

# Ascension Lutheran Church

Missouri Synod

A Christ-centered community where we *connect, learn, and serve.*

February 5<sup>th</sup>



## Welcome To Our Guests

It is a great joy to have you here today. We pray that your time with us helps 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!

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# FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

## WELCOME

## ASCENSION CHILDREN'S CHOIR – This Little Light Of Mine

## PRELUDE

## AS WE GATHER

As the liturgical year tells the story of Jesus' earthly ministry, with Christmas still fresh in our memory, it may seem too soon to begin talking about the cross, that instrument of death for the rejected Christ. But as the mysterious star drew the Wise Men to the newborn King of the Jews, so a light draws us to the goal of His mission, the glory of salvation found only in the crucified King of the Jews. How strange it must sound to those who have not heard or who do not yet believe when we sing "In the Cross of Christ I Glory." Only God the Holy Spirit can enlighten a person with the spiritual wisdom of faith. And He does give and strengthen that faith through the preached Word and the Sacraments administered according to Christ's institution. Today, that faith enlightened by the cross of our Lord produces a life of love and good works in all we say and do.

*Stand*

## INVOCATION

*Matthew 28:19b; 18:20*

**P** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
**C** Amen.

## OPENING HYMN - All The Way My Savior Leads Me

## EXHORTATION

*Psalm 124:8; Psalm 130:3-4; Luke 18:13*

**P** Our help is in the name of the Lord,  
**C** **who made heaven and earth.**

**P** If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?  
**C** **But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared.**

**P** Since we are gathered to hear God's Word, call upon Him in prayer and praise, and receive the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ in the

fellowship of this altar, let us first consider our unworthiness and confess before God and one another that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, and that we cannot free ourselves from our sinful condition. Together as His people let us take refuge in the infinite mercy of God, our heavenly Father, seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, and saying: God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

*Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.*

## CONFESSION

**C** Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.

## ABSOLUTION

*[John 20:19–23]*

**P** Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** Amen.

## GREETING OF PEACE

*At this time, you may turn to those around you and greet each other with the peace of Christ.*

*Sit*

## OLD TESTAMENT READING

*Isaiah 58:3–9a*

<sup>3</sup>“Why have we fasted, and you see it not?

Why have we humbled ourselves, and you take no knowledge of it?’  
Behold, in the day of your fast you seek your own pleasure,  
and oppress all your workers.

<sup>4</sup>Behold, you fast only to quarrel and to fight  
and to hit with a wicked fist.

Fasting like yours this day  
will not make your voice to be heard on high.

<sup>5</sup>Is such the fast that I choose,

a day for a person to humble himself?  
Is it to bow down his head like a reed,  
and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him?

Will you call this a fast,  
and a day acceptable to the LORD?

<sup>6</sup>“Is not this the fast that I choose:  
to loose the bonds of wickedness,  
to undo the straps of the yoke,  
to let the oppressed go free,  
and to break every yoke?

<sup>7</sup>Is it not to share your bread with the hungry  
and bring the homeless poor into your house;  
when you see the naked, to cover him,  
and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?

<sup>8</sup>Then shall your light break forth like the dawn,  
and your healing shall spring up speedily;  
your righteousness shall go before you;  
the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.

<sup>9</sup>Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer;  
you shall cry, and he will say, ‘Here I am.’”

**A** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** **Thanks be to God.**

## EPISTLE READING

*1 Corinthians 2:1–16*

<sup>1</sup>And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. <sup>2</sup>For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. <sup>3</sup>And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, <sup>4</sup>and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, <sup>5</sup>that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

<sup>6</sup>Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away. <sup>7</sup>But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. <sup>8</sup>None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. <sup>9</sup>But, as it is written,

“What no eye has seen, nor ear heard,  
nor the heart of man imagined,  
what God has prepared for those who love him”—

<sup>10</sup>these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. <sup>11</sup>For who knows a person’s thoughts except

the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. <sup>12</sup>Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. <sup>13</sup>And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.

<sup>14</sup>The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. <sup>15</sup>The spiritual person judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one. <sup>16</sup>“For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?” But we have the mind of Christ.

