

Ascension Lutheran Church

Missouri Synod

8225 Peebles Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15237
Phone: 412-364-4463
Fax: 412-369-0599

www.ascensionpgh.com

www.facebook.com/AscensionPgh

www.twitter.com/AscensionPgh

<https://plus.google.com/+AscensionLutheranChurchPittsburgh>



October 18, 2020

Worship Leader Today: Mike Fiffik, Elder

Secretary: Barbara Marcellus
secretary@ascensionpgh.com

Music Director: Vanessa Candreva
vcandreva@ascensionpgh.com

Welcome To Our Guest

It is a great joy to have you here today. We pray that your time with us has helped to deepen your faith in our Lord, Jesus Christ. If we can be of service to you or your family, we invite you to talk to us at your convenience. You will always be welcome here. Please do us the honor of signing the guest sheet at the podium at the front of the church or at the entrance from the Education Wing.
Thank you for coming!

TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

October 18, 2020

Worship Service - 9:30 AM

AS WE GATHER

Countless times during Christ's mission in human flesh for the sins of the world, the Pharisees and others tried to test, trap, and trick Jesus, thinking He would suffer a setback to His ministry. Time and time again, Jesus in His divine wisdom and teaching would instead turn those times into a setup for teaching about many things regarding life on earth and the kingdom of heaven. We, too, face times of testing, trapping, and tricking, though not from Pharisees, but from this world, the devil, and our own sinful flesh, and often we face setbacks. We are wise to turn to the one who has set us up for forgiveness, mercy, and a new life through His own life, death, and rising. Rejoicing in His grace, in response to His love, we faithfully, "render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's" (Matthew 22:21).

WELCOME

Mike Fiffik, Elder

(stand)

OPENING HYMN: "We Sing the Almighty Power of God"
(tune: Hosanna, Loud Hosanna)

LW 441

**We sing th'almighty pow'r of God,
Who bade the mountains rise,
Who spread the flowing seas abroad
And built the lofty skies.
We sing the wisdom that ordained
The sun to rule the day;
The moon shines too at His command,
And all the stars obey.**

**We sing the goodness of the Lord,
Who fills the earth with food,
Who formed His creatures by a word
And then pronounced them good.
Lord, how Your wonders are displayed
Each time we turn our eyes
To view the ground on which we tread
Or gaze up at the skies!**

**There's not a plant or flow'r below
But makes our glories known;
And clouds arise and tempests blow
By order from Your throne.
On You each moment we depend;
If You withdraw, we die.
Oh, may we never God offend,
Our God, forever nigh!**

Reprinted from *Lutheran Worship*, Copyright © 1982 Concordia Publishing House. **Setting:** Copyright 1982 Concordia Publishing House. Reprinted by permission.

INVOCATION

Elder: In the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: **Amen.**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION *Psalm 51:1–3; 96:9–13; Isaiah 45:5, adapted*

Elder: Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your steadfast love;

People: **according to Your abundant mercy blot out my sins.**

Elder: Wash me thoroughly from my immoral behavior, and cleanse me from my sin!

People: **For I know how I have failed to live according to Your law, and my sin is ever before me.**

Elder: As we come and bow before the Lord to confess our sins, we admit that we have bowed down to other gods of this world and gods of our own choosing.

People: **Lord, we confess that we have trusted in ourselves and others rather than in You.**

Elder: We have failed to rely on You in all times. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, and against others in what we have done and left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart

People: **and have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We confess we have trusted in ourselves and others rather than in You, Lord.**

Elder: Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; let the sea roar, and all that fills it;

People: **let the field rejoice, and everything in it!**

Elder: Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy

People: **before the LORD, for He comes,**

Elder: for He comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness, and the peoples in His faithfulness.

People: **Worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness.**

(sit)

OLD TESTAMENT: Isaiah 45:1–7 (*The Lord uses Cyrus as an instrument of deliverance.*)

EPISTLE: 1 Thessalonians 1:1–10 (*The Thessalonians' faith and example*)

(stand)

HOLY GOSPEL: Matthew 22:15–22 (*Jesus tested by the Pharisees about paying taxes to Caesar*)

Congregation reads together:

¹⁵ Then the Pharisees went and plotted how to entangle Him in His words. ¹⁶ And they sent their disciples to Him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that You are true and teach the way of God truthfully, and You do not care about anyone's opinion, for You are not swayed by appearances. ¹⁷ Tell us, then, what You think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?" ¹⁸ But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, "Why put Me to the test, you hypocrites? ¹⁹ Show Me the coin for the tax." And they brought Him a denarius. ²⁰ And Jesus said to them, "Whose likeness and inscription is this?" ²¹ They said, "Caesar's." Then He said to them, "Therefore render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." ²² When they heard it, they marveled. And they left Him and went away.

