

# ASCENSION NEWSLETTER

June  
2026

ASCENSION  
LUTHERAN  
CHURCH

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## Inside this Issue

Pastor's Letter	1
Ascension Christian School	1
Birth/Anniv.	3
Puzzle	3
Worship Themes	
Community	4
Elder - LCMS	
school growth opportunities	4
Sunday and More	5
Stewardship	5
Catechism Corner	5
Fellowship -	6

*"..., but in Him (Jesus) it is always, "Yes." 2 Corinthians 1:19*

There are certainly a lot of rules, do's and don'ts, a lot of yes's and no's floating around: In your house, rules are established for peace; in your work, rules for efficient productivity; in school for adequate learning; driving on roadways for safe passage; how we engage with the neighbor, family, friends, etc. All kinds of yeses and no's, do's and don'ts that are intended to help us for our good, safety and peace!

There are a lot of rules (many unwritten) in the church whereby we ought not break for fear of overstepping boundaries, sinning and disrupting our peace and tranquility. But... and listen carefully: there is a place when a Christian is inspired by an idea for a life or ministry endeavor that more than likely has the stamp of God's "Yes, go for it!" In Paul's letter to the Roman Church, he makes the point that the doctrine of belonging to God (salvation) does not come about by following rules and regulation of the church, but only through faith in the finished work of our Lord's suffering and dying on the cross for our sins. And as **"He was raised from the dead, so too, we have new life."** (Romans 6: 4) This is what places us in the family as born-again believers in the one true God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

In this 2<sup>nd</sup> book to the Church in Corinth, Paul says the life of the Christian is not a yes or no kind of life as far as permission to do or not to do a particular kind of work in or out of the Church. But having been filled with the Spirit to believe God's Word and be inspired by it, a Christian has the permission to pursue life under the blessing of God with the gifts, and the means God has given the believer. Now, this is not a free-for-all to do anything we want at the expense of others, in our homes, work or church. God gives us permission to meet opportunities for good as divine appointments whereby His grace (blessings) can abound in goodness for all. It doesn't mean it will be easy or that no sacrifice is needed. In fact, it will probably require a lot of sacrifice. But then, when you are inspired by God it will not be seen as a sacrifice, only what God has prepared in advance for you to do!

Continued page 2 --->

## **Ascension Christian School Director -**

Hello everyone!

My name is Samantha Chauvet, and I am so excited and honored to be part of both the school and church family at Ascension. It truly feels like such a blessing to be surrounded by such kind and welcoming people, and I look forward to getting to know everyone better in the months ahead. I am excited to see all that God has planned for this school and community, and I feel grateful to be part of something so special.

I have always had a heart for children and feel deeply called to serve in this role as director. I love organization, creativity, and creating environments where children feel loved, safe, and encouraged to grow. While I certainly strive to do my very best each day, I also believe in grace, learning, and growing together as a team. I am passionate about building strong relationships with both students and families, and I believe communication, kindness, and teamwork are such important parts of creating a positive and nurturing school environment.



More on page 2 --->



(Continued from Page 1)

In chapter 1, verse 20, Paul says of this “yes”, **“For no matter how many promises God has made, they are “Yes” in Christ.”** The promises of God for our good and blessing always signifies His “yes” to us, His acceptance of us, His provision for us, His work for our good, His prospering, benefitting, blessing, etc. is all found in Jesus, His Son! There isn’t anything that is off limits for the Spirit inspired thoughts that prompt you into action. Paul says in Philippians 2: 13 that **“for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.”** So as God works in you, giving you the desire to serve/work for Him Paul continues, **“Do everything without complaining or arguing,<sup>15</sup> so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe<sup>16</sup> as you hold out the word of life...”**

Can you see where God’s “yes” comes in? It’s His yes to you when faith in His Son has entered your heart, His yes as His child to gift you with inspiration and skill to be a blessing to others, His yes to you as He prepares a place for your eternal abode. In Christ, it is not yes or no, but only yes! His yes is a gift to you, for you, in you and through you! You might say it’s an offer too good to refuse and it is and we do... yet His forgiveness always shows His faithfulness to complete that which He started so long ago. (Phil. 1:6) May His work continue to inspire you as He enables you to live it out! Amen

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

Pastor Ralph

**New Director!** (Continued from page 1)

My husband, Julien, and I moved to America from South Africa nearly seven years ago after he was offered an opportunity in the steel industry. Julien is truly the kindest man I know and one of God’s greatest blessings in my life. He has an incredible gift for fixing and building just about anything—from intricate vintage radios to massive earth-moving machines. He is always creating, tinkering, and finding solutions. He is currently beginning an exciting new journey in home renovations alongside a business partner, and I know great things are ahead for him.

