



Disciple

May 2015/ Monthly Newsletter of Holy Cross
Lutheran Church

“IS JESUS HERE OR THERE?”

by: Pastor Chris D. Ongstad

One of the questions that confuses many Christians is whether Jesus is really present here on earth or only in heaven. Some people say He is really present here and others say that since He ascended to heaven Jesus is really present there only.

This question comes into play when we talk about the death of a loved one. When the person dies is her soul with Jesus in heaven? This question comes into play when we talk about the Lord's Supper. Is Jesus really present with us when we take the bread and drink the wine?

We remember that Jesus said, “Lo, I will be with you always to the end of the age.” So He promises to be present with us. But how is He present with us? Is it bodily or spiritually? The disciples were told that what they were receiving at the Lord's Supper was Christ's body and blood. Did Jesus mean they were receiving Christ's true physical body and blood?

When Jesus comes to judge all mankind on judgment day is He coming bodily or only spiritually? The Bible does tell us that all mankind will see Him coming with their eyes.

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Mark Your Calendar

5.5

Food Pantry

5.9

LWML Spring Tea

5.10

Mothers Day

5.12

Community Meal

5.14

Ascension Day/Worship

5.16

VBS Site Leaders Meeting

5.24

Pentecost

5.25

Memorial Day

5.31

Trinity Sunday

“Is Jesus Here or There ?” Continued ...

The truth is that Jesus is both here and there. As God, the Son - Jesus Christ is omnipresent. He is everywhere at the same time. But, does that mean he is everywhere bodily and spiritually?

The physical, bodily resurrection of Jesus is foundational to Christian doctrine and our hope of heaven. Because Jesus rose from the dead with a physical body, every Christian has the guarantee of his own bodily resurrection (John 5:21, 28; Romans 8:23). Now Jesus is in heaven, where He is pictured sitting in a place of authority, at the right hand of God (1 Peter 3:22).

We know that the Christian will have a heavenly body like Jesus’ “glorious body” (Philippians 3:21). At His incarnation Jesus took on human flesh, and at His resurrection He took on a glorified, eternal body—although He retained the scars (John 20:27). He will forever be the God-Man, sacrificed for us. Christ, the Creator of the universe, will forever stoop to our level, and He will be known to us in heaven in some kind of physical form that we can see, hear, and touch (Revelation 21:3–4; 22:4).

Throughout the Middle Ages and into the Reformation, the fact that Jesus ascended to sit at the right hand of God and that He will return in glory on the

Last Day was understood to mean that Jesus’ body was located (literally and physically) in heaven, more or less inaccessible to Christians on earth. Therefore, the Church on earth had access to Jesus primarily through, or only through, His Spirit.

But if Jesus is bodily located in heaven and He can only be accessed through the Holy Spirit, how is it that we claim He is present in His body and blood in holy communion? How can both be true? Some sought to relieve the tension by saying that the bread and wine were changed into Christ’s body and blood at the altar and therefore left Jesus bodily in heaven, others said that the bread and wine were only symbols of Christ’s body and blood and thus left Jesus in heaven.

We confess in the Apostles’ Creed that Jesus is “at the right hand of God to judge the living and the dead.” The right hand of God is not a place but an authority. As Matthew 28:18 says, “All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me.” Therefore Christ’s ascension is not to a place separated from His people but to a position of authority at God’s right hand.

So, Jesus is always present with us bodily and spiritually even though we can’t see Him now. He is present in, with and under the bread and wine that we take at Holy Communion. He is present with us as we live in this world, even though we can’t perceive Him.

Christ’s ascension to the right hand of the Father gave Him the power and authority to deliver exactly what He has promised—His body and His blood given for you and me to eat and to drink for the forgiveness of sins. Therefore, His ascension to God’s right hand celebrates not His distance from us, but rather His nearness to us.

Christ’s ascension means that in holy communion Jesus is actually closer to you than He was to the virgin Mary when in her womb. He puts His very body and blood in your mouth through the Holy Supper.

So, Jesus is really present with us now, especially received in holy communion and really there- at the right hand of God the Father with all authority and power.

