

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

JUNE 2025

When He had said these words, He was lifted up before their eyes till a cloud hid Him from their sight. While they were still gazing up into the sky as He went, suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them and said, "Men of Galilee, why are you standing here looking up into the sky? This very Jesus who has been taken up from you into Heaven will come back in just the same way as you have seen Him go." (Acts 1:9-11, JB Phillips Version)

As you read these words, we celebrate another holiday or, more accurately, holy day, in our faith. It is unfortunate that the only holy days that many in the Church recognize are those which the commercial industry takes advantage of to generate income, primarily Christmas and Easter (you could throw in Halloween which was developed from the celebration of All Saints Day). Even Pentecost (June 8th this year), the third major holy day in the Christian faith, gets shortchanged in the Church because quite frankly it is so abstract (tongues of fire and speaking in other languages are harder to replicate than mangers in barns, crosses on hills, and empty tombs). So, what is the holy day that is presently observed on the Church calendar? It is Ascension Day which is 40 days after the resurrection, always on a Thursday and this year, May 29th. Every holy day emphasizes an aspect of the Christian faith. So why is Ascension Day important?

What occurred on Ascension Day is reported by Luke in Acts 1, the specific verses are found above. After Jesus spent 40 days (or a complete time) to help the believing community come to grips with His actual resurrection, it was now time to move onto the next phase of the Father's plan which was the coming of the Holy Spirit, and all that would mean to the community of believers. So, right before the eyes of the disciples, away Jesus went to be seen no more in His physical nature. And where did He go? The answer is found in the Apostles Creed, *He ascended into heaven and is seated on the right hand of God the Father Almighty* and that is most significant to us in our faith.

We use the term that someone is a person's 'right hand man/woman' to stress someone's authority in the work of the person to whom they are connected. The thought stems from this affirmation which the Church has believed from the beginning: Jesus is at the right hand of God, indicating Jesus is Lord and has authority over all granted by God the Father. I Corinthians 15:24-27 says it best:

The end will come, when He (Jesus) will turn the Kingdom over to God the Father, having destroyed every ruler and authority and power. For Christ must reign until He humbles all His enemies beneath His feet. And the last enemy to be destroyed is death. For the Scriptures say, "God has put all things under His authority."

On Ascension Day, we remember Jesus is Lord of all and thus nothing can separate us from God's love for us because Jesus has authority over all things, and He will not let anything take us away from God. He gave His life to accomplish that truth, and He will never allow it to be undone, especially death itself, evil's last effort to undo us.

Ascension Day is very important to our hope. Remember it, be thankful for Jesus' Lordship, and be at peace. Even though He appeared to leave, He is with you always until time is no more, thus He has got you covered. Alleluia!!!

With love,



SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

The Sacrament of Baptism will be administered during worship on Sunday, June 29th. If you are interested in receiving the Sacrament of Baptism, call the Church office at 774-4211 by June 12th. All requests need to be approved by Session at their meeting that night.