ministry staff also distribute content through the popular *WhatsApp* application.
- Digital outreach continues to gain momentum for LHM-Chile through successful online seminars, presentations, and "talks." A recent session titled "Let's Talk About Mental Health" was watched by nearly 110,000 people. **Bible Correspondence Courses** are now offered digitally instead of as printed copies. *Who is Jesus?* is the newest online course in Chile (it will soon be adapted for use by other ministry centers throughout the region). This six-lesson course on the Gospel of Matthew immerses students in the Word of God to learn who Jesus is—"the Way, the Truth, and the Life."
- In the cities of Valparaiso and Viña del Mar, LHM supports a chaplaincy program in schools, with booklets, pamphlets, Bibles, and the Small Catechism and children's Bible books from Lutheran Heritage Foundation. Staff also lead presentations to parents about drug addiction prevention, teenage depression, and family violence. In just a single month, more than 1,600 printed copies of *Living with Optimism*, *Being Parents*, and *Educating for Life* were distributed at two schools.
- Holistic outreach plays a key role in LHM—Chile's ministry. "A Day of Health" takes place at the local Lutheran church. Health professionals volunteer to conduct blood pressure tests, verify oxygen concentration, and share information about potential health issues, while LHM staff and volunteers share messages of hope in Jesus with attendees and distribute topical materials to help improve their lives. A new "Reaching Our Neighbors" program allows LHM to set up a booth near the ministry center to share Christian materials and engage in conversations with thousands who come through the area each day by way of two subway/train stations. The goal is to build ongoing relationships to eventually connect these people with the church.





## JOIN LHF'S BOOK-A-MONTH CLUB!

Remember the days of the Record or Book-of-the-Month clubs? Each month, you eagerly awaited the newest arrival “personally selected for you.”

This Lenten season, we at LHF challenge you to join a new kind of book club – one where YOU provide Lutheran books to new Christians who eagerly await them!

How? By making regular, monthly gifts to LHF through the “Book-a-Month” Club.

On average, LHF prints 20,000 books per month at a cost of about \$5 per book. This April, LHF's featured Book of the Month is the Anyuak language *Child's Garden of Bible Stories*. Having just been printed, these books will now go to South Sudanese families living in refugee camps in Ethiopia or to others who have immigrated to the United States and Canada.

When you enroll in the “Book-a-Month Club,” you indicate how much you'd like to send to the LHF mission each month. As an example, \$10 per month may not sound like a lot...but by the end of the year, your LHF mission gifts will have combined to place Bible storybooks and *Small Catechisms* in the hands of 24 waiting children of God!

Your monthly, tax-deductible donation can either be a credit card charge or an automatic withdrawal from your bank account. You may cancel your enrollment in LHF's Book-a-Month Club at any time.

Each month, your receipt will include an update on a new book that is being printed and distributed!

