



Ascension Lutheran Church

ANNOUNCER

Dear saints of Ascension,

A recent survey claims that “religious nones”—defined as “atheists, agnostics, the spiritual, and those who are no specific organized religion in particular”—now comprise the largest group in America (<https://www.cnn.com/2019/04/13/us/no-religion-largest-group-first-time-usa-trnd/index.html>). Since 1991, the pot of “religious nones” has grown 266%, and is estimated to be “the largest group outright in four to six years.” There is no doubt we live in a post-Christian society that generally balks at God as creator, man as sinner, and Jesus Christ as Savior. But aside from the obvious ethical implications, our country’s current makeup simply means we have more people percentage-wise to share the gospel with than before.

The article referring to this survey includes a quote from the executive director of famed-atheist Richard Dawkins’ Foundation, saying, “We are seeing the rise of a generation of Americans who are hungry for facts and curious about the world.” It seems to me those are things Christianity takes very seriously. Don’t we stake our (eternal) lives on certain facts? And don’t we claim to wield the proper lens through which to view the world? The answer to both questions is a resounding, “Yes.” So, we Christians absolutely have knowledge to give “a generation of Americans who are hungry for facts and curious about the world.”

Some suggest people are no longer interested in the “big questions.” Some suggest people are destined to sleepwalk through a cycle of work-entertainment-work-entertainment-work-entertainment until they die. Some suggest people are no longer concerned about their eternal destiny. On the other hand, people might not show concern because they already hold a conviction about their destiny. Just because one identifies as a “religious none” doesn’t mean he doesn’t have a sense of destiny. Perhaps he believes in eastern philosophy that says we all become “one soul” after death; perhaps he believes he’s done enough good to stroll into heaven; perhaps he’s content in the belief that there’s no life beyond death; perhaps he’s resigned to despair in the belief that there’s no life beyond death. In any case, even if the percentage of “religious nones” grows to 35, 50, 75, or 90% of America, a touchpoint remains, for God “has put eternity into man’s heart” (Ecc

3:11)... or as the director of a devout atheist organization says, people “are hungry for facts and curious about the world.”

Decades ago, a popular outreach program titled “Evangelism Explosion” was adapted by the LCMS. And it begins with two “diagnostic questions” in order to steer the conversation: 1) “Have you come to a place in your spiritual life where you know for certain you have eternal life, or is that something you would say you’re still working on?” and, 2) “Suppose you were to die tonight and stand before God, and He were to ask you, ‘Why should I let you into My heaven?’ What would you say?” The purpose is to ascertain one’s conviction and basis for that conviction regarding his destiny. We can quibble over the wording of the questions, but the questions are good in substance, and they’re questions that intrigue people. The very few who don’t contemplate their destiny aren’t being fair to themselves... yet, eternity remains in their hearts.

But destiny isn’t the only touchpoint. Origin, meaning, and morality are three other “big questions” people are eager to discuss. Who hasn’t heard someone vigorously defend evolution?... or endorse personal pleasure as the ultimate goal?... or assert his or her lifestyle as acceptable? The “big questions” of origin, meaning, morality, and destiny are the underlying premises of conversation far more often than we realize. It’s up to us to steer those conversations toward Jesus, or as Peter writes, to be “prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you”—the hope that is “a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead” (1 Pet 3:15; 1:3). If someone asks (or scoffs at!) why you’re so certain you’re right about origin, meaning, morality, or destiny, your answer is not some great logical argument that dizzies the intellect, but the simple fact that Jesus rose from the dead! In that one person lies the answer to all “big questions,” and in that defense you’ve shared the gospel. Thereafter, the results are God’s work.

In His name,
Pastor Greg



“My teacher says that if you’ve got enough faith you can move mountains. ... I can’t even move that ant hill.”

A LITTLE LUTHER

“The proper subject of theology is man guilty of sin and condemned, and God the Justifier and Savior of man the sinner. Whatever is asked or discussed in theology outside this subject, is error and poison. All Scripture points to this, that God commends His kindness to us and in His Son restores to righteousness and life the nature that has fallen into sin and condemnation.” (*Psalm 51*; AE 12:311)



Quick Financial Update

At the end of July, expenses exceeded income by \$8,245 (\$114,137 less \$122,382). The difference is a result of three factors:

- 1) a \$4,300 drop in average monthly income for July
- 2) a \$1,700 bump to church maintenance
- 3) a \$2,600 loan to the youth group for the National Youth Gathering to be paid back by end-of-year



However, it was not necessary to borrow any funds from savings, and the early August offerings were high. In short, we're in good shape for the last four months of the year if offerings return to the monthly average of \$16,300. Please keep this status in mind as we prepare the preliminary budget for 2020.