**A** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

*Stand*

## HOLY GOSPEL

*Matthew 5:13–20*

**P** The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the fifth chapter.

**C** Glory to You, O Lord.

<sup>13</sup>[Jesus said:] “You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people’s feet.

<sup>14</sup>“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup>Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. <sup>16</sup>In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

<sup>17</sup>“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. <sup>18</sup>For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. <sup>19</sup>Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. <sup>20</sup>For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.”

**P** This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**C Praise to You, O Christ.**

*Sit*

**CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**

*Pastor Thompson*

**HYMN OF THE DAY - O God Of Mercy, God Of Light**

*LW 397*

**THE APPLICATION OF GOD'S WORD FOR TODAY**

*Pastor Thompson*

*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*

## **OFFERING**

**Meditation Song - Finished Work Of Christ**

*Praise Team*

*Stand*

**OFFERTORY - Son Of God, Eternal Savior**

*LW 394 v. 1 & 2*

**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

*[1 Timothy 2:1-4]*

*After each prayer, the response will be:*

- P** Lord, in Your mercy,  
**C** Hear our prayer.

**LORD'S PRAYER**

*Matthew 6:9-13*

- P** Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:  
**C** **Our Father who art in heaven,  
hallowed be Thy name,  
Thy kingdom come,  
Thy will be done on earth  
as it is in heaven;  
give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses  
as we forgive those  
who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For Thine is the kingdom  
and the power and the glory  
forever and ever. Amen.**

**THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

*Matthew 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-25*

- P** Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said:

“Take, eat; this is My  $\text{†}$  body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me.”

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: “Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My  $\text{†}$  blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

## PEACE OF THE LORD

*John 20:19*

- P** The peace of the Lord be with you always.
- C** **And also with you.**

*Sit*

## HOLY COMMUNION

*Holy Communion is celebrated at Ascension Lutheran in the glad confidence that our Lord Jesus, as His word says, gives not only bread and wine, but also His true Body and Blood for us to eat and drink for the forgiveness of our sins (Matthew 26:26-28). Our Lord invites to His table those who, repenting of their sins, believe His word that His body and blood are really present for the forgiveness of our sins. All baptized believers who hold our confession and have examined themselves according to Scripture’s guidance (1 Corinthians 11:27-29), are invited to receive His Sacrament*

## COMMUNION SONGS - Remembrance

**Lord Jesus Christ, Life-Giving Bread**

*LW 248*

*Stand*

## POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE - In The Cross Of Christ I Glory

*LW 101 v. 1*

## POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

- P** Let us pray.  
We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** **Amen.**

*Sit*



**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*Stand*

**BENEDICTION**

*Numbers 6:24-26*

- P** The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.  
The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace.
- C** **Amen.**

**CLOSING SONG – Facing A Task Unfinished (We Go To All The World)**

**DISMISSAL**

- P** Go in peace and
- C** **serve the Lord!**

**Acknowledgments**

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**LOOKING AHEAD: The assigned readings for next week are:  
Deuteronomy 30:15-20; 1 Corinthians 3:1-9; Matthew 5:21-37**

**SERVING TODAY**

ELDER(S).....Mike Fiffik & Bob Booth  
 LAY READER.....Trish Young  
 USHERS.....Cristen Fiffik & Lora Koontz  
 ACOLYTE.....Daisy Lucas  
 ALTAR GUILD.....Nancy Hughey

**SERVING NEXT WEEK**

ELDER(S).....Darryl Gunther  
 LAY READER.....Dave Dille  
 USHERS.....Ken Lindsey & Matt Gunther  
 ACOLYTE.....Ella Krieger



- ✦ Prayers of thanksgiving for Marie Swenson, sister to Pastor Thompson, for a healthy pregnancy & safe delivery this past week.
- ✦ Continued prayers for a full recovery for Caleb Rajendaran and rest for the family.
- ✦ Prayers of thanksgiving for God's healing grace for Caryn, sister of Cristen Fiffik. Caryn's surgeries went well and her breast cancer was not shown to have spread further. We pray for God's continued comfort and support as she begins radiation treatment soon and all the effects that may bring.

