

February
2023

ASCENSION NEWSLETTER

"Have This Mind In You!" Phil. 2: 5

ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH

8888 County Rd 64

Daphne AL 36526

Church: 251-626-7500

School: 251-348-7510

Inside this Issue

Pastor's Letter 1

ACS Note 2

Sunday Worship 2

Word and World 3

Fundraising 3

Parish Nurse 3

Birthdays 4

Anniversaries 4

Why Lutheran? 4

Choir Resumes 4

Stewardship 5

Bible Studies 5

Men's Breakfast 5

Ash Wed.
(2/22) 5

Council 5

Stop, Look, Lis-
ten 6

Dinner of Life 6



MINISTRY
PARTNERS

I do not know who it was that said they began their day "with the Bible in one hand and the New York Times in another." It could have been one of America's great industrialists or a president of our country. It is good to know where such people gain their information because it shows up in the policies they make or the businesses they run. I can confess I, too, pay attention to news, national and local, "in one hand and my Bible in another" as well. It helps to know what is going on the world, but more importantly, what God has to say to us in His Word. Because of His Word I seek to pick and choose who I listen to as well as to whose written work I read. But I always seek to understand what others are saying through the lens of the Bible. In other words, from a biblical worldview... from how God looks at His creation.

Actually, as a Christian (and pastor on top of that!), I am not at liberty to place man's view above God's. Well, I am allowed, but God's Word has captivated me so that I dare not place man's view point above what God has said, especially when it is contradictory. This is because God's Word is His word to mankind so that we may know Him as our Creator: the One who has shaped and fashioned man and woman in His image; the One who has redeemed us from our sinful, fallen ways; the One who continues to call us by the Gospel and enlightens us with His gifts for serving one another. Again, we are instructed: **"Have This Mind In You...which was in Christ."** As we look to the life of our Lord Jesus, we know even from His birth how the devil and the world rebelled (continuously, too!) against this **"King of the Jews"** and yet, Jesus, submitting to the Father's plan as He took on human flesh, did not consider **"equality with God something to be grasped... but instead made Himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men."**

The apostle Paul describes what theologians call the humiliation and exaltation of Jesus as He obediently submits to death on the cross for our sins and raised from the dead and seated at the right hand of the Father who justifies those who believe. **"Have This Mind In You"** follower of Christ! In the book of Hebrews, the writer describes the motivation of our Lord when he says, **"for the joy set before Him, He endured the cross, despising its shame, and is seated at the right hand of God."** Heb 12: 2

This helps us to understand what motivated Jesus so that we, as His followers, are motivated and live by the same thing. God, seeing the darkness of men struggling with sin, sent (gave) His one and only Son into the world so that whosoever believes in Him would not perish but have everlasting life. We know this as John 3:16. By faith in Jesus and what He has done for us, we have everlasting life that begins in the here and now. **"Have This Mind In You"** is Paul's way of saying we, too, should see our humble estate. We, too, should see we have been fashioned as a servant. We, too, should, with the joy set before us, give of our lives as Jesus did so that others, too, would know Christ as Savior, be saved from their sin, enjoy the fellowship of God and His people, as they await an eternity in heaven as we do! This is the mind of Christ for us, in us and through us.

Maybe you are asking how this takes place? How does God make this happen (Phil 2: 13)? As we said last newsletter, worship, bible study and serving build us as God's people as we are kept by His Word. But even more pointedly, Paul leads us to the 4th chapter of Philippians, the 8th verse and tells us, **"Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, THINK about these things."** This tells us that what we pay attention will either lead us away from Jesus and God's Word, or bring us close to Him and what we know is true according to His Word.

"Have This Mind In You" we are admonished so that with the mind of Christ (the Word of God) we live in peace with God even as we serve where God has placed us. **"What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me - practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you."** Phil. 4: 9

In Christ service to you and for the advancement of His Kingdom always,

Pastor Ralph

Ascension Christian Pre-School

Happy February! Can you believe we celebrated 100 days of school last month? The children were so excited to learn that they were 100 days smarter! They celebrated the special day by making a snack with 100 items, doing 100 exercises, making towers with 100 cups and bringing 100 items from home to have on display for a 100 day museum. Thank you, members of Ascension, for supporting our school and helping us share the love of Jesus with our students for 100 days (so far) this school year!



