



PILGRIM LUTHERAN CHURCH

44 CHAPEL ROAD – KENMORE, NY 14217

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A Congregation in Mission, Community and Service

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

MAY 2017

PASTOR: Rev. Ben Eder

SUNDAY SCHOOL: 9:00 AM

EDITOR: Mary Werth

TUESDAY BIBLE STUDY: 9:30 AM

ASSOC. EDITOR:

WORSHIP: 10:00 AM



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.

The meaning of Christ's Ascension

In the days of Christ's earthly ministry, he could only be physically present in one place at any given time. The late Archbishop William Temple put it this way, “Only those could speak to him who came to where he was. If he was in Galilee, people could not find him in Jerusalem; if he was in Jerusalem, they could not find him in Galilee” (from Readings in St. John's Gospel).

Christ's Ascension means that, spiritually speaking, he is with us wherever we find ourselves. Christ desires to be present with us everywhere we go. His presence is universal. He is here now.

“Beloved in throughout the world, taken up in glory” (1 Timothy 3:16 NRSV). That is what the Ascension affirms.

I am with you always

The Ascension of Christ is celebrated 40 days after Easter. It focuses upon the ascent of Christ into heaven shortly before Pentecost.

The Ascension is important to Christians because it reminds us that while Christ's human body could not be present everywhere, Christ's spiritual presence can be experienced universally. St. Matthew's Gospel tells us Christ's last words to his friends were, “Remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:20 NRSV). And so Christ is!



SUNDAY SERVER SCHEDULE

MAY 2017

DATE ➔	May 7	May 14	May 21	May 28	
READER	Wes Wiers	Alec Ruby	Tyrone Bryant	Karen Smith	
USHERS	Eric Fellner * Gary Smith	Naomi George * Harvey Caldow	Peggy Clark * George Alessi	Mike Weurch * Dianne Weurch	*
COMMUNION ASSISTANT	Alec Ruby	Frank Alessi	Eric Fellner	Gary Smith	
NURSERY	Carol Obot	Ruth & Gabby O'Brien	Linda Eder	Peggy Clark	



Mysterious ways

Before pursuing a career as a Christian singer, Ryan Stevenson was a paramedic, encountering trauma and “true brokenness.” When he received a 911 call about a woman struck by lightning, Stevenson didn’t think she’d survive. But thanks in part to his efforts, the woman made a full recovery — and later struck up a friendship with him.

One day the woman asked Stevenson, “If you could be doing anything with your life, what would it be?” His answer? Music. She gave him a check for \$2,000, and he used it to cut an EP, which led to a record deal. Through Stevenson’s chart-topping song “Eye of the Storm,” he wants to remind listeners that God “hasn’t forgotten about us. He’s still paying attention to us no matter how horrible things might seem. He’s in control.”



Carolyn Alessi	May 8
Tyrone Bryant	May 9
Mark Eder	May 18
Peggy Clark	May 29
Gail Rodgers	May 30



May 11	Rob & Carol Gross
May 17	Frank & Carolyn Alessi



Willing recipients

A young graduate longed for a certain sports car and knew his dad could afford it. So on the big day, he was infuriated to receive instead a leather-bound, embossed Bible. He threw it down and left for good.

Years later, after his father died, the son entered his father's study with sorrow and regret. Sorting through belongings, he found the gift and this highlighted verse: "If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!" (Matthew 7:11, ESV). Suddenly something dropped from the back of the Bible: a key with a tag from the dealer of the car he'd wanted long ago. On the tag was his graduation date and the words "Paid in Full."

How often we miss out on God's generous gifts because they come "packaged" differently than we expect! At graduation — and throughout life — may we be open to every gift God bestows on us with a Father's deep love.



ESTHER CIRCLE

We thank all who bought and/or sold candles for our fundraiser. We realized a profit of \$195. The candles will be here before Mothers' Day. A special thanks to Diane Wuerch for chairing this event.

Our next meeting is May 8th at 6:30 p.m. All women are invited to come and check it out.

