



A Word from Pastor Schielke

On Creeds: Part 7

From the 2nd article of the Nicene Creed: and *(He) ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father.*

The Feast of the Ascension of Christ is celebrated every year by the church 40 days after Easter. The problem is that this great commemoration always falls on a Thursday. Traditionally, churches would have a special service on that day marking the feast, but in the busyness of modern times doing so has fallen out of practice. Thus, we often lose track of how important the ascension is and what it means for us Christians.

But why is the ascension a big deal? Often, Christians think of the ascension as the time when “Jesus left us,” and now we are left here on earth to “fend for ourselves.” But nothing could be further from the truth. The disciples saw Jesus go up (ascend) into heaven physically, but the word ascension sort of has a double meaning. We also use that term for a new earthly king or queen

who takes the throne. The king “ascends” to the throne. This is true for Jesus as well. He ascended (or re-ascended) to the position of power and authority in heaven, the right hand of His Father. The crucified and risen Christ is now ruling and reigning all things.

One should note that the verbs in the second article of the creed describing Jesus up until this point have been written in the past tense. Jesus **was born** of the virgin Mary. He **was crucified**, etc. And the last part of the second article is written in future tense. He **will come** again in glory. But this one word, sits, is written in present tense. The Lord Jesus currently sits at the right hand of the Father. That is not so much *where* He is but describes the current situation in the world. We are between the time of Christ’s ascension and His return in glory. During this time, Christ is with His church in Word and Sacrament and is seated at the right hand of the Father ruling all things. We are in a time of waiting. Christ isn’t absent. He hasn’t abandoned the church but is at work through the church to

bring people to Himself, even as He rules the universe.

The ascension is even more profound when you consider that Jesus retains His full humanity. Jesus is still fully divine and fully human. There is a human being at the right of the Father ruling all things. There is a priest who experienced our human weakness constantly interceding for us with the Father, placing the sacrifice of His own blood between us and God’s wrath over sin.

This hymn verse summarizes the ascended Christ, “Christ sits at God’s right hand, His saving work complete, to reign till every foe will lie beneath His feet. All that the Father planned, The Son sought to fulfill, when first He said, “Lord, here am I to do your will.” (LSB 564).



Transfiguration Sunday

Transfiguration Sunday - February 11 is Transfiguration Sunday, the Last Sunday of Epiphany before the beginning of the Lenten season. It commemorates when Jesus Christ went up on the mount to meet with Moses and Elijah, and His glory was shown to Peter, James, and John.

Ash Wednesday - Lent begins on Wednesday, February 14, with Ash Wednesday. During the Lenten season, we focus on our sins and repent of them as we look towards Jesus’ trial, punishment, and death for our sins as the Lamb of God who was sacrificed for us.

"But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."
1 Corinthians 15:57

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The Formula of Concord - The Formula of Concord (FC) was the last of the confessional documents written by the Lutherans in the 16th century. Finished in 1577, the FC consists of twelve articles presented in two parts. The first part, the Epitome, is a brief presentation of each point of doctrine and the controversy surrounding it while the Solid Declaration presents a more detailed discussion. Over a dozen authors contributed portions of draft versions of the FC, but the most influential authors of the final document were Jakob Andrea and Martin Chemnitz. The need for the FC arose after the death of Martin Luther in 1546. Over time, the Lutherans became divided over several points of doctrine. Several political peace treaties also forced the Lutherans to entertain and accept certain points of Reformed theology which had been developing in Switzerland. Thus, the FC was pivotal in clarifying the Lutheran position over and against both the Roman Catholic position and more significantly, over the Reformed position. It is the FC that most clearly distinguishes Lutheran teaching on several important points and against the various Protestant bodies we see around us even today. Over the next months, you will find the articles of the Epitome of the Formula of Concord in our newsletter. It's good for all of us to have at least some familiarity with this important doctrinal statement.

**III - The Righteousness of Faith before God - Continuation of The Affirmative Theses:
Pure Doctrine of the Christian Churches against Both Errors Just Mentioned.**

⁹6. We believe, teach, and confess also that notwithstanding the fact that many weaknesses and defects cling to the true believers and truly regenerate, even to the grave, still they must not on that account doubt either their righteousness which has been imputed to them by faith, or the salvation of their souls, but must regard it as certain that for Christ's sake, according to the promise and [immovable] Word of the holy Gospel, they have a gracious God.

¹⁰7. We believe, teach, and confess that for the preservation of the pure doctrine concerning the righteousness of faith before God it is necessary to urge with special diligence the *particulae exclusivae*, that is, the exclusive particles, i. e., the following words of the holy Apostle Paul, by which the merit of Christ is entirely separated from our works, and the honor given to Christ alone, when the holy Apostle Paul writes: Of grace, without merit, without Law, without works, not of works. All these words together mean as much as that we are justified and saved alone by faith in Christ. Eph. 2:8; Rom. 1:17; 3:24; 4:3ff.; Gal. 3:11; Heb. 11.

¹¹8. We believe, teach, and confess that, although the contrition that precedes, and the good works that follow, do not belong to the article of justification before God, yet one is not to imagine a faith of such a kind as can exist and abide with, and alongside of, a wicked intention to sin and to act against the conscience. But after man has been justified by faith, then a true living faith worketh by love, Gal. 5:6, so that thus good works always follow justifying faith, and are surely found with it, if it be true and living; for it never is alone, but always has with it love and hope.

The Antitheses: Contrary Doctrines Rejected

¹²Therefore we reject and condemn all the following errors:

¹³1. That Christ is our Righteousness according to His divine nature alone.

¹⁴2. That Christ is our Righteousness according to His human nature alone.