We have two beautiful children who keep life exciting and full of joy. Our son, Jordy, is our football-loving boy with a strong and determined spirit. He recently earned the “Workhorse of the Team” award, which perfectly describes his hardworking and fearless personality. But beyond that strength, he has such a soft and caring heart. He loves the Lord deeply and dreams of becoming a pastor one day after football!

Our daughter, Savannah, is our little firecracker and definitely the boss of the family! She is creative, caring, funny, and full of personality. We joke that she may become an interior designer one day because she is constantly rearranging things around the house. While she can be shy in public, at home she keeps us laughing nonstop with her sweet sense of humor.

We also have a beloved dachshund named Rosie, whom we often call our third child. She has completely stolen our hearts and loves running alongside our golf cart while we ride through the neighborhood. Our home is never quiet between Rosie, the kids, and Jordy’s leopard gecko, Tofu—who I never expected to love as much as I do!

In my spare time, I love creating art and spending time in my art room at home. It has become such a peaceful and healing space for me, where I can be creative, reflect, and spend time with God. I also enjoy long walks, family time, and recently started learning to play golf. My dad was actually a golf pro, although I definitely did not inherit his professional golf skills! Still, we absolutely love spending time together as a family.

Life has brought both beautiful blessings and seasons of deep loss, but through it all, I truly believe God had a plan in bringing our family here to Daphne. There is something so special about this place—the breathtaking sunsets, the green landscapes, the warmth of the people, and the strong, faith-filled community. This town has been incredibly healing for my heart, and I feel so grateful that God planted our family here! S C

## Officers

John Peterson, President  
Richard Tellman, Vice-President  
Alex Norton, Treasurer  
Joyce Hanley, Recording Secretary  
Open, Financial Secretary

## Directors

### **Evangelism, Open**

Jean Canupp, Education ,

### **Stewardship, Open**

Marian Bencke, Fellowship,

Greg Nichols, Grounds and Board of Properties,

### **Public Relations, Open**

Jordon Kotowske , Parochial School Board Chair

### **Youth, Open**

## Elders

Tom Hanley

Peter Bencke

Michael Schulz

Tom Wilkens



## Anniversaries and Birthdays

Anniversaries	
Les and Lisa Donner	June 13
Peter and Marian Bencke	June 15
Charles and Nancy Powell	June 17
Tim and Sharlene Lutz	June 25
Birthdays	
Elizabeth Scully	June 6
Sharlene Lutz	June 17
Teneille Dawson	June 25
Julie Scheider	June 25
Greyson Kotowske	June 30

Attention all,

It is that time of year when church lawn requires mowing on a weekly basis. Some of you have already mentioned that you would be interested and I would like to set up some kind of schedule so we know who is coming when. I plan to set up a sign up sheet on hallway bulletin with dates/yard area for your convenience.

Thank you everyone,

Gary Rapp



## A Child's Favorite Word

A 6-year-old boy attended a church conference with his parents. After listening for a short while, he began to fidget in his seat. To help him settle down, his mother handed him a notepad and pencil and suggested he make a mark every time the speaker said the word "and."

Before long, the boy grew restless again. "Would you like to listen for a different word?" his mother whispered. "Yes," he replied. "I'd like to listen for 'Amen.'"

# Puzzle!

## One of a Kind

The scrambled words and phrases below are all drawn from Scripture. Unscramble each one to reveal the correct biblical term or phrase. After solving them, transfer the circled letters in order to the lines at the bottom of the page to uncover the final message.