Let’s celebrate Jesus’ presence and power together this Ascension Day- May 14, by attending the 7 p.m. worship service.

SELC DISTRICT CONVENTION

April 9-12, 2015

“He Is Risen! — We Will Rise! — He Lives! — We Live!”

ELECTIONS

SELC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Rev. Andrew Dzurovcik,
Zion, Clark NJ

1st Vice President: Rev. Wally Arp, St.
Luke, Oviedo FL

2nd Vice President: Rev. Chris Cahill,
Christ the King, Lodi OH

3rd Vice President: Rev. Chris Ongstad,
Holy Cross, Alsip IL

Secretary: Rev. John Telloni, St. John,
Massillon OH

Treasurer: Mr. Robert Lange, Zion,
Norridge IL

Financial Secretary: Mr. Larry Schultz,
Concordia, Macungie PA

BOD Pastoral Rep: Rev. Paul Biber, St.
Lucas, St. Louis MO

BOD Pastoral Rep-Mission Focus: Rev.
Ron Meyr, Faith "Viera", Rockledge FL

BOD Lay Rep: Mrs. Milly
Kwiatkowski, Holy Trinity, Parma OH

BOD Lay Rep-Mission Focus: Mr. Don
Roegge, St. John, Hazleton PA

LUTHERAN HAVEN BOARD OF TRUSTEES OVIDO, FL

Circuit Pastoral Representatives

Rev. Wally Vinovskis, Concordia,
Macungie PA —Eastern Circuit

Rev. George Hansell, Grace, Lakewood
OH —Central Circuit

Rev. Luke Jacob, Pentecost, Racine WI
—Western Circuit

Rev. Wally Arp, St. Luke, Oviedo FL --
Southern Circuit

District Layperson Representative

Mrs. Ardyne Kim, Resurrection, Crown
Point IN.

CIRCUIT VISITORS (COUNSELORS)

Eastern—Rev. James Douthwaite, St. Athanasius, Vienna
VA

Central—Rev. Kenneth Ballas, Calvary, Parma OH

Western—Rev. Luther Bajus, Zion, Norridge IL

Southern—Rev. Brian Roberts, St. Luke, Oviedo FL

SELC appointee to the 2016 LCMS Convention
Nominating Committee

Thelma (TJ) Myers

RESOLUTIONS

The first resolution voted on by the convention delegates expressed the district’s “deepest appreciation” to Rev. Dr. Carl Krueger and his wife, Dianne, “for their dedication and service to the Lord and His Church.” The resolution also asks the LCMS to recognize and thank the Kruegers “for their incredible example, love and service in the name of our Lord.”

A resolution was approved that LCMS pastors to “consider ceasing to act as agents of the governing authority in regards to signing marriage certificates” because “governing authorities are diverging from the scriptural understanding of marriage” and pastors “may have to compromise their faith practice and the sovereignty of God’s Word to comply with each state’s legal requirements of marriage administration.”

Delegates approved a resolution setting a district wide three-year emphasis on youth and family ministry — sharing the Gospel with the next generation and working to strengthen families in their faith. The resolution also asks the LCMS to make children and families a priority and a focus of the Synod during the next triennium.

LCMS President Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison, shared the Synodical report.

Holy Cross delegates to the convention were Thomas Griffin and Pastor Chris Ongstad.



MAKING YOUR BLENDED FAMILY STRONGER

*Lutheran Child & Family Services
(April 2015)*

Stepfamilies or “blended families” have become very common. But what special challenges do they face?

Families that must learn how to blend with each other have different challenges from biological families. First, one or both partners are marrying into a family that already has children. You don’t get the gradual learning that a biological family gets as a child develops. Parents may also be at different developmental stages with their children. If one parent has a five-year-old who is just starting kindergarten and the other has a teen starting to drive, they are helping their children manage different issues. There are often divided loyalties between families and many mixed emotions.

So, given all of these challenges, what can you do to make your blended family stronger?

