



**Redeemer Lutheran Church of Leisure World and  
St. Theodore of Canterbury Episcopal Church**  
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## ***Message from the Interim Pastor:***

### ***“A Festival Day in May”*** (Often Missed and Sometime Neglected)

Dear Members and Friends of Redeemer and St. Theodore of Canterbury,

There is an important day in May that we will want to remember. Please read on...

One of the primary messages of the Christian Church during this month of May is that we are blessed as the people of God to “live the resurrection,” with all of the promises, joy and hopefulness that Jesus gave to the world. During the month of May, we are between two of the major festival days in the Christian calendar. We celebrated the Easter Day of Resurrection on April 20<sup>th</sup>. Fifty days later, on June 8<sup>th</sup>, it will be the Day of Pentecost—the day remembering the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. It is considered to be the birthday of the Christian Church. The four Sundays in May this year are called the “Sundays of Easter,” the middle days in a season of seven weeks that continue to tell the story of Jesus’ resurrection and his appearances to his disciples and followers for the forty days between his rising from the grave and his return to his heavenly throne. There is one very special day in the Church calendar during May...

In the Nicene Creed, we profess

***On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures.  
he ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.***

**Ascension Day** this year will be remembered and observed on Thursday, May 29<sup>th</sup>. Saint Luke tells us the story of the ascension of Jesus at the end of his gospel and then again in the first chapter of his book, *The Acts of the Apostles*. Here are a few of the verses from that story in the Book of Acts, wherein Luke articulates some of the most important understandings and teachings about Jesus’ interactions with humanity...

Saint Luke penned, “...<sup>1</sup> I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning <sup>2</sup> until the day when he was taken up to heaven... <sup>3</sup> After his suffering (**Good Friday**) he presented himself alive (**Day of Resurrection**) to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God... Jesus told his followers <sup>8</sup> But you will receive

*power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; (Pentecost) and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.' <sup>9</sup>When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, (Ascension) and a cloud took him out of their sight. <sup>10</sup>While he was going, and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. <sup>11</sup>They said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come (Day of Judgment) in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."* (Acts 1, selected verses NRSV)

Years ago, many congregations worshipped on the Day of Ascension, often with an evening service. When I was young, our family always attended Ascension Day services year after year, remembering that very special day in the earthly life of Jesus. Our pastor told us that we Christians crowd into our churches to celebrate Christmas, the day Jesus came into our world as the Incarnate Son of God. How important it is that we also remember the day that Jesus physically departed to return to his heavenly home. Today, some churches still gather and worship on Ascension Day, but in many denominations and congregations, that practice has diminished. This month you will be provided a few resources to help remember and observe Ascension Day in whatever ways might be meaningful for you. There will be some things written in the Midweek Communiqué and toward the end of the month, there will be a handout on Sunday and an attachment to the Communiqué.

The most important part of the story, in my opinion, is the last and final words of Jesus as he was being lifted up into the clouds... *"Remember,"* he said, *"I am with you forever to the end of time."* (Matthew 28:20)

May God be always with each of us as we *"live the resurrection"* these holy Easter days!

*+Pastor Murray D. Finck*  
The Rev Murray D. Finck, Bishop Emeritus