This month, we will host an Open House on Friday, February 10 from 4:30-6:30 for current students as well as students for the 2023-2024 school year. If you have friends or neighbors with children, encourage them to stop by and check out our preschool program. Felicia has done a great job creating a flier for the event. Fliers are available on the table in the Narthex. Please share!

February is a special time of year to celebrate love and friendship. The preschool children will be busy making valentines to exchange with peers and family members as well as extra-special valentines to share with shut-ins within our congregation.

Sally Norton



Officers

John Peterson, President
Richard Tellman, Vice-President
Alex Norton, Treasurer
Ruth Partain, Recording Secretary
Kathy Schulz, Financial Secretary

Directors

Evangelism, Open

Education, Jean Canupp

Stewardship, Open

Fellowship, Marian Bencke

Grounds and Board of Properties,
Greg Nichols

Public Relations, Open

Cynthia Tellman, Parochial
School Board Chair

Youth, Open

Elders

Jim Partridge
Michael Schulz
Randy Kirk



February Worship Themes

February 5 – "You Are..."
February 12 – A Good Confession
February 19 – A Deeper Glimpse
February 26 – "If You Are..."

Parish Nurses Note

Spring is coming and with it comes spring cleaning and National Clean Out Your Medicine Cabinet Day! The perfect time to get rid of expired or unused medication. This includes vitamins, supplements, and topical medications.

After reaching the expiration date, medications might not be effective, but a few (one is the antibiotic tetracycline) may even be toxic.

It's important to dispose of medication properly due to potential harm to the environment. DisposeMyMeds.org has a locator for local pharmacies that take unused or expired medication.

Another option is to crush or pour medication into a resealable bag. Fill the bag with unappealing or unappetizing material like kitty litter, coffee grounds, or dirt. This will discourage persons who may find it from keeping it for use.

Do not flush medications down the toilet. Waste water treatment plants are not equipped to remove pharmaceuticals from waste water and the medication can be harmful to the public and the environment.

It's also a good practice to remove all personal identifying information from the bottle or package, to keep your medical information private.

Still have a mercury thermometer? Mercury is a hazard to the environment and needs to be disposed of as a hazardous material. Baldwin County accepts household hazardous waste from Baldwin County citizens for a small fee, or take advantage of their amnesty day on the first Saturday of March. Locations are Bay Minette Transfer Station: 4291 Nicholasville Rd, Bay Minette, AL and the Magnolia Landfill: 15140 County Rd 49, Summerdale, AL. For more information about expired medications visit poison.org or call Poison Control at 800-222-1222.

Sonja Kirk

The Word and the World

Psalm 42:11-"Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God."

We can sympathize with King David as we read this psalm. The world we are experiencing at present is offering very little reason for hope. Almost everything we were taught in school and church as we were growing up is being challenged by society. We understood from the Bible that the world would end one day, but the speed and drastic nature of our decline is quite alarming. But as David said in the psalm, I will again praise my God. God has not lost control or changed his plan. Jesus came to earth to offer eternal life and forgiveness to his followers. The world has turned its back on this gracious gift of God and we are witnessing what happens to mankind when they rely on their own understanding and intelligence. Jesus reassured his disciples who were having this same anxiety. "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."-John 16:33

Gary Kinne

Fundraising Information

Can you believe January has passed by so quickly? And now, we would like to thank you once more for your constant prayers and support for Ascension Christian School. We hope you enjoyed your "thank you" cookie and decorated heart card made by the school children.

