

December
2018

ASCENSION NEWSLETTER

~ The Gospel that Equips Us for Our Eternal Good ~

ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH

8888 County Rd 64

Daphne AL 36526

Church: 251-626-7500

Rev. Ralph Hough, Pastor

Officers

John Peterson, President
Richard Tellman, Vice-President
Alex Norton, Treasurer
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Kathy Schulz, Financial Secretary

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Linda Hall, Education
Cheryl Pitts, Stewardship
Susan Dube, Fellowship
David Ellis, Grounds
Charles Kettell, Board of
Properties
Open, Public Relations

Elders

Eric Marrero
Michael McAllister
Jim Pitts
Michael Schulz

¹⁰ Finally, **be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.** ¹¹ Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. ¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. ¹³ Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. ¹⁴ **Stand firm** then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, ¹⁵ and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷ Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. ¹⁸ And **pray in the Spirit** on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. ¹⁹ Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should. ²¹ Tychicus, the dear brother and faithful servant in the Lord, will tell you everything, so that you also may know how I am and what I am doing. ²² I am sending him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are, and that he may encourage you. ²³ Peace to the brothers, and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ **Grace to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with an undying love.**
Ephesians 6: 10-24

If there was ever a season of anticipation, joy and celebration for the Church it is Christmas! And while many people moan about hearing Christmas music before Halloween or Thanksgiving, we are reminded once again that God and His love for the world cannot be ignored or undone! And so, for you Christian, rejoice in the celebration of all God has done through Christ. Since Jesus became man, suffered and died and rose again, God's pardon, peace and call for us to participate in His Kingdom is an invitation to be thankful for and humbled by!

Be strong in the Spirit - As Paul finishes his letter to the Church in Ephesus, his admonition to be and remain strong in the Lord should not be lost on us. There are many distractions and opportunities to dilute our faith or set it aside for a season. Some say that the church is for the seasons of child bearing and baptism, confirmation and weddings. And to round out ones' participation in the Kingdom, don't forget to attend your own funeral! But it is a mistake to think those are the only times we need the Church! Actually, the times you need your Lord (in context of participating in Church) are the very times you think it is not that important. Those are the times that Satan knows you are the most vulnerable and that your spiritual guard is down. Every Christian who absents themselves from the presence of God's people gathered around His Word and Sacrament remove themselves from the very things God says is a part of the life of His called and redeemed people. To be and remain strong in the spirit is to be in the Word and Fellowship of God's people.

Stand Firm in the Spirit - This is spiritual maturity 101: the total man or woman of God in Jesus, with Jesus and for Jesus! Baptized and called, learning and caring, and reaching out in God's love through Spirit strengthened grace, every part of life is to be built upon the knowledge of Christ. True life grows and is reinforced as it is nourished by the Word of God and the hope we have in Jesus. He is the reason for our existence and together we are able to withstand the storms that come our way and defeat the strongholds of Satan and the world's plunge into darkness. As we stand firm, we do so in joyful hope that all we do in life with and for our Savior will produce eternal results fit for a Kingdom such as His!



DECEMBER /ADVENT WORSHIP THEMES

The King Is Coming

The Kingdom of God is a major theme in God's holy history, from the house and lineage of David to David's greater Son and Lord, whose birth and second coming we celebrate this season of Advent. This 4week series will focus on the appointed lessons from the Old Testament prophets with the expectation of a King who delivers God's people to come. The Word of God through these prophets also speak of this King's Kingdom that will have no end. Our lives as God's people in Christ are "lived under Him in His kingdom," as Luther put it – under the righteous rule and reign of Christ our King. Let us rejoice for the King is coming!



Wednesdays December 5, 12, 19

Midweek Advent 1 Today... in Your Ears!
Midweek Advent 2 At the Border Station
Midweek Advent 3 Is It True?

Services 11 am and 7 pm

Dinner at 5:45

Dec 2 – The King's City: Safe and Secure
Dec 9 – The King's Herald: Announcing the King
Dec 16 – The King Will Have His Day
Dec 23 – The Royal Roots: Back to the Future
Christmas Eve – What Kind of King is This?
Christmas Day – God Gave His Son
Dec 30 – Christmas in Our Sort of World

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Pray in the Spirit - Being in the Word informs us how and for what we pray. It's easy to remember to pray when we or someone we love are in a fix or a bind. That's reactive praying – praying when you are forced to while you want to do something else. **Active praying**, when clear understanding of what we are to pray for (all occasions and everything), moves us to continually seek God's will so that as we pray we are asking God to not leave us out of what He is blessing! In this manner we are praying for strongholds in people's lives to be removed, faith to rise in people's hearts and much more as it pertains to God's work in and through us! Every part of life and the blessed endeavors we take on is to be a reflection of God's desire for his people, for our good and the advancement of His Kingdom. Matt 11: 12

Love with an Undying Love – all of this is wrapped up in God's love form people. It was Jesus' love that drove Him to the cross to give His life for our sins and to rise from the dead to give us new life! Love gives and new life is the result! Whether it's a baby in Baptism, an adult convert through the preached Word, the gracious gift to a stranger, an encouragement to a brother or sister – Love gives and life is the result! It is the very thing we see and believe about our Lord Jesus whose sacrifice earned forgiveness and eternal for all who believe!

