

# The “AGAPE” #41

(ASCENSION AND PENTECOST)

A “BLOG-LIKE” NEWSLETTER FROM PASTOR ZEUCH

ST. MATTHEW LUTHERAN CHURCH, CALGARY AB

May 15, 2022

“On the third day He rose again from the dead, He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty...”

We pronounce these unbelievable and powerful words every Sunday as a confession of faith, affirming that we truly believe in the death, the resurrection, and the visible ascension of the Christ, our dear Lord. Forty days after his glorious resurrection, he gathered his followers, gave them final instructions, a commission (The “Great Commission”) and went up, “ascended” into heaven to be with his Father. This year we commemorate this fact described in Acts chapter 1. Christ is risen up after advising the disciples to stay in Jerusalem until the arrival of the Holy Spirit. That happened ten days after Jesus ascended into heaven We celebrate that day also, calling it “Pentecost” (which means 50 days after his resurrection – hence the name PENTE-cost, “*penta*” meaning five).



As he raises, a cloud obscures him from their view, and two men in white arrive to tell them that he will return “in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.” In Christian doctrine, the ascension is correlated with the exaltation of Jesus, meaning that through his ascension, Jesus took his seat at the right hand of God: “He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.”

Both, the Ascension and the Pentecost are important days for us, Christians. This Jesus that was hung on the cross on Good Friday, has now fulfilled all promises about the Saviour already found in the Old Testament. We now have free access to the Father in heaven! As someone said in the past, “salvation is free, but not cheap”. It cost God’s only Son’s life so that YOU and ME could have live forever. Are you thankful to God for this? Then come, join us in worship every Sunday. May the Holy Spirit dwell in your heart and fill you with joy in the upcoming season of Pentecost!

## REFLECTIONS: “What’s up?”

So, there is a movie on Netflix called “don’t look up”. One of the things I enjoy in life is stargazing, having a moment to contemplate the beauty of God’s creation. I do look up and check “what’s up” - in the night skies! You probably know this, or you will hear it in the news, but let me tell you: this coming Sunday evening, May 15 will be both exciting and meaningful for stargazers and astronomers (actually, for anyone who likes to see celestial phenomena) all over the American continent and parts of Europe and Africa. There will be a **total lunar eclipse** (also called “blood moon”, because of the reddish tinge the Full Moon takes on when fully eclipsed). The full moon of spring is also called “flower moon”. Native Americans call it “budding moon” or “egg laying moon”. The last total eclipse of the moon of this kind happened in 2019. This year it should be amazing and last for hours! It should reach its peak at 9:15 p.m. here in Calgary, when it rises in the SE. Venture outdoors to get the best view of the fully eclipsed red Moon! Find a location with unobstructed views of the horizon, if possible. Let’s hope for good weather (meaning “clear skies”).



As you behold the beauty of the moon, remember this: Psalm 19 says “the heavens declare (proclaim) God’s glory”. Psalm 104 says: “the moon marks off the seasons and the sun knows when to go down”; Psalm 148 even invites the sun and the moon to praise the Lord (v. 3), including the “shining stars”, just to mention a few passages among so many! The Bible also has an “eschatological” language (things concerning the last days) and talks about the moon turning red like blood, since the time of the prophets in the Old Testament:

“The sun will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes. Joel 2:31

Many years later, St. Peter quotes this passage from the prophet Joel in his Pentecost speech (Acts 2:20)

And, in the book of Revelation we read: “I looked when He broke the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth made of hair, and the whole moon became like blood;” (Rev. 6:12)

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## HELP & PRAY FOR UKRAINE

This will probably be the last time and we pray that this war will be done by the time we come up with another edition of Agape. We continue to pray for our brothers and sisters in the Ukraine while the war still sweeps over the country as I write these lines. Lord, have mercy.