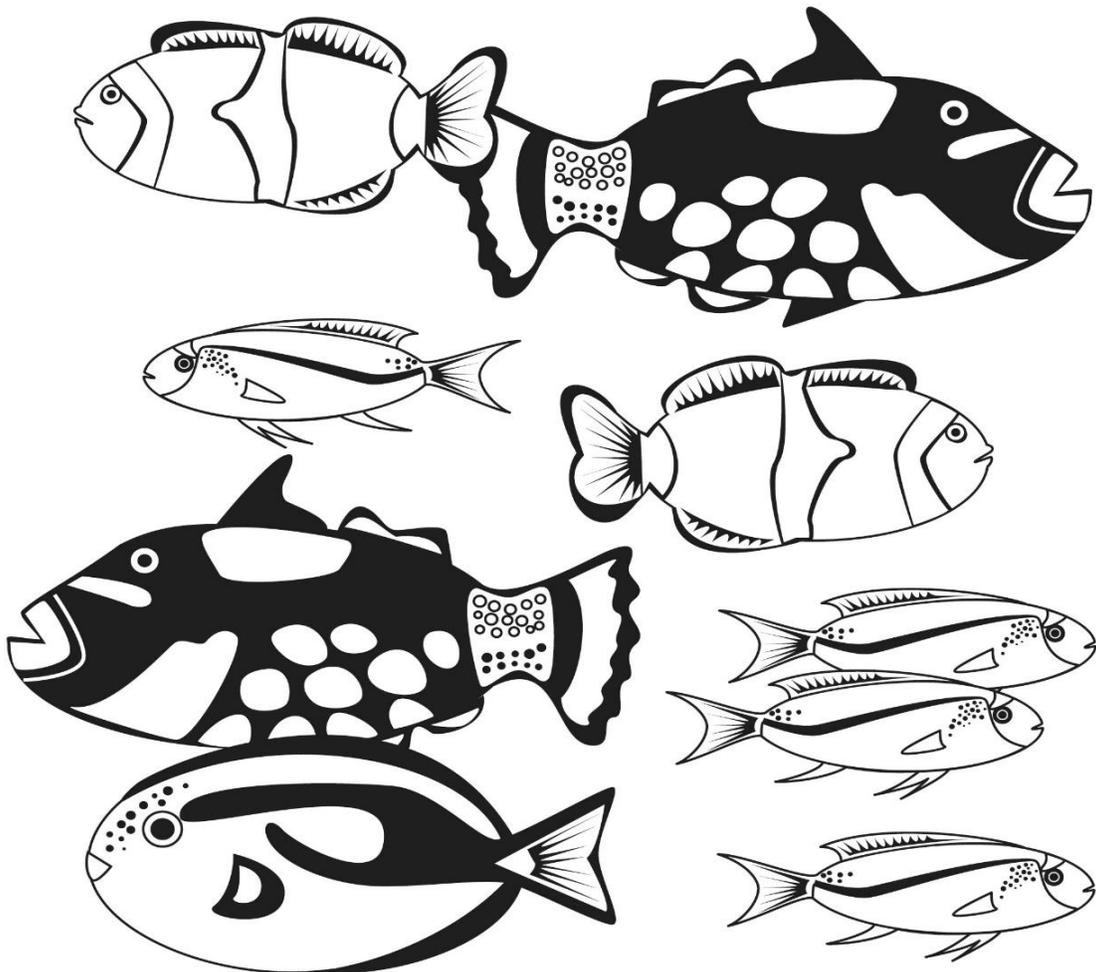
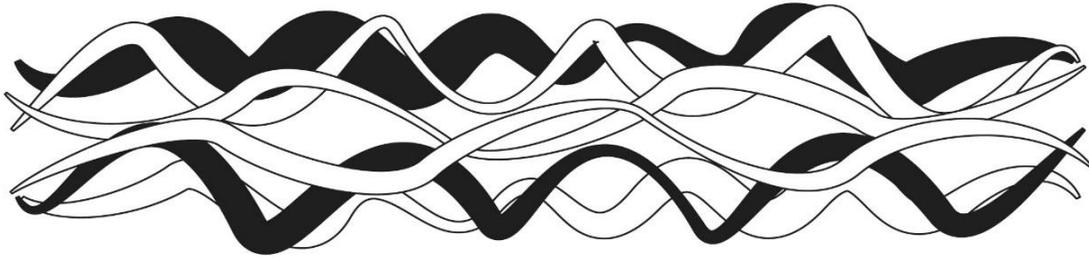
To enroll as a member of the Book a Month club, either:

1. [Click here to make your first online donation.](#) Under the “Recurring Gift” headline, simply click the box to “make this a monthly gift.” Then select which day of the month you'd like your gift to be made. That's all there is to it! You'll be automatically registered as a member of the club.
2. Print a hard copy of [this PDF](#) and fill out the Book a Month enrollment form. Then mail the completed form to LHF at 51474 Romeo Plank Rd., Macomb MI 48042. Done!



# COLORING PAGE

Enlarge, print and color this image.



**THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS FOR THE  
JUNE NEWSLETTER IS MAY 24<sup>TH</sup>.**