It is in the love of Jesus that we, the Church, continue to share with our family, friends and community the grace that won and purchased our salvation! May the peace of Christ rule in your hearts and minds as we praise God for His indescribable gift from above!

Got an idea, want to serve, need some encouragement... give me a call...

In Christ' service to you, P Ralph



Vincentine Williams 12/5
 Noel Thies 12/15
 Eric Marrero 12/25
 Judy Jackson 12/30

Charae Thies 12/15
 Thelma St. Pierre 12/22
 Clara Kimmery 12/27
 Ruth Partain 12/30



Keith & Lucille Hogancamp 12/19

Jim & Cheryl Pitts 12/28

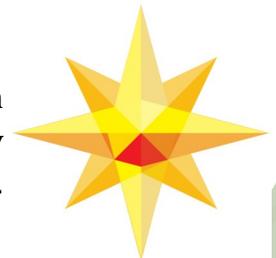


The LORD your God...
 will rejoice over you with gladness;
 he will quiet you by his love.
 ZEPHANIAH 3:17, ESV

My Walk with Jesus

What is the dream you have of what it would look like for you to have an established rhythm with Jesus? If someone were to observe you for a month, what would they observe about your personal walk with Jesus. Would they see you are even walking with Jesus? Hopefully they would answer yes, but if they are not, why is that way? What can you do to change this? Another pastor's wife at a convention came out and asked me are you in the Word everyday and I had to answer no. Embarrassing but true. I was not in God's Word except for Sunday morning or occasionally. So, what did I change, I bought a devotional study bible and it was laid out me in a format easy to follow. It had daily readings with an explanation of what I was reading that day and every 13 -14 days it was just a devotional or rest day. Easy, sure, doable, YES! Did it make a difference absolutely? Did I mess up occasionally, of course, but I worked hard to get on track and it pays off. My rhythm with Jesus is going well and now I find I crave the Word and feel off if I don't read some every day. Kind of like brushing your teeth, feels off (and my breath doesn't smell good either). I encourage you to get your walk with Jesus going and see what happens and maybe someone will see and be able to observe your personal walk with Jesus. Sarah Hough

Children's Ministry Team -You may inquire more about this to John Peterson (president), 251-626-7642 or P Ralph Hough 330-209-0012 or any others on the team: Cynthia Tellman, Jean Canupp, Jim Dube or Sally Norton. Thank You.



Stewardship – “Looking Ahead”

It is again Advent, my favorite season of the church year. As the beginning of the church year, we are looking ahead as our secular year draws to an end.

As in all good things, there is an end as this has been my final year serving as Stewardship Chair. For the past nine years, it has been my privilege to encourage the congregation to think of stewardship as a way of life, rather than just a word for asking for money. Of course I’ve done some of that and many of you still hold your wallet tight when I pass, but you have responded with unbelievable generosity. You have also responded generously with your time and abilities. As I continue in other areas of service, I encourage you to continue in your active stewardship life.

At this time, we do not have a volunteer to become our next Stewardship Chair. I am hoping by the December 9th Voters meeting that someone will step forward. I will be happy to talk with you about the job and if I can help you get started, I will gladly do so. Pastor Ralph and other Council members have been most helpful and supportive of my work and you can expect the same.

A word of thanks (a really big **THANKS!!!**) is in order to all who donated so generously to recent appeals for hurricane relief in our district and in the Southeastern District. Letters of thanks have been received from both, acknowledging your generosity and asking for your continued prayers and support. Recovery in both areas will take years, as you know from your own hurricane experience, and if you can help in any way, please consider doing so.



I wish you God’s richest blessings in this Advent season and in the Christmas-Epiphany season to come.

Cheryl Pitts, Stewardship Chair

Nominations for the next Church year

Below are the current openings for the church council. Nomination are sought and will be voted on by majority of the Voters Assembly for a term of two years starting on January 1. If there is a position that you feel God is leading you to fill, please make this known to one of the Board members or Pastor so that you may be nominated. If you want to nominate someone else please ask their permission first! Generally, the positions require (preferred) attending monthly council meeting. Part of what goes on in the meeting is ongoing training so that the board remains in step with our mission as we represent the congregation.