There are many ways you can help families who are in need right now. There is the “Ukraine Emergency Appeal” through the Canadian Lutheran World Relief. If you are interested, click on the link below:

<https://www.clwr.org/product/E-104/ukraine-crisis>

There is also the LCC Ukraine Aid Fund. This fund will provide specific support for the pastors and people of the congregations of the Synod of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in Ukraine (SELCU). Here is the link if you read this newsletter electronically:

<https://lutheranchurch-canada.tng-secure.com/?pageld=donation-edit&categoryld=10976>

If you are reading this newsletter on your electronic device, you may click here to read an article written by pastor Roland Syens in the Canadian Lutheran:

[\*\*The most powerful weapon is not nuclear: Jesus and the war in Ukraine.\*\*](#)

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### SAINT MATTHEW LUTHERAN CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS:

**USHERS NEEDED:** We are looking for a few good members to greet members and visitors who are joining us on Sundays for services. If you would consider filling this position, please contact the office @ 403-266-1458. Training will be provided. Thank you.

**OFFERING COUNTERS NEEDED:** we are looking for members who are able to spare 45-60 minutes on Sundays after the English service to count Sunday’s offerings. Please let us know by calling the office at 403-266-1458 if you would consider this volunteer position. Required training will be provided. Thank you.

**BIBLE STUDY:** We continue our online Bible studies on Wednesday evenings @ 7 pm on Zoom. We are studying “Christ in the Old Testament”. It is amazing, even mind- blowing how Jesus Christ is present from cover to cover in our bibles and how both testaments

connect to each other! I would like to encourage you to consider spending one hour a week for these opportunities to grow in God's Word. Our last Bible study before the summer break will be June 22. Even if you haven't joined us before, I strongly invite you. See you there!

**LADIES ONLY:** Please come and join us for good food and fellowship on Saturday, **May 28 @ 12 pm.** for our SPRING LUNCHEON. You may find a sign-up sheet in the back of the church.

**SERVICES ON OUR WEBSITE:** Since day 1 in the pandemic (March of 2020) we have posted our worship services regularly, almost every Sunday on our website. It's a huge amount of work to keep doing this. Also, we were wondering how many of you still watch those services on the website? We are planning to stop posting those, since the majority now either comes to church or watches us live on zoom. We are thankful to Warren Ohlhauser for having volunteered to do it for all that time.

**CONFIRMATION CLASSES:** Our five confirmands have now completed the first year and are going into "summer break". Salma, Jordan, Melissa, John and Emily will resume their classes in September, when they start their second year. A big thank-you to teachers Koreen and Heather for the faithful work they have done in teaching these kids the basics of Christian faith so far!

**MOTHER'S DAY COFFEE HOUR:** We were all so happy to be able to bring back our beloved coffee hour this last Mothers' Day! Thank you, Lori for organizing it and thanks to all who brought some goodies to share. Fathers' Day should be next! We will keep you posted.





## MARK IT ON YOUR CALENDAR!

### Special dates, services, celebrations, activities, events...

**MAY 15 (Sun):** Fifth Sunday of Easter: German worship service with Holy Communion @ 9:30 a.m. / English worship service with Holy Communion 11 a.m.

**MAY 18 (Wed):** Online Bible Study @ 7 p.m. topic: "Christ in the Old Testament";

**MAY 19 (Thurs):** Online PPC meeting @ 7 p.m.

**MAY 20 (Fri):** Youth activity from 7 – 10 p.m.

**MAY 21 (Sat):** Emperor Constantine, Christian Ruler, and Helena, Mother of Constantine

**MAY 22 (Sun):** Sixth Sunday of Easter. German worship service @ 9:30 a.m. / English worship service @ 11 a.m.

**MAY 23 (Mon):** Victoria Day (office closed);

**MAY 24 (Tues):** Esther;

**MAY 25 (Wed):** Bede the Venerable, Theologian / Online Bible Study @ 7 p.m. topic: "Christ in the Old Testament";

**MAY 26 (Thurs):** The Ascension of Our Lord;



**MAY 28 (Sat):** Ladies Luncheon at the church basement @ 12 p.m. (Registration required);

**MAY 29 (Sun):** Seventh Sunday of Easter. German worship service @ 9:30 a.m. / English worship service @ 11 a.m.

**MAY 29 (Sun):** Online monthly Bible study in Portuguese;

**MAY 31 (Tues):** The Visitation;

June 2022

no.	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
22				1	2	3	4
23	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
24	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
25	19 <small>Father's Day</small>	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	26	27	28	29	30		

**JUNE 1 (Wed):** Pastor leads worship service at Bethany Riverside Senior Home; / Online Bible Study @ 7 p.m. topic: "Christ in the Old Testament" / Justin, Martyr;