- Establish a strong marital bond. Spend time together. Talk to each other. Enjoy each other’s company. A unified relationship as a couple will make you more effective as parents and step-parents.
- Maintain a good relationship with the other biological parent. Discuss important decisions. Remember, both of you want what is best for the child.
- Develop resources to help with parenting issues. You can take parenting classes or meet with a professional to discuss parenting issues as well as read books or information online dealing with stepparenting.

- Focus on communicating your own feelings and needs positively. Emphasize your own feelings rather than blaming the other person. When you talk, you should say “I” more than you say “you.”

- Recognize the unique challenges you have as a blended family. Work on creating new traditions and give time for the stepparent to build a relationship with the step-child.

- Help children develop their own space at each house, helping to give them a sense of belonging. You and your family do not have to struggle alone.

LCFS counselors help families generate hope and cope with life’s challenges. Most insurance plans accepted; sliding-scale fees are available on a case-by-case basis. For more information or to schedule an appointment, contact us at lcfs_info@lcfs.org or 800-363-LCFS (5237).

Discover LCFS and the services we offer at www.lcfs.org and www.facebook.com/LCFSIL.



LET US TAKE A MOMENT TO PRAY FOR OUR FAMILY WITH HEALTH CONCERNS

Mary Tumas
Doris Kracht
Marylin Long
Joe Bradley
Kathy Ridder
Elenor Thiele
Rita Joyce
Jeanne Simovic
Edna Wendt
Erna Sherman

CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES HILITES

March 9, 2015

- A motion was made and approved to accept the February minutes with corrections: The Alsip Expo is March 14 only (not 15). The Maundy Thursday Prayer Vigil starts at 8:30pm.
- Treasurer's Report - The General Fund is down, the Food Pantry Fund is doing well. The Nicor bill was very high due to a meter reading error. A motion was made and approved to accept the Treasurer's Report.
- Elders Report - Recommended that we only have one service for Easter with a breakfast afterwards. A motion was made and approved to have only one service on Easter Sunday (9 am) followed by a breakfast.
- Education Report - The Easter Egg Hunt is March 21 at 11:00 am, there will be a craft and hot dog lunch. May 17 is the last day for Sunday School. Julie Wedster will get a tree for Spring planting.
- New Business— A motion was made and approved for Pam Rutkowski to use the Fellowship Hall, Friday March 13, from 5 to 11 pm for a jewelry demonstration. She will submit a deposit. A motion was made and approved to accept the board nominations and present it to the voters for their approval.

Disciple Newsletter

Holy Cross Lutheran Church
(LCMS, SELC District)

4041 W. 120th St.

Alsip, IL. 60803

708.597.5209

Office: Mon.—Thurs. 8:30am - 12:30pm

Web-- www.hc-lc.org

Email—hclc@hc-lc.org

Pastor Chris D. Ongstad

Worship - 8:00AM & 10:30AM Sundays

Sunday School --9:15AM Sundays

The Spirituality of Stewardship

by: Patricia Minet

Stewardship is about Spirituality. The Scriptures present faithful stewardship as the means, the basic discipline, for learning how to follow Jesus. Stewardship is not the goal of the Christian life, but a method. It is designed to break our addiction to control, greed, the demand for personal security. This is why Jesus told the young man first to sell it all, give it all away, and then to come follow Jesus. It was not the goal, but the gateway.

Most often, when people hear about tithing, they think of it as an ideal, as a goal. Jesus viewed it quite differently. For him, the ideal, the goal, was not 10%, but 100%. He pointed to the poor widow who gave 100% as the target, and he chastised the tithing Pharisees for not understanding the “weightier things of Torah.” (Matt 23.23) He is clear that the Pharisees needed to have been tithing, but that it was not enough. Tithing is not a goal, but a beginning, Where we start, not where we end.

Christian spirituality is not an experience, but a process, an infinitely long and difficulty journey. But every journey begins someplace. The beginning of Christian spirituality is trusting Jesus enough to follow him. The goal of Christian life is, having trusted Jesus, to have followed him to the end. The way to practice following Jesus is literally to trust him with whatever you have: your time, your talent, and your treasure. By trusting Jesus with these things, we learn to follow him. Bit by bit, we can become like him. There are a great number of spiritual disciplines that are designed to help us become people of deep prayer: journal keeping, Sabbath keeping, spiritual direction, contemplation, meditation, fasting, etc. But the most simple and basic of the disciplines, the beginning place where one practices trusting Jesus, is the tithe. This is where one begins the serious path to spiritual transformation and fulfillment.

