



## St. Paul's Ev. Lutheran Church Aberdeen, SD April/May 2026

### Ascension Day

They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven." Acts 1:10-11

Over the years, Ascension has risen much higher in my favorite church holidays. I think that I have begun to understand how important the Ascension is because of my time spent as a pastor and the value of pastoral ministry. Perhaps you are asking how those things are connected? Martin Luther wrote a tremendous sermon on the Ascension based on the last chapter of Mark. (If you would like a copy of this sermon, I can make it available to you.)

In this sermon he makes the great point that if Jesus didn't ascend into heaven, he would be alive and kicking around Israel. The problem begins when we think about location and vicinity. How can Christians all around the world "get" to Israel. This would be impossible for some due to age or health and for others due to finances and opportunity. The second problem might be worse than the first. Even if you can get to Israel, how would you get to Jesus? He would be surrounded by people, and it would be impossible to actually be in his vicinity. We see this in a way when the woman who has the bleeding problem tries to get to Jesus. Jesus is in a throng of people pushing in and so the disciples are surprised when Jesus asked who touched him. They reply, "**You see the crowd pressing around you, and yet you say, 'Who touched me?'**" As you can see this had already been a problem, how much worse would this situation have been after his resurrection when the word got around to the whole Roman empire?

In fact, there is another issue, Jesus wishes us to become the least and value the least over the most important, powerful or rich. In a post resurrection world where Jesus is living in Israel who would get to see Jesus or be close to him? Probably the most important, the rich, the powerful, exactly the opposite of what Jesus wanted.

Now that you can see the problem Jesus gives us an elegant solution that is in fact better than any solution, we could have come up with. Jesus ascends to the right hand of God and sits down on that throne of glory and power and from there he dispenses forgiveness and strength through the work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit works through the Means of Grace. And thanks be to God, the Means of Grace are readily available then to anyone who goes to a Lutheran Church and receives forgiveness in Baptism, forgiveness in the Absolution, forgiveness in the Lord's Supper and even consolation and love from the brethren of our churches.

Luther states it like this, *And for this purpose did he ascend up thither, that he might be down here, that he might fill all things and be everywhere present; which thing he could not do had he remained on earth, for here in the body he could not have been present with all.*

Christ sits down on his throne and so he is then present everywhere. His body after the resurrection is fully endowed with the power of his divinity. He is no longer hiding or veiling his glory. That is why he can be present everywhere on every altar. That is why poor humble people living in Mansfield, Rapid City, Fargo or Aberdeen can receive the body of Christ all at the same hour all on similar altars. What a gift to us! It is then that when Jesus ascends to heaven and sits down upon his throne in glory that he becomes present everywhere and present for us. The Ascension is a sort of birthday for the Means of Grace, and the Means of Grace are so important to us and vital to our faith. I hope you enjoy this holiday and join us to celebrate it. SDG Rev. Drevlow

Hebrews 1:3 He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

1 Peter 3:22 Who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.

Acts 2:33 Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing.

Hebrews 12:2 Looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

Colossians 3:1 If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.



## Pentecost

*Acts 2:1-4, "When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. <sup>2</sup> And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. <sup>3</sup> And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested<sup>d</sup> on each one of them. <sup>4</sup> And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance."*

Pentecost is probably one of those stories we know well. After Jesus' resurrection and right before His ascension He told the disciples to go to Jerusalem and wait for the Helper. That is the Holy Spirit. Then on Pentecost the Holy Spirit came and descended on the disciples like fire and suddenly everyone could understand what the disciples said in their own language. It's an amazing story where we get to see the power of the Holy Spirit. Yet, we sometimes fail to see it more than that, when we should. In fact, Pentecost is one of the three high feast days for Christians, along with Easter and Christmas. That means we should think of it along the same lines as Christmas and Easter and yet, we never do. Usually, it's just another Sunday in the year and that's it.

However, at Pentecost we see a few important things. First, we see the reversal of the Tower of Babel. At the Tower of Babel got punished the people who thought they could usurp Him by confusing their language. At that point everyone spoke the same language but afterwards we got the multitude of languages we have now. At Pentecost, though, we begin to see this reversed where everyone can now understand each other. In many ways it is a glimpse of what heaven will be like! Notice though, that God does this for the Gospel. So, that all there can hear what Jesus has done for them and come to faith. So, in many ways we can see that Pentecost is the start of the disciples evangelizing and the church beginning to grow.

Along the same lines, at Pentecost we begin to see the Church spread. At this time all the believers are in Jerusalem or Israel but after Pentecost it begins to spread around the world. Some of it because of the Apostles going and spreading the Gospel but also because of those who heard and were baptized at Pentecost went back home and began to spread the Gospel there. So, Pentecost is not just a celebration of the Holy Spirit coming upon the Apostles but also the Holy Spirit working throughout the world bringing people to faith.

Lastly, we see Scripture fulfilled. Joel prophesied about this in 2:28-32 which Peter quotes in his speech to the people. What we see in Joel and here at Pentecost is the Holy Spirit will go out to all people. Not just the Israelites but the Gentiles as well. Now, of course the Holy Spirit brought Gentiles to faith before this but the mission to bring them in goes out to all people. Israel is now longer needed for the Savior for the Savior has come. Now is the time of the new church, of the new Jerusalem, that includes both Jew and Gentile. Pentecost then can be seen as the beginning of bringing the Gentiles into the faith. Something that should be rightly celebrated by all Christians but especially us Gentiles!