SONG OF THE DAY: "Jesus Paid It All"

(sit)

THE APPLICATION OF GOD'S WORD FOR TODAY: "The Great Debate" Mike Fiffik, Elder

(stand)

NICENE CREED

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made, who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man, and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

(sit)

OFFERTORY MEDITATION SONG: "Grace Alone"

(stand)

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Elder: Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

We offer to You, Lord, the sacrifice of our prayer and praise. You have blessed us with the gift of life in Your Son, Jesus Christ. You provide for all our needs, even when we are unaware. Accept our humble thanksgiving, and empower us to demonstrate our thanks in words, actions, and dedicated service to You. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Elder: We acknowledge that You are the Lord, and there is no other. Strengthen us to resist temptations to serve other gods, whether things of this world, others, or ourselves. Open our eyes to see Your presence in all of our lives. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Elder: Our Savior Jesus Christ, has reminded us to render to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to You what is Yours. As You have established all authority over us, we pray for our leaders in this world, nation, state, and community. Give them wisdom and courage to act with justice and mercy for all lives, including the unborn and aged, the vulnerable and needful. Bless also those who serve our Church as elected and called officials, and the leaders within our own congregation, that all actions bring glory to You. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Elder: We lift up Pastor Adam Thompson whom You have led us to call to Ascension to be our pastor. Lord we pray earnestly that You would send the Holy Spirit to Pastor Thompson so that he might know Your will for the future of his ministry, for Your ministry at Ascension and for Your ministry at Fairlawn Lutheran. In all things Lord, we trust that Your will for all is perfect and we pray that Your will be done in this matter. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Elder: We lift up all those in need, the hungry and homeless, the mourning and grieving, and all who seek healing, [*especially . . . individual prayer requests may be spoken at this time followed by the petitioner saying “Lord, in Your mercy” after each request*]. Give peace, hope, and healing according to Your will. Lord, in Your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Elder: Bless all who commune at this altar today, that through the body and blood of Your Son, Jesus, they be strengthened in Your forgiveness, enabled to withstand temptations of the devil, and empowered to lovingly serve neighbors in Your name.

Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord.

People: Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

PEACE

Elder: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

People: And also with you.

HOLY COMMUNION

Congregants are welcome to take a Communion kit from the Narthex near the front door, and will be invited to take Communion in the pews at this time.

HOLY COMMUNION

(sit)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

(stand)

THE BLESSING

The Lord bless us and keep us.

The Lord make His face to shine upon us and be gracious unto us.

The Lord lift up His countenance upon us and give us peace.

CLOSING SONG: “Only King Forever”

Elder: Go in peace and

People: serve the Lord.

LOOKING AHEAD: The assigned readings of the Church Calendar for next week are Revelation 14:6-7, Romans 3:19-28; John 8:31-36 or Matthew 11:12-19.

OUR MISSION AND VISION STATEMENT

Acknowledging the great gift of God the Father in sending His Son, Jesus Christ, as our Savior, we the people of Ascension Lutheran Church, as guided by the Holy Spirit, are committed to the furtherance of God's Kingdom. We will share and live the Gospel in our homes, our church, our community, and the world. Motivated by Christ's love for us, we are dedicated to spiritual growth and unity, worship and fellowship, and compassionate service. We recognize this as our common purpose and pray that God will enable us by His strength and wisdom to seek His will.



ASCENSION NEWS – OCTOBER 18, 2020

THANK YOU to Mike Fiffik (Elder) for leading us in worship today.

IMPORTANT – **EVERYONE please sign in** on one of the attendance sheets located at the Narthex or the Education Wing entrances.

FACE COVERINGS – Please wear face coverings indoors in all parts of the building (those who are over age two [2] and medically able to do so). If you forgot a face covering, there are some available in the Narthex and at the office entrance.

SOCIAL DISTANCING – Please practice social distancing in the Sanctuary (six [6] feet between households), and seating in every other pew. Please do not linger inside the building entrances/exits prior to and following worship services. Please enjoy the beautiful weather outside as you visit from six (6) feet apart!