SAVE THE DATES

SPRING TEA

Sponsored by our own LWML will be held on Saturday May 9, at 2 pm. You can purchase your tickets today. Proceeds will go toward overseas missions.

Dinner Club

On Saturday, May 16 at 5:00 pm the Dinner Club will be going to Chef Klaus' Bier Stube. This restaurant serves authentic German favorites along with a number of other entrees including steaks, chops, seafood and pasta. The restaurant is located at 20827 S. La Grange Road in Frankfort. If you would like to join the group for a delicious meal, please sign up on the sheet on the bulletin board. See Faith Schulz for more information.

LWML-SELC WESTERN ZONE SPRING RALLY

Saturday May 2, Registration fee: \$7.00
Dr. Martin Luther (DML) Lutheran Church
5344 S. Francisco Ave
Chicago, IL
Registration and coffee 9:00 am
Worship 9:30 am

Theme:

“Showing the Love of Christ to Special Needs and their Caregivers”

Guest Speaker and Bible Study Leader: Rev. Dr. Dean Pittelko, Area Director for Voice of Care, a ministry to equip the church to nurture people with disabilities and their caregivers in their walk with Christ. Voice of Care received a 2013-2015 Mission Grant from the National LWML. Your mites have helped this.

Gifts from the Heart will again be collected for people in need of assistance at the Lutheran Haven. You may make a cash donation or a donation by check. Make checks payable to “Lutheran Haven Foundation,” and write “Benevolent Fund” on the memo line.

If you are planning to attend please let the Church office know by April 26.

The LCMS Speaks the Truth in Love in the Public Square

“The Church doesn’t get involved in politics!” At least, that’s what we tell ourselves. It’s often easier to focus on the separation of church and state than to admit that the two intersect and, increasingly, collide.

But Easter is coming, and with Easter comes a reminder that we live in and by our Lord, Jesus Christ; when church and state tangle, we are given to abide by Him alone.

That’s why, when the latter inserts itself unjustifiably into the former, when the government intrudes in the realm of the Church, when consciences are bound and the culture makes demands contrary to Scripture, we — baptized children certain of Christ’s resurrection promises — speak.

Our servicemen and women, for example, are being told how and when they are able to confess the faith. Our university students are required to undergo training that affirms same-sex relationships and marriage. Our mercy organizations may soon be forced to choose between closing their doors and placing children in same-sex parent households.

In the coming Easter joy, let’s remember our brothers and sisters, both in prayer and in the public square. Let’s encourage our military personnel to be bold in the faith! Let’s hearten our young men and women to speak the truth in love regarding God’s design for marriage! Let’s support our adoption agencies in their efforts to place children in homes where they will be loved by both a mom and a dad!

And this April, this Easter, let’s not forget that while the task may seem daunting, we are marked with Christ’s cross in Baptism. He is raised from the dead! We are His! Jesus lives. We have nothing — no one, no government, no law — to fear.