### **WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**MEN'S FELLOWSHIP EVENT** - Our Men's Fellowship event will be held at 12:30pm on February 26th at Big Sewickley Creek Brewery: [2175 Big Sewickley Creek Rd, Sewickley, PA 15143](#) Please join us for some food, drink & fellowship. Any questions, please see Pastor Thompson.

**CONGREGATIONAL MEETING** – Please join us for our first congregational meeting of 2023! We will meet on Sunday, February 19<sup>th</sup> immediately following our divine service. There will be no Sunday School or Adult Bible Classes this week.

**FAMILY SMALL GROUP** – Ascension's Family Small Group will meet on Sunday, February 19th from 5:00 – 6:30PM at Ascension Lutheran Church. Families with kids of all ages are welcome. We will gather for a meal and some fellowship, followed by a bible study that focuses on Christian parenting & Christian families. Babysitting is provided. [Barna studies](#) have revealed much about the state of religion in the United States and how faith is perceived and discussed in public. But what about how faith is being nurtured in private—with the spouses, children, parents, roommates and even frequent visitors who spend time under our roofs? Households of Faith, produced in partnership between Lutheran Hour Ministries and Barna, presents a vivid portrait of the domestic lives of U.S. practicing Christians.

**MEN'S BIBLE STUDY**– In February we will be looking at the process and history of how we got the first English translations of the Holy Scriptures from Lutheran Hour Ministries series "How We Got the Bible". Our next meeting will be Saturday, February 25<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 am in the Fireside room.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL** – Our Sunday School classes meet again today following our Divine Service. Toddlers – with Emily Marcellus; K-2 – with Patti Lopresto; 3rd - 6th Grade with Lora Koontz. Parents of toddlers may stay in the classroom with your child if you wish.

**YOUTH GROUP** – Our 7th - 12th grade youth group will meet with Pastor and the new member class in the Conference Room directly following our Divine Service.

**ADULT BIBLE STUDY** – We are offering two Adult Bible study classes & our New Member class immediately following Sunday Divine Service:

- ❖ ***Topical Study: Cold-Case Christianity: A Homicide Detective Investigates the Claims of the Gospels (Fellowship Hall)*** - Christianity could be defined as a “cold case”: it makes a claim about an event from the distant past for which there is little forensic evidence. In *Cold-Case Christianity*, J. Warner Wallace uses his nationally recognized skills as a former LA homicide detective to look at the evidence and eyewitnesses behind Christian beliefs. Including gripping stories from his career and the visual techniques he developed in the courtroom, Wallace uses illustration to examine the powerful evidence that validates the claims of Christianity. A unique apologetic that speaks to readers’ intense interest in detective stories, *Cold-Case Christianity* inspires readers to have confidence in Christ as it prepares them to articulate the case for Christianity.
- ❖ ***Book Study (Fireside Room)*** - The book study class will be facilitated by Cooper Blake and meets in the Fireside Room. We will be studying the book ***“Hebrews: The Fulfillment of Faith”*** by Howard Kramin. This 12-session series from Concordia Publishing includes background information, a discussion of author, audience, occasion, and purpose, and challenging questions on this important book.
- ❖ ***New Member Class (Conference Room)*** - Please join Pastor Adam Thompson in the Conference room for our New Member Class where we go over the basics of the Lutheran Confession of Faith.

## THIS WEEK AT ASCENSION

<b>SUNDAY</b> <b>2/05/2023</b>	<b>WORSHIP SERVICE</b> <b>CHRISTIAN EDUCATION</b> <b>BELL CHOIR REHEARSAL</b>	<b>9:30 AM</b> <b>11:00 AM</b> <b>6:30 PM</b>
<b>TUESDAY</b>	<b>MINISTRY TEAMS MEETING</b>	<b>6:30 PM</b>
<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	<b>PRAYER &amp; PRAISE</b> <b>CONFIRMATION CLASS</b>	<b>10:00 AM</b> <b>7:00 PM</b>
<b>THURSDAY</b>	<b>CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING</b>	<b>6:30 PM</b>
<b>SUNDAY</b> <b>2/12/2023</b>	<b>WORSHIP SERVICE</b> <b>CHRISTIAN EDUCATION</b>	<b>9:30 AM</b> <b>11:00 AM</b>