Upcoming events: May 28th –POT FAITH FELLOWSHIP HOUR

June 17th—BAKED GOODS SALE (Stay tuned for more details)

Please keep sending in Dash's tapes, canceled stamps, and mites (pennies). They do make a difference.

"The First Rosa" event at Pilgrim on Saturday, April 1st, was a success! Approximately 33 people attended. There were some from Nazareth, Our Savior, Hananiah and Pilgrim. We viewed the film and afterwards we broke into small groups for discussion. The Esther Circle provided a nice appetizing lunch. Many came to me saying they were happy to be invited and enjoyed the fellowship. I want to thank all those who helped and supported in this event, especially Carolyn Alessi for the technical set up, the Esther Circle and Pastor Ben.

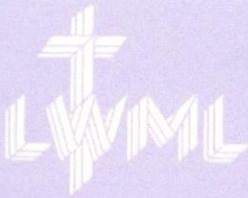
- Carol Obot



The next Community Dinner will be on Friday, May 5th, from 5 to 7 pm. Our menu is spaghetti and meat sauce, served with salad, bread and butter and assorted desserts and beverages. (This monthly dinner is sponsored in part by the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod.) Come and join us for great food and fellowship!



The Pilgrim Active Laymen (P.A.L.) will meet in the fellowship hall at Pilgrim on Saturday, May 20th, at 8:00 a.m. All men are welcome to join us.



News Release

Lutheran Women's Missionary League

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LWML Surpasses Mission Goal for 2015–2017 Biennium

ST. LOUIS, April 3, 2017—The Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML) announced the 2015–2017 Mission Goal of \$2 million was met and has been surpassed.

President Patti Ross shared, "Praise and thanksgiving to God! Through Mite Box offerings and generous responses to our Lord's blessings, LWML will be able to fund all 19 grants chosen by the Des Moines Convention in 2015. In humble adoration and with praise to our faithful God, we dedicate these dollars to Him for the work of missionaries and ministries around the world who work to spread the saving message of Christ's love and forgiveness."

Mission offerings sent with the postmark of March 31, 2017, will be applied to this mission goal, so a final accounting will be available in a few weeks.



Mite offerings, along with donations from other LWML supporters, will help continue to fund the mission grants which will be selected at the LWML Convention in Albuquerque, New Mexico, in June 2017. In addition to support through Mite Box offerings, you may also donate to the LWML in the following ways:

- Donate online at <http://www.lwml.org/donate-online> or by clicking on the "Donate" button on the LWML website;
- Electronic, automated mite offerings may be given at <http://www.lwml.org/joyful-response>;
- Donations to the endowment fund at <http://www.lwml.org/endowment-fund>;
- Planned gifts at <http://www.lwmlgiftplan.org/>;
- Searches and shopping on the web generate donations through Goodsearch at www.goodsearch.com or through www.goodshop.com;
- Purchases through an Amazon account generate donations at www.smile.amazon.com; and
- Thrivent members may direct Thrivent Choice Dollars® at www.thrivent.com/thriventchoice or by calling 1-800-847-4836.

Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML) is the official women's auxiliary of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Since 1942, the LWML has focused on affirming each woman's relationship with Christ, encouraging and equipping women to live out their Christian lives in active mission ministries, and to support global missions.

LWML news releases are available [on the LWML website](#).

Contact:

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Public Relations Director
Lutheran Women's Missionary League
pr@lwml.org

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3558 S. Jefferson Ave.
St. Louis, MO 63118-3910
800-252-5965 www.lwml.org