HOLY COMMUNION – To avoid excessive contact on Communion Sundays, there will be prepackaged Communion packets in the Narthex as you walk in. We ask you pick them up on your way to your seat. When Communion time happens, during the service, we will all partake as a community.

HAND SANITIZER – Hand sanitizer is available in the Narthex, Fellowship Hall, and at the office entrance for your use.

BUILDING RESTRICTIONS – To limit the need for cleaning and disinfection, the classroom areas will be taped off. *If anyone needs to comfort a child, we will temporarily ask parents to use the Narthex.*

OFFERINGS – Since the offering plate will not be passed during the service, an offering plate will be available in the Narthex for you to present your gifts as you exit or arrive.

CHILDREN'S BAGS – Children's bags will be stored in the closet to the right of the main entrance. Please feel free to take one (or more) from the closet on your first visit and keep it in your car for your kids' use during services. Please do not put any bags back in the closet.

BULLETINS and **CHILDREN'S BULLETINS** are available on our website: www.ascensionpgh.com.

HELP NEEDED – We are looking for volunteers to wipe down the handrails after the services. Please see Pete Candreva if you can help.

ALTAR FLOWERS are given by Janet and Bill Seitz in memory of Janet's brother, Larry "Bud" Spindler, on his birthday today.

ACOLYTE: Anna Fiffik
ALTAR GUILD/OCTOBER: Diane DePasquale
ELDERS: Mike Fiffik / Cooper Blake / Bob Booth / Pete Candreva / David Dille / Darryl Gunther
LAY READER: Trish Young
USHERS: Cristen Fiffik / Jim Obringer
ATTENDANCE 10/11/20: WORSHIP 34

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

October 18: Paul Krom; October 22: Mason Foust, Elliott Sichler;
 October 24: Donald Sohngen

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

October 20: Jeff & Sherri Kirk

ADULT BIBLE STUDY CONTINUES today at 10:30AM live at Ascension in the Fellowship Hall AND via Zoom for anyone at home who would like to participate. Our study is: [Irresistible: Reclaiming the New That Jesus Unleashed for the World](#) by Andy Stanley. **Once upon a time there was a version of our faith that was practically . . . irresistible.** But that was then. Today we preach, teach, write, and communicate as if nothing has changed. As if “The Bible says it” still settles it. It’s time to hit pause on much of what we’re doing and consider the faith modeled by our first-century brothers and sisters who had no official Bible, no status, and humanly speaking, little chance of survival. What made their message so compelling, so defensible, so irresistible? What did they know that we don’t? **Buckle up . . .** you’re about to find out. In this six-session video study, Andy Stanley will invite you to embrace the version of faith that, against all odds, initiated a chain of events resulting in the most significant and extensive cultural transformation the world has ever seen. A version we must embrace if we are to be salt and light in an increasingly savorless and dark world.

PRAYER AND PRAISE GROUP is meeting via Zoom. Join us on **Wednesday**, (October 21) from 10 AM to 11 AM and then every Wednesday thereafter until we are able to meet in person. If you have any questions or need prayer, please call me at 808-295-1835. In the Love of Jesus, Bob Booth

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD kickoff is just one week away!!! Empty shoeboxes will be available next Sunday in the Narthex and inside the office door. You can also start bringing in your shoeboxes next week and anytime until November 22nd. Building a shoebox online is also an option. Something new this year concerns the \$9 suggested donation for shipping. In addition to paying your \$9 online (and being able to follow your box) you can now also mail in your donation. The brochure you receive with each box contains a postage-free envelope in which you can place your check and mail it back. If you are doing more than one shoebox, you only need to write one check. This is a more secure option, but you can always place your donation in the shoebox as usual.

THIRD QUARTER CONTRIBUTION STATEMENTS are in your mailboxes in the Narthex. If you have been unable to make it to church, I have mailed your statement. Questions? Contact Bob Marcellus at finance@ascensionpgh.com.

COMMUNION AT HOME – We are making Communion at home available for members who are unable to attend services live at Ascension. If you would like to participate, please contact the church office to make arrangements to either pick up Communion kits or have them mailed to you. These kits have been consecrated and are to be used **ONLY** while viewing the Sunday worship service live (i.e. Sundays at 9:30 AM only). They are not intended for use while viewing recordings of services. If you have any questions, please contact any of the Elders for details.