Nominations for 2019 Officers and Boards (odd Year) And currently serving

OFFICERS:

President John Peterson
Secretary Ruth Partain
Treasurer Alex Norton

BOARDS:

Board of Elders (Half elected this year: elect 3)

1 Mike Schulz 2 Mike McAllister 3 Jim Partridge

Elder 4, 5, 6, are not up for re-election

4 Eric Marrero 5 Position Open 6 Position Open

Chairperson, Board of Stewardship, Position -Open

Chairperson, Board of Youth, Position -Open

Chairperson, Board of Fellowship Susan Dube

Chairperson, Parochial School, Position -Open (only if voters approve school ministry)

(Not up for election, would serve one year than be re-elected)

Evangelism, Position -Open

Public Relations, Position -Open

SOMETHING FOR ALL OF US!

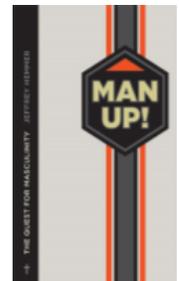
Sunday Morning Bible Study Opportunities

1. (Lead by Pastor Ralph) **Life's Big Questions – God's Big Answers** is the study we will be engaging . Written by a Lutheran teacher, Brad Alles equips us to be able to answer the big questions people today have. This a DVD /discussion study that will help you in your faith and to defend your faith in God's Word and our Lord Jesus Christ. Sundays at 9:15ish.
2. Continuing in December (lead by Cynthia and or Jennifer Tellman) we will study of the consequences and contributions of the 1517 Reformation women. **Katharina von Bora** provides an elegant, determined example of how Protestant women—especially those married to Protestant reformers—constructed and legitimated new social roles for themselves, thus, promoting the legitimacy of the Reformation itself in daily life. These women maintained the traditional social norms and customs expected of them and overlaid their confession (s) on their lives. In doing so, von Bora, through her actions, devotion and dedication, aided in the development of a new social role for Protestant women created as one of the many outcomes of the 1517 Reformation: the pastor's wife. Join us in the lobby at 9:15 a.m. to dig deeper into the Reformation!



Wednesday Morning and Evening Bible Study (Evening class **will not** meet in December) continues in the **Book of Revelation**. Classes are Wednesdays in the morning (9-10:30) and an evening class (7-8:30pm). We have been learning what figurative language for the end times mean and how we are being prepared to face trials and temptations. The format will be Welcome-Intro, Table discussion from homework assignment, question/answer lecture, and prayer. Share in the fellowship and grow in the faith through this exciting book of victory in Jesus that breeds encouragement among the saints! It's not too late to join us! Invite a friend, the more the merrier! More info available online! ourdaphnechurch.org

Man Up Men's Breakfast will happen on December 15th (3rd Saturday). Besides food and fellowship we will enjoy some good devotional discussion (Chapter 9 – The Portrait of Fatherhood: God the Father). You do not need a copy of the book – a discussion guide is provided. Please feel free to invite a friend and join us! 7:30-9am.



Confirmation – Elijah Stevens and Noel Thies are our confirmands and it is a joy to have these young folks in class! Please keep our youth in your prayers. If you have any questions call P Ralph 330-209-0012.

Upcoming Events



Café 8888 - Devotional Praise/ Prayer and Share gathering will be December 18. Our time of praise, devotion and prayer will center on our December Christmas Celebrations. Come and be blessed. Invite a friend and share in the praise of our Lord Jesus! 6:30 -8:30 pm, music begins at 7.

Young at Hearts **Young at Hearts will take place on December 13!** We meet at 11 am, listen to a speaker from an area ministry or local entity and share in a pot luck meal. All are invited and your friends can come, too! This month's speaker is Bob Stauffacher, chaplain at Westminster Villages in Spanish Fort. He will speak of his ministry there and the blessing that Westminster Village is to the residents!



Remember: ***It will only be good if you are there!*** So says Keith Hogancamp.

December 9 Voter's Meeting

We will have Continue our bi-annual Congregational meeting after the 10:30 am Service. In November the congregation voted to:

1. Make nominations for Synodical President, Vice-President and Regional Vice-President
2. Open a brokerage account so that anyone may donate stock directly to the church.
3. Added a designated line item for a School fund.
4. Continue meeting December 9.

Remaining business to vote on December 9:

1. Vote on Church Council
2. Parochial School Board Chairperson (other members are appointed to serve on board by Church Council).
3. Church budget for 2019



Ascension Lutheran Church
8888 County Road 64
Daphne, Alabama 36526

To a future Addressee

We are a congregation committed to the Gospel of Jesus Christ reflected in our ministries of worship, learning, care and outreach to our community.