Our next fundraising event will be a FISH FRY DINNER on Saturday, March 18th, here at the church. The price will be \$10.00 per plate, including fish, 2 sides, bread, and homemade dessert. Plates will be available for pick up only and ready at 12:00 noon. But the meals will be purchased with a ticket and pre-paid before this date. Please help us sell these \$10.00 tickets to family, friends and anyone interested in a plate of yummy food! The tickets will be available for you to purchase your own meals and to sell to others. These tickets will be available on Sunday, February 19th, so plan to grab some and sell as many as you can before March 10th! All monies and unsold tickets must be turned in by the 10th so food can be purchased for this event!

We would love to have your help too! We need bakers to make brownies or cookies; baggers to zip up single serving desserts and bread; fry crew to season, bread, and fry fish; servers to fill take-out plates; ticket takers to collect tickets; delivery crew to deliver to vehicles; and clean-up crew to clean the area when it is all over. We will need YOU!! A sign-up sheet will be available on the narthex table on February 19th. Any questions, call Lynn Nichols 251.597.4577 or contact a school board member.³ Blessings to all!

Why Have a Lutheran School?

With the formation of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, it was a requirement to be a member congregation of the Synod to provide a Christian education for their children. Public schools were not established, and Sunday School was yet to be widespread. It was up to parents to educate their children, and the congregation was expected to play a role. In many cases, the school was the first structure built, and the church came later. Lutheran education keeps scripture at the center and teaches students about the world around them. A Lutheran education helps develop a student's mind, body, and spirit, all admirable past, present, and future goals.

Today enrollment in public schools is declining, according to edweek.org, while parochial and private school enrollment is increasing. Many parents of our students are asking if we will add future grades to our school because they like our program and want their children to continue attending the school where their education experience begins. The Ascension Parochial School Board is looking to the future needs of our students and is working on a plan to grow our school. Therefore, we asked the congregation at the November Voters' meeting and were granted permission to set up an Educational, Multi-use Building Fund for future expansion.

Lutheran schools nurture children daily in the Gospel. Children learn God's Word through Bible Stories, modeling their teacher's faith, and weekly Chapel with Pastor. Our staff exemplifies servant and spiritual leadership by sharing their faith with their students daily. Mrs. Sally, Mrs. Carol, Ms. Felicia, and Miss Grace share a passion for our school ministry and their love of Jesus with the children. It is a beautiful experience to share a day in the classroom, watch the interaction between the children and teachers, and feel the love around you.

Ascension Christian School is committed to sharing Jesus with our students and parents, and our staff is doing an excellent job. We invite you to visit our classrooms and see what you have helped make possible for yourself. We are "Sharing God's Love Through Christian Education" with your financial support and prayers; thank you!

Cynthia Tellman

[Public School Enrollment Continues to Stagnate \(edweek.org\)](http://edweek.org)



It's not too late for me to wish all the members of Ascension Lutheran Church a Happy New Year and to express my appreciation for the generous monetary Christmas gift I received. Also, I would like to thank the choir members for their kind words on the beautiful Christmas card and for their musical efforts during the past three months. Choir rehearsals will resume on February 19 in preparation for Easter on April 9. An invitation is extended to all who would like to join this hard-working, fun-loving and dedicated group of people!

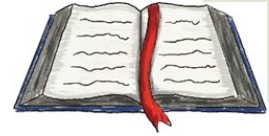
Vincentine

Cindy Segers	February 2
Brett Suits	February 8
Willis Cannon	February 12
Gary Kinne	February 16
Jim Pitts	February 19
Peter Bencke	February 22

Bill & Darlene Kieninger	February 21
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SOMETHING FOR ALL OF US!

Bible Study Opportunities



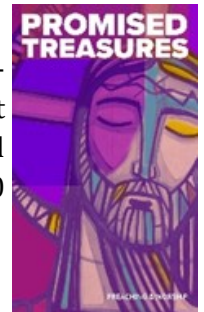
1. Sunday Adult Bible will focus on the sermon message. We meet in the sanctuary. Children meet in their respective rooms in the south hallway! If you have children, grandchildren, now is the time for their confirmation instruction! The Bible Survey (1st year) has just begun so help them get in on the ground level! Contact pastor or Jean Canupp for more info!

