

# The Messenger



MAY  
2023



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*Time to Move Forward  
From Mother's Day to Memorial Day to Pentecost*

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The birth of a child should be a joyful event! How joyful? Well, we tend to remember that day **each year as we say "Happy Birth Day"!**

**For birth Moms, adopted Mom's (who may also celebrate Arrival Day), for foster Mom's, for stand in Mom's, for Grandma's, Aunts, teachers, role models, neighbors, friends – for all the women who have mothered us, and perhaps still do, we give abundant thanks to God!**

**If someone were to say, "OK, the baby has been born, that's over and accomplished", we might look at them sideways a bit and wonder where and when they lost their ever loving mind. Over? I think the journey has just begun!**

That baby, toddler, kindergartener, young man or woman, teenager, young adult, is on a journey that began at birth and continues. God is up to something with that person and the

plans God has are all good! God will mother, but has also placed a lot of other Moms around that child to help them grow. Whatever we can do to encourage the Moms God has put in place for that child, may we move forward to do just that!

Memorial Day is May 29<sup>th</sup> and we will remember in our Worship Service on the 28<sup>th</sup>, those who gave their life for our country. At least 800,000 have died **in our nations' wars between 1775 and 2023.** The costliest war was the Civil War where an estimated \$625,000 soldiers lost their lives. This figure is greater than our losses from both World Wars together. The War on Terror (2001 – present) has cost us 7,075 lives.

These are statistics. Real men and women lost their lives. Families and friends lost loved ones. Soldiers lost comrades. Communities lost friends, neighbors, role models.

*Cont. on pg. 3*



Greetings, congregation!

It is Spring, and we are well into the 50 days of the Easter season. It surely has been windy, and this always brings to my mind the hallmark of the next season we will enter: Pentecost. **“And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting.” (Acts 2:2)**

I believe that the Holy Spirit is moving over Ascension Lutheran Church in Ocala. You should feel proud of your Council, as they are taking many actions to build up the **church in every way. In the very near future, we will improve the church’s appearance and sound system. We will tune the piano. We will continue to reach out into the community to invite people to join our family. We will make our places of worship and fellowship safer by installing defibrillators. We have our eyes on the future, and we are dreaming big, yet grounding those big dreams in small actions we can take.**

**I know I was particularly moved by Arlene’s memorial service and by the care that was taken to record it for her family who could not be present. And I am always moved by Pastor’s steady reminder to us that every one of us is loved, every single moment, of every day.**

Join me in praying for continued inspiration for our church, using the words of one of my favorite hymns.

1 Breathe on me, Breath of God,  
fill me with life anew,  
that I may love the way you love,  
and do what you would do.

2 Breathe on me, Breath of God,  
until my heart is pure,  
until my will is one with yours,  
to do and to endure.

3 Breathe on me, Breath of God,  
so shall I never die,  
but live with you the perfect life  
for all eternity.

*Deanne Kells*

From the Pastor

Continued from Pg. 1

The hurt and pain did not stop with the death of that soldier. That loss continued.

So, on Memorial Day weekend we remember and give thanks to God for those who gave their lives for their country. Again, whatever we can do to support and care for those who hurt and grieve the loss of loved ones, may we move forward to do that.

May 28<sup>th</sup> is also Pentecost Sunday. God's work of salvation was complete in Jesus, but now God sends out the followers of Jesus to give life to the world for which Christ died and rose again. At Pentecost the witness began. On Pentecost the Church was born.

The gift of God the Holy Spirit is given not only to individual Christians but to the Christian community. Jesus has not left us. He meets us in Bread and Wine. Where two or three are gathered in his name, he is in our midst.

We have the joyful responsibility of telling others that they have a wonderful Savior, who gives life not only after death, but right now. Whatever we can do to tell the story, we need to move forward doing this.

May your May continue to be a blessing!

*In Christ Jesus,  
Pastor Chuck*

As I was finishing reading *Walking With the Wind*, the 1998 memoir of the Civil Rights Movement by the late John Lewis, I read the following. Although written almost 25 years ago, it sounds very current. In a nation where divisions seem at times more important than what unites us, I think the following is helpful:

*"We must not turn away from one another. We must not retreat into separate tribes of like minded, like-looking people who worship the same god, wear the same clothes, read the same books and eat the same food as one another. This is the way of exclusion, not inclusion. We cannot afford to keep going this way. If we are to survive as a society, as a nation, we must turn toward one another and reach out in every way we can. It is not a choice; it is a necessity. We need to listen to one another, to look, to open our minds as well as our hearts. John Lewis (p.493)*

"Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another." 2 John 4:7-11



# EASTER EGG HUNT









# EASTER SUNDAY WORSHIP



Our new altar banners added to the Easter beauty of the altar.



*The "He who Believes in Me will Live" Easter banner was sponsored by Ryan and Angela Duffey in celebration Walter Daniel Duffey's baptism.*

*The white and gold "I am the Resurrection and the Life" Easter banner was sponsored by Pastor Chuck and Cindy Erzkus in loving memory of their parents.*





# Holy Baptism of Walter Daniel Duffey



March 26, 2023





### OUR FOOD PANTRY

We have seen a greater need for food assistance in recent weeks.

Our food pantry has been a resource for those in need and could use some replenishment. When you shop the BOGOs at the grocery store please consider bringing non-perishable items to church on Sunday and leave them in the bins near the entrance.