¹⁵3. That in the sayings of the prophets and apostles where the righteousness of faith is spoken of the words justify and to be justified are not to signify declaring or being declared free from sins, and obtaining the forgiveness of sins, but actually being made righteous before God, because of love infused by the Holy Ghost, virtues, and the works following them.

¹⁶4. That faith looks not only to the obedience of Christ, but to His divine nature, as it dwells and works in us, and that by this indwelling our sins are covered.

¹⁷5. That faith is such a trust in the obedience of Christ as can exist and remain in a man even when he has no genuine repentance, in whom also no love follows, but who persists in sins against his conscience.

¹⁸6. That not God Himself, but only the gifts of God, dwell in believers.

¹⁹7. That faith saves on this account, because by faith the renewal, which consists in love to God and one's neighbor, is begun in us.

²⁰8. That faith has the first place in justification, nevertheless also renewal and love belong to our righteousness before God in such a manner that they [renewal and love] are indeed not the chief cause of our righteousness, but that nevertheless our righteousness before God is not entire or perfect without this love and renewal.

²¹9. That believers are justified before God and saved jointly by the imputed righteousness of Christ and by the new obedience begun in them, or in part by the imputation of Christ's righteousness, but in part also by the new obedience begun in them.

²²10. That the promise of grace is made our own by faith in the heart, and by the confession which is made with the mouth, and by other virtues.

²³11. That faith does not justify without good works; so that good works are necessarily required for righteousness, and without their presence man cannot be justified.

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victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."
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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 The Purification of Mary and the Presentation of Our Lord Day	2	3
4 Divine Service 10 a.m Bible Study / Sunday School 11 a.m. Lunch noon	5	6 Women's Bible Study 1:30 p.m.	7	8	9	10 Men's Bible Study 8:30 a.m.
11 Divine Service 10 a.m Bible Study / Sunday School 11 a.m. Lunch noon	12	13	14 Women's Bible Study 4:30 p.m. Lent Dinner 6:00 p.m. Ash Wednesday Service 7:00 p.m.	15	16	17
18 Divine Service 10 a.m Bible Study / Sunday School 11 a.m. Lunch noon	19	20	21 Women's Bible Study 4:30 p.m. Lent Dinner 6:00 p.m. Lent Wednesday Service 7:00 p.m.	22	23	24 St. Matthias, Apostle Day Men's Bible Study 8:30 a.m.
25 Divine Service 10 a.m Bible Study / Sunday School 11 a.m. Lunch noon	26	27	28 Women's Bible Study 4:30 p.m. Lent Dinner 6:00 p.m. Lent Wednesday Service 7:00 p.m.	29		

VIC Happenings

Lenten and Easter Services - And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And the earth shook, and the rocks were split (Matt. 27:51). Darkness. Earthquakes. The curtain of the temple torn in two. It must have seemed as if the whole world were falling apart when Jesus died on the cross. These Miracles of Lent that God the Father performed to set apart His Son's death from absolutely all others were performed to help spread the Good News. This was no ordinary death. For Jesus would rise from the dead, the miracle of all miracles. Topics for the upcoming Midweek Lenten services are as follows:

- 2/14 A Wounded Savior for a Wounded People
- 2/21 The Wound of Betrayal
- 2/28 The Wound of Apathy
- 3/6 The Wound of Denial
- 3/13 The Wound of Mockery
- 3/20 The Wound of Abandonment

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February Birthdays:

- 1 Ashton Rodgers
- 2 Brad Rohloff
- 2 Jared Rohloff
- 3 Zoey Richardson
- 11 Jenny Jones
- 14 Angi Haney
- 16 Tim Schmidt
- 18 Hailey Richardson
- 22 Burgandy Knox
- 24 Suzanne Richardson



Future Church Cleanings:

- Feb. 4 Brad Rohloff Family
- Feb. 18 Gary Rohloff and Tim Rohloff Families
- Mar. 3 Schielke Family
- Mar. 17 Schmidt Family

The Bible readings for February and part of March are listed below.

Feb. 1: Leviticus 1-4	Feb. 15: Numbers 8-10	March 1: Deuteronomy 5-7
Feb. 2: Leviticus 5-7	Feb. 16: Numbers 11-13	March 2: Deuteronomy 8-10
Feb. 3: Leviticus 8-10	Feb. 17: Numbers 14-15	March 3: Deuteronomy 11-13
Feb. 4: Leviticus 11-13	Feb. 18: Numbers 16-17	March 4: Deuteronomy 14-16
Feb. 5: Leviticus 14-15	Feb. 19: Numbers 18-20	March 5: Deuteronomy 17-20
Feb. 6: Leviticus 16-18	Feb. 20: Numbers 21-22	March 6: Deuteronomy 21-23
Feb. 7: Leviticus 19-21	Feb. 21: Numbers 23-25	March 7: Deuteronomy 24-27
Feb. 8: Leviticus 22-23	Feb. 22: Numbers 26-27	March 8: Deuteronomy 28-29
Feb. 9: Leviticus 24-25	Feb. 23: Numbers 28-30	March 9: Deuteronomy 30-31
Feb. 10: Leviticus 26-27	Feb. 24: Numbers 31-32	March 10: Deuteronomy 32-34
Feb. 11: Numbers 1-2	Feb. 25: Numbers 33-34	March 11: Joshua 1-4
Feb. 12: Numbers 3-4	Feb. 26: Numbers 35-36	March 12: Joshua 5-8
Feb. 13: Numbers 5-6	Feb. 27: Deuteronomy 1-2	March 13: Joshua 9-11
Feb. 14: Numbers 7	Feb. 28: Deuteronomy 3-4	March 14: Joshua 12-15

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