PENNIES FOR JESUS – Our mission at this time is our local food banks: The North Hills Food Bank on Perry Highway and the Northside Common Ministries on Brighton Road. This has been a difficult time for a lot of families and these organizations have been helping many in our area. If you would like to make a donation to our Pennies for Jesus fund, please mail your check to the church office, marked with “Pennies for Jesus” in the memo line. There is also a container on the Narthex table for your donation.

LIVE-STREAMING WORSHIP SERVICES – Our worship services are live-streamed Sundays at 9:30 AM on our YouTube Channel. Just click on this link: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCu_ARgzTTcfZZXuZAeyEVO/videos or search in YouTube for Ascension Lutheran Church PGH Music. More detailed directions are available on our website (www.ascensionpgh.com). If you have any questions, feel free to contact Vanessa Candreva at vcandreva@ascensionpgh.com.

FOR PASTORAL NEEDS/EMERGENCIES, please call Pastor Barry Keurulainen at 724-352-2777 (office) or after hours at 724-352-3841 (home). You may also reach him via email at bjk@stlukecabot.org. If you would like to speak with an Elder instead, please feel free to contact one of the Elders listed below:

Mike Fiffik, Head Elder	412-780-1647
Cooper Blake	412-654-4146
Bob Booth	808-295-1835
Pete Candreva	412-999-4856
David Dille	412-726-1934
Darryl Gunther	724-272-0441

THE PITTSBURGH LUTHERAN October issue is available to read at this link [The Pittsburgh Lutheran October Issue](#). **Make sure you check out this issue as Ascension is highlighted as the “House of Worship” for the month.** If you would like a printed copy, please call Barb in the church office at 412-364-4463.

CANCELLED STAMPS – If you are saving cancelled stamps for the LWML, please make sure that there is a ¼ inch margin around the stamp and there are no damaged edges. Please put your stamps in Sandy Malarkey’s or Janet Seitz’s mailbox in the Narthex.

SOCIAL MEDIA – Ascension is on Facebook (www.facebook.com/AscensionPgh), Google Plus (<https://plus.google.com/+AscensionLutheranChurchPittsburgh>), and Twitter (www.twitter.com/AscensionPgh). You don’t have to have accounts to view our pages online. Please do check us out (and “Like”/follow us).

EMAIL ACCOUNTS – Please use the email addresses below for contacting these individuals/groups:

President (Jennifer Ciccone)	president@ascensionpgh.com
Treasurer (Patti Lopresto)	treasurer@ascensionpgh.com
Financial Secretary (Bob Marcellus)	finance@ascensionpgh.com
Elders	elders@ascensionpgh.com
Board of Christian Education	education@ascensionpgh.com
Board of Trustees	trustees@ascensionpgh.com
SOAR Respite Nights	soar@ascensionpgh.com
Vanessa Candreva (Music Director)	vcandreva@ascensionpgh.com
Barb Marcellus (Secretary)	secretary@ascensionpgh.com

CLOTHING RECYCLING PROGRAM – Don’t forget to recycle your clothes in our recycle bins in the parking lot!

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

A DRIVE-THRU OKTOBERFEST will be held on Saturday, **October 24, 2020** from 3:00-7:00 PM at Bethel Lutheran Church (301 Scott Avenue, Glenshaw, PA 15116), hosted by Tri-Parish: Bethel, St. John’s & Zion Churches. Take home your favorite German foods plus apple dumplings. Live entertainment will be provided by Vicar Donn Woolweber. You don’t have to leave your car! Donations accepted to benefit Redeemer Lutheran School (cash or charge).

PRAYERS IN TIME OF PANDEMIC / REFORMATION VESPERS will be held on Sunday, **October 25, 2020** at 3:00 PM at First Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church, 535 N. Neville Street (Shadyside), Pittsburgh, PA. SELC District President, The Reverend Waldemar R. Vinovskis, will be the guest preacher. Kantor Jonathan Hoyt at the Skinner organ will be leading the congregation in song. Special prayers and hymns for our nation and world will be included. CDC and Commonwealth of Pennsylvania guidelines will be observed. Free parking will be available at First Trinity and on the streets within a block of the church. Handicap parking will be available at First Trinity. Presented by Pittsburgh Area Lutheran Ministries

THE LUTHERAN HOUR is on WWNL/1080 AM on Saturdays at 3:30 PM and on Sundays at 8:00 AM. Read or listen to the sermon at www.lutheranhour.org. **October 25, 2020: “No Boasting, Just Belonging”** “The kingdom of God is not a game. The law teaches us how to love others as God first loved us. Our performance matters, but in God's kingdom belonging comes before performance.” Dr. Michael Zeigler (Romans 3:19-31) Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