2. The Wednesday Morning Bible Study We are still working our way through Genesis. Invite a friend and fill your spirit! 9-10:30am



3. The Men's Breakfast is on February 11. We will begin using some new material from a book called, "Thirty Virtues That Build a Man". As Christ followers we grow in His grace by practicing what He calls us to be and do. Perfect? No. But more effective as a Christian witness? See 2 Peter 1: 3ff Yes! Invite friend, enjoy the food and fellowship, and find a blessing as you do!

4. Ash Wednesday – On February 22 we begin the Lenten season. This season's midweek emphasis will be Promised Treasures. Each week we will look at Biblical descriptions such as "salt and light", "ashes and dust" and others to help understand the Christian journey of grace and salvation. Join us on Wednesdays at 11am or 7pm for worship. Services are usually 35-40 minutes long.



5. February Stewardship Corner –

"Stewardship is the joyous activity of the Christian in service to the Kingdom of God."

"Nineteen centuries ago the Savior wept when He beheld His city. It knew not the things that belonged to its peace. What must be in His heart when He sees what ignorant and awful fools men are today!" so begins The Chief Steward in 1951 that describes the desire to help the clergy help his church of that day to respond with the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the spiritual needs of that day. Is it any different today? No, in fact, in our day the spirit of 'live and let live' has blossomed into 'approve and applaud' the diligent efforts of darkness so much so that on all fronts, family, education, work, economy and government, the



Church is assailed, pushed back and cancelled out! And yet, is it not in times such as this that God's people, refreshed by a closer look at God's help in His Word to have a greater hope and know that our purpose for life and living against the powers of darkness are even greater than ever? That is because victory over sin, death and the devil have been won by our Jesus, the Son of God, who sits and reigns over all things for and with His people. So, my friend, we do not despair, but rather rejoice in the opportunities each of us has to make a significant contribution in

our efforts to "make disciples of all nations" beginning in our own "Jerusalem", Daphne, Alabama. **Your time, talent and resources continue to make an impact for Christ' kingdom in the here and now for then and there! Thank you!**

6. The Church Council, in its next few monthly gatherings, will be gearing up for a strategy/planning session with a district representative. The goal is to have 5 and 10 year plans to help Ascension make the most of our opportunities and resources. There may be a congregational survey given out for your input so that we are able to make wise decisions on behalf of the congregation. Please pray and participate as you are called upon. Thank you.





Lenten Signals

Why should we observe Lent? This 40-day season of repentance and reflection that begins on Ash Wednesday has three important purposes. Lent helps us STOP, LOOK and LISTEN.

We observe Lent because it tells us to STOP and rest awhile — and to stop sinning. Lent tells us to LOOK inward for an honest self-examination, to look upward to see the cross of Jesus with healing and love, and to look forward to the hope of the Resurrection. And we observe Lent because it tells us to LISTEN — to the voice of God, the words of Christ and the movement of the Holy Spirit.

STOP, LOOK and LISTEN! These commands that are so crucial for travel safety are also important for our journey through Lent. (See page 5 for service times and theme for our consideration.)

The River of Life

The Red River of the North, in the north-central U.S. and central Canada, takes countless twists and turns. A close-up aerial photo or map shows its frequent sideswipes and U-turns. One could cross the river several times without changing direction while hiking or biking along the border between Minnesota and North Dakota. You might wonder at points if it has completely turned back south — which raises another point: While most rivers flow south, the Red River flows north.

Sometimes life meanders, but that doesn't mean we're off course. Sometimes we seem to be going in the opposite direction of most people, but that doesn't mean we're not headed the right way. Sometimes it feels like it takes us a long time to make progress, but that doesn't mean we're not moving. We might just be taking in more of life's scenery! Follow your own unique trajectory, letting God, the creator of all rivers and all life, serve as the current that moves you ever onward.



Ascension Lutheran Church
8888 County Road 64
Daphne, Alabama 36526

*We are a congregation committed to the Gospel of Jesus Christ reflected
in our ministries of worship, learning, care and outreach to our community.*