**JUNE 2 (Thurs):** Board of Elders meeting @ 7 p.m.

**JUNE 3 (Fri):** Youth activity from 7 – 10 p.m.

**JUNE 5 (Sun):** The Day of Pentecost: German worship service with Holy Communion @ 9:30 a.m. / English worship service with Holy Communion 11 a.m. / Boniface of Mainz, Missionary to the Germans;

**JUNE 8 & 9:** Pastor is away. There is no Bible Study on June 8th!

**JUNE 10 - 13:** Pastor at the LCC synodical Convention in Edmonton;

**JUNE 11 (Sat):** St. Barnabas, Apostle;

**JUNE 12 (Sun):** Holy Trinity Sunday. Pastor is away. Reading services led by elders; / The Ecumenical Council of Nicaea, AD 325;

## READING: CHURCH TERMINOLOGY- What does it mean?

FROM THE LUTHERAN CHURCH-CANADA'S WEBSITE: [lutheranchurchcanada.ca](http://lutheranchurchcanada.ca)

**Baptismal Font:** A baptismal font is where the pastor baptizes children and adults. Through the waters of Holy Baptism, a person is received into the family of God and is given the gifts of forgiveness, life, salvation earned by Jesus. The Sacrament of Holy Baptism is a great source of assurance and comfort for the believer.



**Pascal Candle:** A large candle that has special significance during the Easter Vigil. It is also used at baptisms and funerals. Ordinarily it is located near the baptismal font. During the Fifty Days of Easter (from Easter to the festival of Pentecost) it is placed near the altar, and at funerals it stands near the casket. “Paschal” comes from the Greek word for Passover and refers specifically to the celebration of Christ’s resurrection.

**Banners:** Hanging on stands, the walls or rafters of church buildings, banners often illustrate biblical theme or teaching. Banners are also used to communicate particular themes of the Seasons of the Church Year.

**Stained glass windows:** Works of art often communicate a Bible story or theme. These windows can serve as teaching tools and also as a way to beautify a church building. In medieval times when illiteracy was high, churches used stained glass windows to teach people the stories of the Bible. Stained glass windows have been nicknamed the “Poor Man’s Bible” for this reason.  
There’s more to come in our next Agape!

## DIE DEUTSCHE ECKE

Genießen Sie jetzt das Lied: „Wie lieblich ist der Maien“, ein Maigruß von drei virtuellen Chören. Wenn Sie dies auf Ihrem Computer lesen, können Sie hier klicken, um es anzuhören:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vKvNrZFqJiM>

### **Text: Was wird an Christi Himmelfahrt gefeiert?**

Mit Ostern schließen drei von vier Evangelien ihren Bericht vom Leben und Wirken Jesu. Die Auferstehung ist das Schlusskapitel der Evangelien und der Schlüssel zur Deutung der Lebensgeschichte Jesu. Der Verfasser des Lukasevangeliums entfaltet diesen Schluss durch die Erzählung von der „Himmelfahrt“ des auferstandenen Christus. Danach hat sich Jesus Christus nach seiner Auferstehung 40 Tage lang den Aposteln gezeigt, bevor er von ihnen schied und in den Himmel fuhr (Apostelgeschichte 1,1-11; Lukas 24,51). Ein Vers im Markusevangelium fügt dem im Anschluss an Psalm 110,1 hinzu, dass Jesus



sich „zur Rechten Gottes“ gesetzt hat (Markus 16,19). Das wiederholt der Artikel zu Jesus Christus im apostolischen Glaubensbekenntnis, wo es über Jesus Christus heißt: „aufgefahren in den Himmel; er sitzt zur Rechten Gottes, des allmächtigen Vaters“.

Das Fest Christi Himmelfahrt ist erst seit dem Ende des 5. Jahrhunderts fester Bestandteil des kirchlichen Festkalenders. Seiner theologischen Bedeutung nach ist es das Bindeglied zwischen dem Oster- und dem Pfingstfest.