KFUO RADIO, a media ministry extension of LCMS congregations, shares Christ for you anytime, anywhere on **KFUO.org** via worship services, Bible and theology studies, practical talk programs, and sacred music. You can find programs on demand at kfu.org and wherever you get your podcasts! Find us on social: @KFUOradio on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#). **This week on KFUE.org**, begin studying 1 Timothy on Sharper Iron (weekdays at 8:00 a.m. CT), dig into Mental Health with Deaconess Heidi Goehmann on The Coffee Hour (10/19 at 9:00 a.m. CT), and continue learning about worship and Lutheran Confessions on Concord Matters (10/20 at 2:00 p.m. CT).

CHRISTIAN COUNSELING ASSOCIATES is a full-service counseling center committed to using the resources of the Christian faith in helping individuals and families achieve emotional, spiritual, and physical well-being. Licensed and certified professional counselors provide all services. Available services include help for those seeking professional help for emotional and life challenges such as depression, anxiety, marital problems, addictions, grief, trauma, or any mental health concern. CCA offers services to adults, children, adolescents, and families. Christian counseling engages a faith-based process of change that can equip individuals to overcome the challenges they face. CCA accepts many different health insurances for payment and offers a sliding fee scale if there is no insurance. Ascension provides office space for CCA. For more information or to schedule an appointment, call 724-396-1510.

LCMS FOUNDATION – A focus on wills is focusing on what happens to you after the Lord has called you home. But Power of Attorney documents or even a Revocable Trust can lay out your wishes for what happens to you while still alive on earth if you become incapable of making your own decisions. Your LCMS Gift Planning Counselor can help you to start thinking about those wishes, preparing you for working with your attorney. Contact Robert Wirth, LCMS Foundation Gift Planner at robert.wirth@lfnd.org or 716-863-4427.

LIFE QUOTE: “The Church has confessed from the beginning that each life is created by God, that human life is the supreme gift of the Creator. Human life is not given unconditionally but is given under the condition that we will be responsible for preserving it. The testimony that God respects life above all else is contained in the words of the Gospel: ‘For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life’ (John 3:16).” *Abbot Tryphon, Vashon Island, Washington – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life* • www.lutheransforlife.org

PRAYER REQUESTS – October 18, 2020*

“And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven. Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.” (James 5:15-16)

FOR HEALTH & HEALING

Ron Killcrece (recovery after cardiac arrest – Ronette Blake’s father); Eileen Vogel; for all those ill with coronavirus; Joe (mass on heart – Cheryl Sedar’s son); Gene Williams (mesothelioma); Shut-ins: Elva Fields, Helen Goettmann, Phyllis Kitzki, Clay McClellan, Don Sohngen, Nadine Weber

FOR STRENGTH & COMFORT

For all those who lost loved ones, especially Chris Schroeder and family on the death of his aunt; Lora, Tim, and Hannah Koontz and the Wade family on the death of Lora’s father, Bob Wade; for the citizens, survivors, relief workers, missionaries, and families affected by hurricanes, earthquakes, terrorist attacks and disasters worldwide

FOR THANKSGIVING

For the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ; for all our guests; the gifts of love and God’s Word; family and friends; our country

FOR SAFETY/PROTECTION

For all affected by the coronavirus pandemic; college students; school students, teachers, staff and bus drivers; missionaries; our armed forces; unborn children

FOR DIRECTION AND FAITH

For our pastoral call process; those who are experiencing a crisis of faith; women with unplanned pregnancies

GENERAL PRAYER, GUIDANCE, AND PROVISION

For Pastor Adam Thompson as he discerns God’s will; our country and leaders; Pastor Lee and his family; the Gaertner family; SOAR Respite Nights and participating families; Megan and Gene Williams, Jr. and DiscipleMakers; Pastor Eric Andrae and Campus Ministry in Oakland; seminary students; the residents and staff of Concordia Lutheran Ministries; Shepherd’s Heart Fellowship; Food For The Poor; Christian Counseling Associates counselors and their clients; those with special needs (physical, mental, or emotional)

“Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.” (Colossians 4:2)

***Please note that prayer requests will remain on the prayer list for 60 days and then be removed unless an extension is requested by notifying the church secretary.**