

Pastor Sailer's Page

Faith Lutheran Church
Sioux Falls, SD

Vol. 17, No. 14

May 16 & 17, 2015

IS IT GOOD THAT HE LEFT?

This past Thursday, many in the Christian Church celebrated the Ascension of Our Lord, a monumental event that occurred 40 days after His resurrection.

Why is the Ascension of Jesus so important? Why is it a good thing that Jesus ended His visible presence and ministry activity on earth?

For one thing – and it's the most important thing – Jesus' ascension was part of the Good News that He is alive, never again to die. He is our living, victorious Lord and Savior, and His ascension is a kind of victory procession for Him. For another, the angels do say to the disciples, **"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 1:11b). He's alive, and He's going to come back! Excellent reasons to celebrate, don't you agree?

What else is happening, thanks to Jesus having ascended into heaven? How about this! Jesus said, **"In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am"** (John 14:2-3).

While we cannot know all that it means that Jesus is preparing a place for us in heaven, it does indicate He's busy working for us. And could it be that Jesus' work of preparing a place for us includes what He is doing in us right now – that is, He is bringing His Word to us now? Through the Word, the Spirit is working on your faith now, keeping it strong and making it stronger, until the day you enter the "Father's house." Or think of it this way: Jesus prepares a place for you in the new heavens and new earth He will bring about on the Last Day by preparing *you* for that Day, when He will "come back and take you to be with [Him]." Jesus is busy at work doing that for you!

Do you want some more good news? The Ascension of Jesus marks not only a *departure*, but did you know that it also paves the way for the *arrival* of Someone very special? Jesus promises His disciples in John 14:26-27: **"...the**

Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you." Jesus also says, in John 16:7: **"I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. And when He comes, He will convince the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment."**

Jesus leaves, but only to send the gift of the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, who will help the world by the Word of God. Think about it! Because Jesus ascended, the Gospel would not stay with those few disciples a couple thousand years ago in Israel. No! The Good News about Jesus would be preached to the joy and enlightenment of men and women, boys and girls, scattered around the world for centuries to come.

You and I are living proof of the blessings that have kept coming and coming, because Jesus ascended into heaven to rule all things for the sake of the Church and because He gave the gift of the Holy Spirit!

REPORT FROM THE MAY 3 VOTERS' MEETING

Some important decisions were made at the recent Voters' Meeting. The following Faith members were elected to leadership positions:

Congregational Chairman -	Scott Hirsch
Cong. Vice-Chairman -	Joel Neubauer
Treasurer -	Vacant
Elders -	Mark List, Russ Hirsch
Trustee -	Paul Sargent
Stewardship Vice-Chair -	Todd Taylor
Evangelism Vice-Chair -	Krista Erickson
Parish Ed Vice-Chair -	Sarah Wilkison
SFLS School Board -	Scott Peters

The Voters also 1) resolved to contract with Faith members, Revs. Pete Sestak and Dick Luttmann, to provide some pastoral services in the upcoming senior pastor vacancy; 2) resolved to give extra financial compensation to Pastor Kory during the vacancy for additional responsibilities he will assume; 3) adopted a spending plan for 2015-16, that will include \$25,000 for new ministries within the "Matthew 28 Project," and 4) granted yours truly a peaceful release from my call, effective June 14, 2015.