

Ascension Messenger

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH | MARCH 2018 | VOLUME 17

HOLY WEEK EDITION

The Journey to a Joyous Resurrection Sunday is Through Holy Week

“He Is Risen! He Is Risen Indeed!” will once again echo throughout Ascension’s lofty rafters as the Church family celebrates the triumphant resurrection of Jesus on April 1st. But to truly have a heart that is prepared to joyously sing “Jesus Christ is Risen Today” and “Resurrection Day” together, we must first experience the passion of our Lord.

The Ascension family is encouraged to participate in all of the

services of Holy Week, starting with the Passover Seder on Tues., March 27th; Maundy Thursday Holy Communion service at 7 p.m. on Thurs., March 29th; the moving and dramatic Good Friday Tenebrae service at 7 p.m. on March 30th.

Then, the glorious Resurrection Day Sunday services take on a much deeper meaning as we gather for our celebrations at 8:15 and 11 a.m. April 1st. Don’t miss out on the full experience and joy!



Midweek Lenten Soup Suppers, a long-time tradition at Ascension, brings people together for a hot bowl of soup and fellowship before the reflective Lent service. This is another way for church members to come together as a family during this special time in the church year as hearts are prepared for Holy Week events and the Resurrection Day services.

Mark Your Calendar



- **March 27 - 6 p.m.**
Passover Seder Dinner
- **March 29 - 7 p.m.**
Maundy Thursday Service
with Holy Communion
- **March 30 - 7 p.m.**
Good Friday Service
- **April 1 - Resurrection Day**
8:15 a.m. - Traditional
Worship
9:30 a.m. - Children’s Egg
Hunt and All-Church
Breakfast
11 a.m. Contemporary
Worship
- **April 14 - 7:30—10:30 a.m.**
Pancake Breakfast and
Silent Auction

Ascension Prepares for 8th Annual Passover Seder

Dozens of Volunteers Participate Each Year to Create this Unique Holy Week Experience



Months of planning and hard work go into making Ascension's annual Passover Seder dinner a successful event each year. From the shopping and chopping to the cleaning and final touches, Ascension volunteers work together behind the scenes to provide a delicious traditional Jewish meal, very similar to what Jesus would have experienced with his first disciples thousands of years ago. The church family and friends are invited to reserve their tickets today to be part of this meaningful and memorable event on the church calendar.

Pastor's Pen

by Pastor Michael Abram

When I think of March, the first thing that comes to my mind is the wind. I remember listening to a sermon when I was a kid and the pastor made a joke about "it must be March because my wife kept telling him to go fly a kite!" It brought giggles the first time he said it and so he somehow managed to repeat it at least four times throughout the sermon. As you can imagine, the giggles were more and more forced each time.

Thankfully that memory isn't the only thing I think of when I think of March. The wind also brings to my mind the Holy Spirit. In John chapter 3, Jesus speaks to Nicodemus concerning the Spirit. He says: "The wind blows where it pleases, and you hear its sound but do not know where it comes from or where it goes; so it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

Jesus means by this that just as the coming of going of the wind cannot be controlled by human power, neither can the work of the Spirit be controlled by the nature of man or his will. However, you can certainly see the effects.

"To live our lives in the Spirit is to live as loving, powerful, right-minded image bearers of Christ."

Paul talks about the Holy Spirit being a "down payment on our inheritance." This means that it was so evident how the Spirit had empowered the people of the budding church that to call it a "down payment" meant that their inheritance was going to be amazing! They could all see the changes in their ability to love, forgive, and endure trial and temptation.

Paul also reminds us in his second letter to Timothy that the Spirit that God has given us is not one of timidity, but of love and power and a sound mind. As Christians who have been filled with God's Holy Spirit, this is what should characterize us! To live our lives in the Spirit is to live as loving, powerful, right-minded image bearers of Christ. Perhaps you don't notice this in your own life; it may be that you have been a Christian all or most of your life, in that case you have to imagine how you might have been had you never come to faith. For those who come to faith later in life, they can testify, just as Jesus says, you may not see where it comes from or where it goes, but you certainly see its effects.

Member Spotlight: Getting to Know Richard Lewis and Janet Choi



Meet Richard Lewis and Janet Choi, who have been attending Ascension since 2013. Richard hails from Greensborough, N.C. and Janet was born in Mexico City but grew up in Atotonilco el Grande, a small town in Hidalgo. Richard and Janet met in 2009. Janet has two children, Everardo and Yuni. Richard has three children, Matthew, Miranda and Preston.

Richard is the Operations Chief of Public Affairs for the Space and Missile Systems Center at Los Angeles Air Force Base. He is also a freelance writer. Janet works for Bar-S Sigma Foods, as an administrative assistant.

For fun, Richard enjoys weightlifting, boxing and martial arts; Janet is starting to learn gardening, and enjoys cooking, especially traditional Mexican food. She also enjoys caring for her family.

Richard first started attending Ascension because he took a quiz online, "What Denomination Are You?" and the results pointed him to the LCMS, of which he was unfamiliar with at the time. From there, he found Ascension and he and Janet have been attending ever since. "I loved the service from the first time I heard Pastor Michael," Janet said. "I stayed because I felt welcomed with my daughter. I also love the praise songs in the contemporary service." Richard agrees, saying "I learn something new every week. My depth of understanding of theology has grown exponentially from the time I have spent with Pastor Michael learning from him. Lutheran theology is the most assuring, common-sense, reasonable and solid understanding to be found in all of Christendom."

Richard is involved as a reader in the services and in the Worship Team and choir. Janet is not yet part of any Ascension ministries but she said, "Since my faith has grown, I have seen the Lord send many people at work to me for testimony, encouragement, prayer and advice."

We Celebrate March Birthdays

March 1 Steve Madrigal

March 2 Michael Hung
Nicole Pagnini

March 4 Carla Orpilla
Darcy Pagnini
Riley Rich
Gertie Wiechmann

March 6 Jack Aguilar
Jennifer Leung

March 12 Anya Koehler

March 13 Scott Tanaka
Ron Woods

March 14 Lydia Leung

March 16 Timothy Hanson
Philip LaPointe

March 17 Jeff Garren
Steven Petredis
Audrey Rempert

March 24 Dorothy Friday

March 25 Sheila Nichols
Ed Scholz

March 26 Scott Livergood

March 27 Veronica Kormendy

March 29 Bob Bommarito
David Nelson

(No Anniversaries in March)



Women's Retreat Focuses on Sheep and The Good Shepherd

Twenty-eight women from Ascension and neighboring churches gathered on March 10th for the Spring women's retreat, "A Day with Our Shepherd." The event, sponsored by Ascension's LWML, was centered around a Bible study on Psalm 23, along with activities, music, group discussion and strengthening of Christian friendships.

By Tammy Simpson, Ascension Pre-School

Pre-School News

Winter blues, winter blahs! Lack of daylight, cloudy days and rain or cold weather---all of these contribute to "winter blues." Adults and children alike can suffer from "the blues" this time of year, which can cause lack of motivation to move and get things done. No worries, though, Spring is just around the corner!

With the days getting longer and Springtime just around the corner we are leaping into March with a renewed sense of excitement! During the month of March, the Preschool staff has planned many fun events to chase away those winter blues, including the celebration of Dr. Seuss' birthday & St. Patrick's Day fun.