As you can see Pentecost then should not be overlooked and simply seen as simply another Sunday. Instead, we should celebrate it like a high feast day for it was the day the Holy Spirit went out upon all flesh, and the new church began in earnest. May God bless you with the Holy Spirit this Easter season and as we enter the season of Pentecost afterwards.

In Christ,  
Pastor Smith

## Youth for Christ

We are having a blast in Jr youth group. We have three more regular meetings this school year wrapping up The Nicene Creed. The kids are eager at a chance to win a Walmart gift card upon reciting the creed they worked so hard to learn about this year. Please consider reciting it with them at home. The kids have impressed us so much with their kind fellowship skills, their openness to welcome visitors and their joy in including each other throughout age gaps. Kids 4 Christ is a place to welcome each other as Christian brothers and sisters and these kids have blown us away meeting that mission. Our end of the year send off will be May 15th- the kids plan to vote on what we will be doing next meeting. We will start up again August 21st. Thank you for sharing your amazing children with us this year.

Laura & Pastor Smith, Gracelyn & Joy





## Upcoming Events:

**Statements of Faith: Wednesday, April 29th @ 7:00pm**

**Confirmation Day: Sunday, May 3rd, 2026**

## Egg Bake Recipe

Prep Time: 10 mins

Cook Time: 20 mins

Total Time: 30 mins

### Ingredients:

- 12 eggs, beaten
- 1 pound ground breakfast sausage, bacon or ham
- 16 ounces shredded Cheddar cheese, divided
- 7 slices white bread, torn into pieces
- 1 diced red or yellow pepper
- 1 diced green pepper

### Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C).

Brown sausage in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Drain off grease, and set aside to cool.

Tear bread into small pieces and place in 9x13 pan.

Mix eggs in a separate bowl.

Add to eggs, sausage/ham/bacon, 12 ounces of the cheese and peppers. Mix well and pour this over bread in 9x13 pan.

Top with the remaining 4 ounces of cheese and cover with foil.

Bake at 350 degrees F (175 degrees C) for 15 minutes, uncover, and bake until casserole is golden brown and bubbly.



# Lighthouse Preschool

Teaching God's children about their Creator, Savior, and Friend while preparing them for a lifetime of wonder, learning, and service.

Spring 2026

## Upcoming Dates:

April 3-6- Easter Break

April 7- Raffle Fundraiser Begins

April 21- Field Trip to Museum

May 3- Raffle Fundraiser Ends

May 11- Spring Program/Graduation

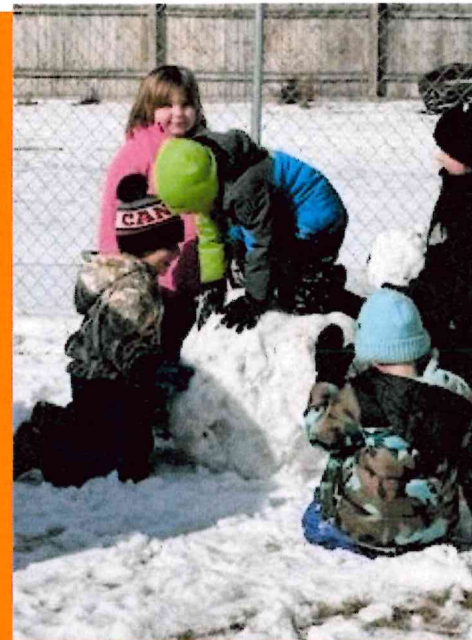
May 15- Last Day of School!



Digging for dinosaurs and hatching dinosaur eggs from baking soda and vinegar!



Learning about worms!



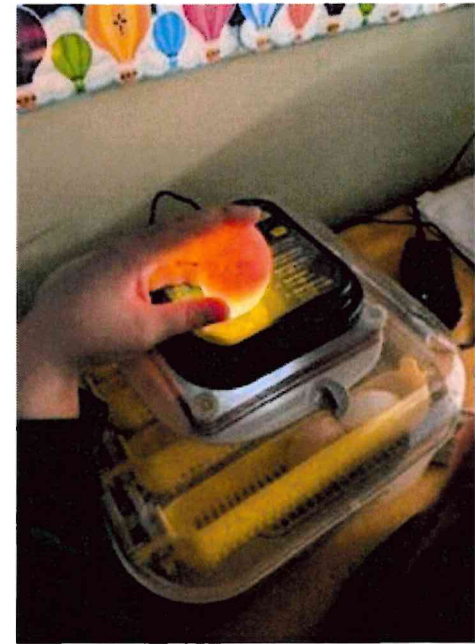
Enjoying the weather, no matter what it brings!



## Our favorite activity so far, the Life cycle of a chicken!



Is the inside of a white egg different than a brown egg?  
Will our chicks all look the same too?  
We will find out in 21 days!



Day 4 of development! We see a lot of veins and a small chick!

## REMINDERS:

Registrations are now being accepted for the 2026-2027 School year! Our Jr. Kindergarten program is limited to the first 12 students who enroll! Please call the preschool for more information or pick up a registration packet from the church office!