- eiVn \_ \_  \_
- ilLy fo teh elaVly

\_ \_ \_ \_ \_  
 \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

- abLm fo dGo \_ \_  \_

- estMar \_ \_ \_ \_  \_

- eJuss \_ \_  \_

- okRc \_  \_ \_

- rdBea fo eiLf \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

- higLt fo hte dorWI \_ \_  \_ \_

- voaSir \_ \_ \_ \_  \_

- doLr \_ \_ \_  \_

- ishCrt \_ \_ \_ \_  \_

- ehSprhed  \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

- hTe doWr \_ \_ \_ \_  \_

- rncPie fo cePae \_ \_ \_  \_ \_

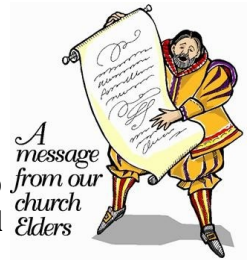
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**What do all these words have in common?**

Answers: Vine; Lily of the Valley; Lamb of God; Master; Jesus; Rock; Bread of Life; Light of the World; Savior; Lord; Christ; Shepherd; The Word; Prince of Peace; Names of God's Son

## School and Church Leaders Discuss Tax Credit Potential

From the January 2, 2026 Reporter



The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod recently gathered leaders from across the country to discuss a major new opportunity for Lutheran schools created by the **One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA)**, a federal law passed in 2025. This law has the potential to significantly expand access to Lutheran education — including for families in our own congregation and community.

### What the OBBBA Does

Beginning in **2027**, individuals can receive a **federal tax credit up to \$1,700** when they donate to a **Scholarship Granting Organization (SGO)**. For most taxpayers earning over \$50,000, this donation is essentially “**free**” — it redirects tax dollars they already owe. These donations fund scholarships for students to attend private schools, including LCMS schools.

### Who Can Receive Scholarships

Children are eligible if: They could enroll in public school, and Their household income is below **300% of the area median income**. Scholarships can cover: Tuition; Books and curricular materials; Tutoring; AP tests; Special-needs therapies; Other educational expenses.

### Why This Matters for Our Ministry

LCMS leaders believe this program could dramatically increase access to Lutheran education. Evidence from Iowa — where similar state-level scholarships were introduced — shows **significant enrollment growth** in LCMS schools, even prompting building expansions. This could mean: More families able to choose a Christ-centered education; Stronger enrollment for our school; Expanded mission opportunities; Greater long-term stability for Lutheran education nationwide

### Important Notes

States must opt in each year, but even if a state opts out, residents can still donate to SGOs in other states and receive the tax credit; The program does **not** reduce public school funding, since it relies on **private donations** and **federal tax credits**, not state or local school budgets; Public school students can also receive scholarships for tutoring, transportation, and other educational needs.

### What Congregations and Schools Need to Do

2026 will be a **critical preparation year**: Establish SGOs in each LCMS district; Educate members about “no-cost giving”; Prepare schools to receive and distribute scholarship funds; Ensure no available funds go unused — which could threaten the program’s future

### The Opportunity Before Us

The LCMS operates the **largest Protestant school system in the country** — nearly 2,000 schools serving 170,000 students. Leaders are urging congregations to “seize the moment” and prepare for what could be a transformative decade for Lutheran education.

### The Word and the World - I Samuel 12:22-23

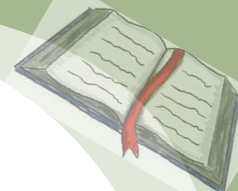
“For the Lord will not forsake his people, for his great name’s sake, because it has pleased the Lord to make you a people for himself. Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by ceasing to pray for you, and I will instruct you in the good and the right way.” All is not lost. The world is racing toward its eternal destruction. We, however, are the children of God, a people he has made for himself. We still continue to pray for the lost and instruct them in the good and right way.