Lutheran Women's Missionary League

2015-2017 Mission Goal

\$ 2,000,000

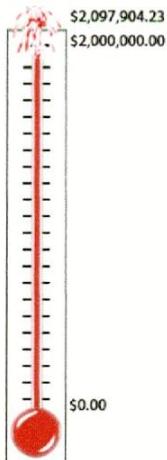


March 31, 2017 Report

Biennium Data

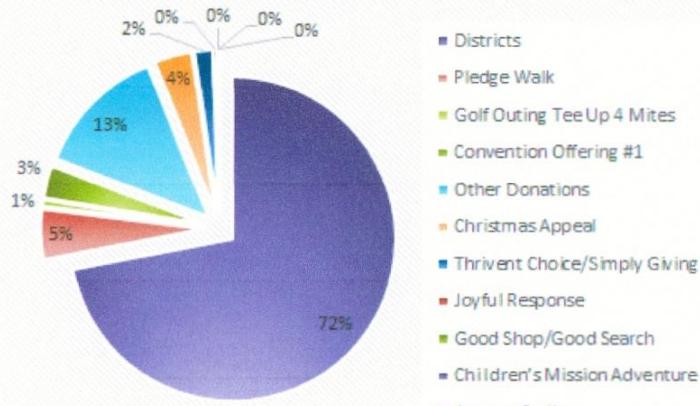
Total Mites Received:
\$2,097,904.23

**Overage of Mites for the
2017-2019 Mission Goal:**
\$97,904.23



Mites Sources

Mite Sources as of March 31, 2017



Districts	\$1,457,901.49
Pledge Walk	\$ 101,637.73
Golf Outing Tee Up 4 Mites	\$ 13,281.57
Convention Offering #1	\$ 65,549.61
Other Donations	\$ 265,528.24
Christmas Appeal	\$ 75,166.68
Thrivent Choice/Simply Giving	\$ 36,036.00
Joyful Response	\$ 8,300.00
Good Shop/Good Search	\$ 1,520.40
Children's Mission Adventure	\$ 303.84
AmazonSmile	\$ 1,334.65

Monthly Gifts Received to Support Our Mission Grants

Reporting Period	Mite Offerings Received	Over / Under Monthly Budget of \$83,333.33
April 2015	9,530.76	73,802.57
May 2015	34,205.17	49,128.16
June 2015	216,527.08	133,193.75
July 2015	72,544.40	10,788.93
August 2015	37,247.09	46,086.24
Sept 2015	34,345.63	48,987.70
October 2015	71,724.48	11,608.85
Nov 2015	68,329.24	15,004.09
Dec 2015	117,265.21	33,931.88
Jan 2016	131,488.78	48,155.45
Feb 2016	89,899.50	6,566.17
March 2016	80,377.27	2,956.06
April 2016	118,661.09	35,327.76
May 2016	65,555.51	17,777.82
June 2016	50,604.05	32,729.28
July 2016	65,016.41	18,316.92
August 2016	40,818.96	42,514.37
Sept 2016	54,918.48	28,414.85
October 2016	63,454.16	19,879.17
Nov 2016	115,027.64	31,694.31
Dec 2016	102,625.40	19,292.07
Jan 2017	85,274.72	1,941.39
Feb 2017	153,662.40	70,329.07
March 2017	218,800.80	135,467.47
TOTAL	\$2,097,904.23	\$ 97,904.23

And a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins [mites], which make a penny (Mark 12:42).



LUTHERAN HOUR MINISTRIES

www.lhm.org

THRED Outreach Launches: Join the Conversation!

Lutheran Hour Ministries' newest outreach ministry, called **THRED**, launched Feb. 1 and invites people of all beliefs—or no beliefs—into discussions about life, faith, and Jesus.

Mar. 2, 2017 — "I wish more people could sit down and talk about things like this with each other. I really think this world would be a better place if we could sit down and be rational and loving toward each other's individual views."



"Religion is a big passion of mine. As I reject all claims, I still find the topic very interesting."

"This is beautiful. The essence of tolerance doesn't mean we agree.... The essence of tolerance is respect."

"I love this! People with different ideals congregating peacefully and being open to listen to and understand each other's thoughts, feelings, and opinions on an otherwise controversial topic."

This is a selection of direct quotes from people of various backgrounds who all came together online to share in thoughtful conversation about life, faith, and Jesus.

This is **THRED**.

Lutheran Hour Ministries' newest outreach ministry, called **THRED**, launched Feb. 1. **THRED** is digital; its initial focal point is a [Facebook page](#). People of all beliefs—or no beliefs—are invited and welcomed into discussions about thought-provoking topics.