Under the cross,

Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison

President, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod



SERVANTS IN WORSHIP - May, 2015

DATE	TIME	USHER	COMMUNION ASSISTANT	LECTOR	ACOLYTE	ALTAR GUILD	COUNTER	GREETER	PROJECTIONIST
3	8:00 am	Martha Stevens	TBA	Donna Judd	-----	Barb Piekosz	D. Meilahn F. Schulz	Joy Maddox	Mike Meilahn
	10:30 am	Tom Griffin		Pam Rutkowski	Carly Potts	Jeanne Simovic		Carole Vrshek	Theresa Boltz
10	8:00 am	Martha Stevens	TBA	-----	-----	Barb Piekosz	T. Vrshek C. Vrshek	Joy Maddox	Mike Meilahn
	10:30 am	Tom Griffin		Donna Meilahn	Kaitlyn Shelton	Jeanne Simovic		Carole Vrshek	Theresa Boltz
14	7:00pm	Jim Boltz	TBA		Carly Potts	Barb Piekosz ----- Jeanne Simovic	D. Lux D. Kracht	Martha Stevens	Mike Meilahn
17	8:00 am	Martha Stevens	TBA	Joy Maddox	-----	Barb Piekosz	P. Griffin N. Fehser	Joy Maddox	Mike Meilahn
	10:30 am	Tom Griffin		Sue Wilczynski	Carly Potts	Jeanne Simovic		Carole Vrshek	Theresa Boltz
24	8:00 am	Martha Stevens	TBA	-----	-----	Barb Piekosz	D. Lux D. Kracht	Joy Maddox	Mike Meilahn
	10:30 am	Tom Griffin		Aimee Wilczynski	Kaitlyn Shelton	Jeanne Simovic		Carole Vrshek	Theresa Boltz
31	8:00 am	Martha Stevens		-----	-----	Barb Piekosz	P. Rutkowski M. Potts	Joy Maddox	Mike Meilahn
	10:30 am	Tom Griffin		Faith Schulz	Carly Potts	Jeanne Simovic		Carole Vrshek	Theresa Boltz

Thank you for all you do for Christ and His Church!

MAY 2015

Church Office Hours: Monday through Thursday 8:30 am - 12:30 pm, 708.597.5209 hclc@hc-lc.org

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1 Pastor's Day Off James M. Bahr (b)	2 10:00AM Musicians 10:30AM Food Pantry
3 FOOD PANTRY SUNDAY 8:00AM Worship/Traditional/Comm. 9:15AM - Sunday School/Bible Class 10:30AM Worship/Contemp. Carole Vrshek (b)	4 4:30PM Womans' Bible Study 7:30PM Southwest Chorus	5 4:30PM Food Pantry 7:30PM LifeLight Bible Study	6 John Rheinwald (b) Pat Minet (b)	7 9:00AM Senior's Group Gathering	8 Pastor's Day Off	9 10:00AM Musicians 2:00PM LWML Spring Tea
10 MOTHERS DAY 8:00AM Worship/Traditional 9:15AM Sunday School/Bible Class 10:30AM Worship/Contemp./Comm	11 4:30pm Womens' Bible Study 7:30PM Southwest Chorus Practice 7:30PM Church Council	12 4:30PM Community Meal 7:30PM LifeLight Bible Study	13	14 ASCENSION DAY 9:00AM Senior's Group Gathering 7:00PM Worship Samuel Meilahn (b)	15 Pastor's Day Off	16 10:00AM Musicians 10:30AM Food Pantry 1:00PM VBS Site Leaders 5:00PM Dinner Club
17 LAST DAY OF SUNDAY SCHOOL 8:00AM Worship/Traditional/Comm 9:15AM Sunday School/Bible Class 10:30AM Worship/Contemp.	18 4:30PM Womens' Bible Study 7:30PM Southwest Chorus Onon Simonson (b)	19 7:30PM LifeLight Bible Study	20	21 9:00AM Senior's Group Gathering 1:00PM Stewardship Meeting	22 Pastor's Day Off	23 10:00AM Musicians 10:00AM Bd. of Education 10:30AM Food Pantry Bob Schulz (b)
24 PENTECOST NEWSLETTER ARTICLES DUE 8:00AM Worship/Traditional 9:15AM Bible Class 10:30AM Worship/Contemp./Comm.	25 MEMORIAL DAY 4:30PM Womens' Bible Study 7:30PM Southwest Chorus	26 7:30PM LifeLight Bible Study	27 Tom Joyce (b) Charles Lux (b)	28 9:00AM Senior's Group Gathering	29 Pastor's Day Off	30 10:00AM Musicians 10:30AM Food Pantry Bruce McGlin (b)
31 TRINITY SUNDAY 8:00AM Worship/Traditional 9:15AM Bible Class 10:30AM Worship/Contemp.	<h2>HAVE A BLESSED MOTHERS DAY!</h2> 					