The late arrival of our envelopes made the recording process more difficult for the counters this year. The envelope system is imperative to our church support system and we encourage you to use the "Initial Offering" envelope if you have not already done so. The suggested amount of \$3 helps defray the expense. Thank you!




Congratulations to Gabriel Tighe who graduates from Forest High School on May 27th!

### PRAYER FOR GRADUATES

Heavenly Father,  
Surround those who are graduating with your grace.  
Bless them with hope so that they move into the future with eager and open hearts.  
Help them to put the knowledge, skills, and insights gained through their education to use for the good of all humankind.  
Inspire them to believe in the goodness of life even when faced with challenges and difficulties.  
As they commence with their lives, may they grow ever more grateful and wise.  
All of this we ask in the name of Jesus, your beloved Son. Amen.







Pictures from the Pineland's Conference...

# Women of the ELCA



The ladies from Ascension attended the Pineland's Conference on Saturday March 18 at St. Matthew's Church.



**Celebrations for May**

*Daily Scripture Readings for MAY*



5/06 Sharon DeWalt

5/08 Gail Velten

5/31 May Duffey

1	Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19; Isaiah 25:1-5; 1 Peter 1:8b-12
2	Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19; Isaiah 26:1-4; 1 Peter 1:13-16
3	Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19; Isaiah 25:6-9; Luke 14:12-14
4	Acts 2:14a, 36-41; Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19; 1 Peter 1:17-23; Luke 24:13-35
5	Psalm 134; Genesis 18:1-14 1 Peter 1:23-25
6	Psalm 134; Proverbs 8:32—9:6; 1 Peter 2:1-3
7	Psalm 134; Exodus 24:1-11; John 21:1-14
8	Psalm 23; Exodus 2:15b-25; 1 Peter 2:9-12
9	Psalm 23; Exodus 3:16-22; 4:18-20; 1 Peter 2:13-17
10	Psalm 23; Ezekiel 34:1-16; Luke 15:1-7
11	Acts 2:42-47; Psalm 23; 1 Peter 2:19-25; John 10:1-10
12	Psalm 100; Ezekiel 34:17-23; 1 Peter 5:1-5
13	Psalm 100; Ezekiel 34:23-31; Hebrews 13:20-21
14	Psalm 100; Jeremiah 23:1-8; Matthew 20:17-28
15	Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16; Genesis 12:1-3; Acts 6:8-15
16	Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16; Exodus 3:1-12; Acts 7:1-16
17	Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16; Jeremiah 26:20-24; John 8:48-59
18	Acts 7:55-60; Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16; 1 Peter 2:2-10
19	Psalm 102:1-17; Exodus 13:17-22; Acts 7:17-40
20	Psalm 102:1-17; Proverbs 3:5-12; Acts 7:44-56
21	Psalm 102:1-17; Proverbs 3:13-18; John 8:31-38
22	Psalm 66:8-20; Genesis 6:5-22; Acts 27:1-12
23	Psalm 66:8-20; Genesis 7:1-24; Acts 27:13-38
24	Psalm 66:8-20; Genesis 8:13-19; John 14:27-29
25	Acts 17:22-31; Psalm 66:8-20; 1 Peter 3:13-22; John 14:15-21
26	Psalm 93; Genesis 9:8-17; Acts 27:39-44
27	Psalm 93; Deuteronomy 5:22-33; 1 Peter 3:8-12
28	Psalm 93; Deuteronomy 31:1-13; John 16:16-24
29	Acts 1:1-11; Psalm 47 or Psalm 93; Ephesians 1:15-23; Luke 24:44-53
30	Psalm 93; 2 Kings 2:1-12; Ephesians 2:1-7
31	Psalm 93; 2 Kings 2:13-15; John 8:21-30



There will be worship services here at Ascension Lutheran Church on Thursday, May 18 at 6:30 pm, in honor of the Ascension of Our Lord.

We hope to see you there!

Pastor Chuck



# MAY 2022

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4 9:00am Quilting	5	6
7 Fifth Sunday of Easter  10:30am—Worship with Holy Communion	8  5:30pm—AA	9	10	11  9:00am Quilting	12	13
14 Sixth Sunday of Easter  10:30am—Worship with Holy Communion  <b>Mother's Day</b>	15  5:30pm—AA	16	17	18  9:00am Quilting  <i>Ascension Day Worship Service 6:30 pm.</i>	19	20
21 Seventh Sunday of Easter  10:30am—Worship with Holy Communion Council meeting after	22  5:30pm—AA	23	24	25  9:00am Quilting	26	27
28 Day of Pentecost  10:30am—Worship with Holy Communion May Birthdays after Healing Prayer after	29  <i>MEMORIAL DAY</i>  5:30pm—AA	30	31	<div style="border: 2px solid blue; padding: 5px;"> <p>Each Sunday, we try to produce a new You tube worship video; perhaps something to share with a homebound friend or someone who just might be interested. <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSCCPOEIRIDVNciYLL6WcMXA">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSCCPOEIRIDVNciYLL6WcMXA</a></p> </div>		



## **Prayer for Memorial Day**

Almighty God, you are our strength and our shield. We give you thanks for the members of our armed forces past and present, and especially those who have died while serving. May their sacrifices serve the cause of peace, and may our nation be ever grateful for their service. With your wisdom and strength guide our military's leaders and give to all people a desire for justice and peace. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**