Missions & Ministry

Organizations and people we support:

 <p>http://rescue1global.org/</p>
 <p>https://www.trinityhope.org/</p>
 <p>http://helpmadison.org/</p>
 <p>https://nashvillerescuemission.org/</p>
 <p>https://www.hopeclinicforwomen.org/</p>
 <p>Caring Closet and other programs http://www.lstn.org/</p>
 <p>International Health Partners http://ihptz.org/</p>
 <p>Seminarian Corey Shaffer and family https://www.csl.edu/</p>
 <p>Missionary photographer: Johanna Heidorn https://www.lcms.org/heidorn</p>
 <p>Missionaries in Germany: Carl and Karen Cecil https://www.lcms.org/cecil</p>



Dine, fellowship, enjoy live music, bid on live & silent auctions, celebrate survivors from around the world, and partner with Rescue 1's Prevention, Rescue, and Restoration ministries.

We are so grateful for your partnership. Without your support we would not be able to prevent victimization, rescue the enslaved and restore survivors!

It is that time of year again; the Rescue 1 Annual Gala - ONE FREEDOM GALA! Thursday, September 19, 6:30-8:30P at Millennium Maxwell House Hotel, 2025 Rosa L Parks Blvd, Nashville TN 37228.

Remember the Gala is free to guests and doors open at 6:00P! Help us secure business and church sponsors for this year's Gala by becoming a Rescue 1 Gala Ambassador.

Blessings and Thank you!

To register for this free event (donation request at evening's end), visit www.rescue1global.org.



Serving Ascension in September

	September 1	September 8	September 15	September 22	September 29
Lector	Judie Mader	Linda Fritz	Liz Brown	Rick Speitel	Pastor Greg
Acolyte	Michael Patterson	TBD	Michael Patterson	TBD	TBD
Elder	Tim Hanusa				
Ushers	John Boggs & John Kubitz				
Cantor	Tim Hanusa	Mark LaLumondier	Tim Hanusa	N/A	Tim Hanusa
Altar Guild	Pam Oehlkers & Trisha LaLumondier				

If you're unable to serve, please find a replacement.



Coffee Half-hour

September 1: *Labor Day weekend*
 September 8: Cindy Dougherty
 September 15: Jane Chitren
 September 22: Kathy Meyers
 September 29: Linda Fritz

The Organist

September 1: Minae Hayashi
 September 8: Cindy Dougherty
 September 15: Minae Hayashi
 September 22: Cindy Dougherty
 September 29: Dennis Anderson



Celebrations

Birthdays



September 1: Carolyn Spann
September 3: Claudia Bauch
September 5: Pat Baumann
September 13: Rachel Blittle
September 14: John Boggs
September 15: Korryn LaLumondier
September 16: Amanda Bauch
September 20: Greg Bauch
September 20: Katie Shaffer
September 24: Greg Golter
September 24: Judie Mader
September 24: Pam Oehlkers
September 24: Sheryl Whitbey
September 24: Cecil Willis
September 28: Rob Dougherty
September 28: Ryanne Grobengieser
September 28: Barbara Wiebbecke

ANNIVERSARIES



September 1: Fred & Grace Lehmann
September 16: Robert & Judie Mader
September 18: Eric & Sara Blittle
September 20: Jeff & Kathy Meyers

Baptismal Birthdays

September 11: Rick Speitel
September 17: Andrew Fuller
September 19: Brooklyn Deland
September 20: Claudia Bauch
September 22: Mike Bergeron
September 23: Mark Boggs
September 25: Justin Langston



If a celebration is incorrect or missing, please call (615-868-2346) or email (office@ascensionmadison.com) the church office so our records can be updated. Thanks!

Church Calendar

September						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9:00 Sunday school 10:30 Worship w/ the Lord's supper	2	3	4	5 10:30 Bible study 7:00 Narcotics Anonymous	6	7
8 9:00 Sunday school 10:30 Worship w/ Confirmation and Sunday school teacher blessing	9	10	11 6:30 Confirmation	12 10:30 Bible study 7:00 Narcotics Anonymous	13	14
15 9:00 Sunday school 10:30 Worship w/ the Lord's Supper	16	17	18 6:30 Confirmation	19 10:30 Bible study 7:00 Narcotics Anonymous	20	21
22 9:00 Sunday School 10:30 Worship 11:30 Voter's Assembly – preliminary 2020 budget	23	24	25 6:30 Confirmation	26 9:00 ROMEO breakfast 10:30 Bible study 7:00 Narcotics Anonymous	27	28
29 9:00 Sunday school 10:30 Worship w/ the Lord's Supper	30					



The mission of Ascension Evangelical Lutheran Church is to connect people to the one true God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—so that they may come to know and believe they are saved for eternal life by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone.



Rev. Greg Bauch, Pastor
610 W Old Hickory Blvd, Madison TN 37115

Church Office: (615) 868-2346
Office email: office@ascensionmadison.com
Pastor Greg: (904) 553-7066
Pastor's email: pastorgregbauch@gmail.com
website: www.ascensionmadison.com

Sunday School & Bible Study at 9:00am
Coffee Half-hour at 10:00am
Worship at 10:30am

Please email newsletter submissions to office@ascensionmadison.com one week before the 1st of the month.

Please email all weekly bulletin announcements for the upcoming Sunday to office@ascensionmadison.com by Wednesday.