"That's why LHM has called this outreach **THRED**," says project lead Andrew Fitzgerald. "When people participate in an online discussion, it's called a thread. The whole idea of **THRED** is for it to be a safe place for people to converse about things they care about. And while **THRED** unapologetically presents a Christian point of view, it also presents an environment that is open to all perspectives."

"And," he adds, "we're seeing some surprising early reactions to it!"

The most striking example is the discussion generated by one of **THRED**'s "Jesus Dialogues" videos, posted Feb. 9 on the Facebook page. The video depicts roundtable chats by people with both Christian and non-Christian points of view on the topic, "What did Jesus say about heaven?"

"Viewers engaged in a big way," says Fitzgerald. "The post has had more than 66,000 views; more than 200 people—and they're not just Christians—have shared it in their own Facebook feeds. And the more than seventy comments in the discussion thread reveal some of the wide range of ideas people have about heaven."

For anyone who has questions or who desires to dig a little deeper into issues such as relationships, community, culture, God & Christianity, and a host of other contemporary issues, [THRED's website](#) publishes short and long articles on life and faith themes. **THRED** also has a presence on YouTube, where the ministry's growing collection of videos—including the "Jesus Dialogues"—is based. **THRED** has also recruited a team of ministry volunteers who can offer Christian perspectives in broad discussions—or in one-on-one conversations with participants who have specific questions.

"**THRED** is also designed to serve as a path, if you will," explains Fitzgerald. "Someone who engages with **THRED**'s content can move through **THRED** into closer and closer community with thoughtful people of faith. We envision **THRED** bringing Christ to the nations—and the nations to the church in whole new ways."

Want to know more about **THRED**? Visit www.facebook.com/ourTHRED (Don't forget to Like it!) and THRED.org.

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"Why don't streetlamps have ears?"

"Mom!" my 3-year-old self hissed at 6 a.m. "Why don't streetlamps have ears?" My mom later wrote (in a 1974 article) that she peered at me sleepily, silently asking a question of her own: "Seriously?!"

That year I amused — and exasperated — my parents with countless questions: "Why did sister leave one shoe here and one there?" "If God is up in heaven, how did he make the grass?" "Why are dandelions yellow?" To that query, Mom replied, "I guess that's how God wanted them" — and wrote, "In our house, we let God answer many of our questions."

I still have questions: Why is my dynamic young friend dying of cancer? Why are a parent's own children sometimes hard to love? How can we end war, poverty, sex trafficking? Should we donate money or save for college? How, exactly, does salvation work? Sometimes science or professionals are God's instruments to answer my questions. Sometimes answers come quietly to my heart — and sometimes they don't come at all.

Faith doesn't mean never questioning. It means trusting enough to ask, even when a question seems silly or pointless. Thanks, Mom and Dad, for teaching me by your loving example that God always welcomes my questions.

—Heidi Mann



Make this craft to display a bit of springtime year-round!

What you need:

- An old shirt
- Tempura paint (brown, dark pink, light pink and white)
- Paintbrush
- Light blue or white construction paper
- A paper plate
- Q-tips
- Paper towels



What you do:

1. Roll up one sleeve and paint your arm and the palm of your hand brown.
2. Lengthwise on the paper, carefully place your painted arm and hand, with fingers spread apart. (This is the tree trunk and branches.)
3. Place the other paint colors on the plate.
4. Using Q-tips, place dots of paint (blossoms!) all over the branches.
5. When dry, display your tree – or give it as a Mother's Day gift.

GOD CARES FOR YOU!

Jesus tells his followers not to worry about their daily needs.
What example does he give of God's care for his creation?

Directions:
To complete Luke 12:27 (NIV), match the shapes under each blank with the letter shapes shown to the right.

s	f	n
w	d	e
l	m	o
r		

“Consider how the wild
grow. They do not labor or spin.
Yet I tell you, not even
in all his splendor was
like one of these.” Luke 12:27, NIV

Answer: “Consider how the wild flowers grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these.” Luke 12:27, NIV

THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS FOR THE JUNE NEWSLETTER IS SUNDAY, MAY 28TH.