Das Fest Christi Himmelfahrt wird immer am 40. Tag der Osterzeit, also 39 Tage nach Ostern gefeiert. Daher fällt es stets auf einen Donnerstag. Mit Ostern und Pfingsten gehört es zu den drei Festen der Osterzeit, die nach 50 Tagen mit Pfingsten endet. Diese Feste stehen gewissermaßen für die Stufen der „Erhöhung“ Jesu Christi, nämlich am Kreuz (vgl. Johannes 3,14), in der Auferstehung (Ostern), in der Himmelfahrt und in der Ausgießung des Heiligen Geistes (Pfingsten). Christi Himmelfahrt ist somit als Moment einer Bewegung zu verstehen, die am Karfreitag begonnen hat und erst an Pfingsten zum Ziel kommt – gemäß dem Jesuswort in Johannes 16,7: „Es ist gut für euch, dass ich weggehe. Denn wenn ich nicht weggehe, kommt der Tröster [nämlich der Geist Christi] nicht zu euch. Wenn ich aber gehe, werde ich ihn zu euch senden.“

Aus die Webseite [www.ekd.de](http://www.ekd.de)

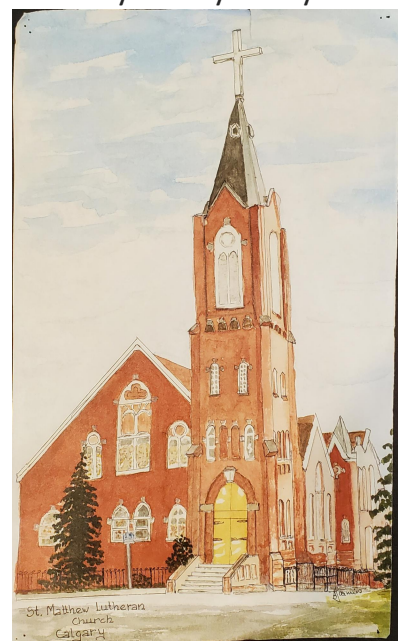
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## GOD’S WORD FOR EVERY SITUATION

For the most part, life is beautiful, exciting, and enjoyable. However, at times, it can be stressful, discouraging, and worrisome. If we cling to the cross and the word of God there is nothing that cannot be overcome. Whether you are excited for a new opportunity or struggling with anxiety, here are 12 verses to encourage you to keep the faith. Here are a few verses for you to help you. Read the verse very slowly many times and pray that these words may be engraved in your heart. It’s your Christian way to practice meditation.

**When You Are Stressed:** “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”  
John 14:27

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## ST. MATTHEW'S HISTORY

Since we will be celebrating our 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary next year, I decided to bring to you some events that were the highlights of our history since the foundation of this congregation. Here are some highlights for **MAY**:

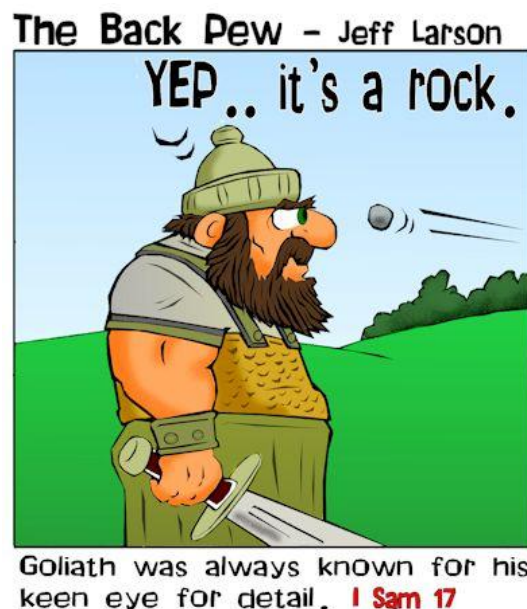
1919 (May) The first constitution is adopted and signed.

1953 (May) Basement completely excavated to provide more room for the auditorium.

1958 (May) Neon Cross placed on spire.

1991 (May) Reinhard Dittmer served as a vicar until 1992

And now, a little humour to wrap up this edition:



Thank you for taking your time to read the Agape. Enjoy the beautiful weather and may God's peace fill your days ahead in this upcoming Pentecost season.



In His service,

**Rev. Markus Zeuch**

Ph: (403) 837-4600

Visit our website: [www.stmatthewlutherancalgary.com](http://www.stmatthewlutherancalgary.com)

Follow us on Facebook and YouTube!

"And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." Phil 4:7