Yours in Christ, Gary Kinne

# Sunday and More !

1. **Sunday Adult Bible** focuses on the current worship lessons. Children Sunday School meets in their respective rooms in the south hallway! The Sunday School teachers stand at the ready to love, teach and instruct the younger folks! Contact Jean Canupp for more info!
2. **The Wednesday Morning Bible Study**- We are starting a new study in **2 Corinthians**. Study Guides are available. Please join us. It is never too late to jump in! We meet at 9:00 am in the Narthex.
3. **Men's Breakfast New Time!** – June 13 at 8am. We will continue in our Missionary Pathways Discovery Bible Studies.
4. **June Stewardship Corner** – *“Stewardship is the joyous activity of the Christian in service to the Kingdom of God.”*

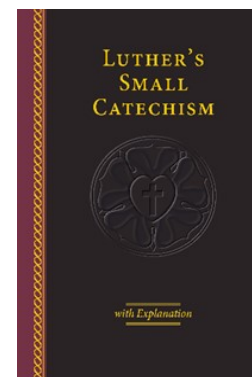


**“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”** Matt 6: 21

“Time, talent and treasure, o my! Time, talent and treasure, o my!” If we were Dorothy on our way to the kingdom of God rather than the Emerald city, we might make such a statement found above! This would be in keeping with the recognition that all things come from the gracious hand of our Father. The Wednesday Bible Study is working through 2 Corinthians. In the eighth- and ninth-chapters Paul encourages and speaks of generosity as a fruit of God’s working in our lives. He says this of the Macedonian church: **“Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity.”**

Unlike the church located in wealthy Corinth, this was a poor church without all the resources of a well to do city. And yet, God put it in their heart to give towards the need of those in Jerusalem suffering from a famine. They **“pleaded for the privilege of sharing”** the reason being Paul says – **“they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us in keeping with God’s will.”** Because of God’s generous grace in the Lord Jesus Christ, they had come to faith and sought, despite their circumstances, to honor the Lord above and beyond their capacity! They demonstrated in a very tangible way, through their poverty, that God supplies for all our needs, even the need to give, support and assist others in their time of need. God does this, as Paul says in the ninth chapter, **“..so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.”** This is the result of our generous God and Savior, Jesus Christ from whom we have eternal life, and more than we need for unselfish purposes in the life we live now! Only God can do this with the heart He holds in His hands!

5. **As we open our Luther’s “Small Catechism”**, we read these words, “as the head of the family should teach them in a simple way his household”. We have been through the 10 Commandments, the articles of the Apostles Creed and now The Lord’s Prayer. In the catechism we learn from the explanations to the Seventh petition *“but deliver us from evil (the evil one)* that we need God’s protection from the devil himself. He is the author of all evil that seeks whom he may devour. Jesus says of the devil in Luke 10: 10, **“the devil has come to steal, kill and destroy.”** No wonder we have in this prayer a specific petition to counter the work of the devil. We pray in this petition that our heavenly Father *rescue us from the devil, and all evil which has come into the world because of sin.* In question 232 we ask, *“How does the Lord rescue us from every evil of body, soul, possessions and reputation?”* Answer: *In a world ruined by sin, the Lord keeps us from harm and helps us to endure the troubles that He allows to come into our lives.”* Paul says in acts 14:22, **“We must go through many hardships to enter the Kingdom of God.”** He is not saying that by our works we are saved, but as Christians seeking to live out our faith and sharing it with others, we like he, might face strong opposition to the working out of God in our lives. There are times when it is our sin (disobedience) that God disciplines us (Prov. 3: 11-12) for our good that we may share in His goodness and blessings. The whole idea of praying that God would keep evil from us is that we want to remain *“faithful to Him and when we die to take us from this sorrowful world to Himself in heaven.”* Answer to question 233.



## Fellowship

Our Fellowship ladies had a very successful tea with a bit of study of the women of the Bible! There were many, yet we covered 6 of them. Courage, compassion, and strength in leading were many of their attributes, as well as obedience to our Father as we are led by Him. Visiting with our sisters in Christ brought us closer as we witnessed to each other of His blessings given as we were blessed by intentionally placed in each other's paths. New and old friends were made as 22 of us gathered!

Much Love and many blessings to you all!

Marian Bencke



Fellowship Opportunities



Great things are happening at Ascension Lutheran for 2026 VBS!

June 22-26 from 9-noon. K - 6th Grade

Pick up an invite card on Narthex table for your neighbor's children!

Sign up online:

**[ourdaphne.church](http://ourdaphne.church)**

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.*