



August 2023

# THE SPIRIT

Ascension Lutheran Church Newsletter

## Read God's Word!

“My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you, listening closely to wisdom and directing your heart to understanding; furthermore, if you call out to insight and lift your voice to understanding, if you seek it like silver and search for it like hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and discover the knowledge of God.” (Proverbs 2:1–5, CSB)

When the American Bible Society's annual State of the Bible report saw their survey statistics, they found it hard to believe the results. The data said that in 2021 roughly 26 million people had or completely stopped reading the Bible. That's a drastic and discouraging number. The report highlighted the connection between infrequent church attendance and a decrease in Bible reading.

Hosea 4:6 (CSB) says, “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I will reject you from serving as my priest. Since you have forgotten the law of your God, I will also forget your sons.” The Lord held the Israelites responsible for their lack of knowledge of His Word. The principle is still the same today: without knowledge, especially of God's Word, we will never grow into all God wants us to be!

We should read the Bible because it is God's Word to us. The Bible is literally "God-breathed" (2 Timothy 3:16, ESV). It is God's very words to us. There are so many questions that philosophers have asked that God answers for us in Scripture. What is the purpose of life? Where did I come from? Is there life after death? How do I get to heaven? Why is the world full of evil, and why do I struggle to do good? In addition to these "big" questions, the Bible gives much practical advice. What do I look for in a spouse, and how can I have a successful marriage? How can I be a good friend? How can I be a good parent? If we want to live life as God intended, we must listen to and heed God's written Word. That means knowing what it says.

We can neither fear God nor love him if we do not know him. Reading the Bible helps us understand God's personality and appreciate the wisdom of following his direction. Many of us who have been brought up in church from an early age remember some of the great stories of the Bible. They were told in such a way that they have become etched upon our souls as they declare the mercy and compassion of the Creator God. The stories such as David and Goliath, Samson, Daniel in the Lion's Den, Moses and the Children of Israel, Jesus healing the sick, and so on came alive as our teachers shared from the Word of God. The stories are not only fascinating to hear, but the truths contained in the stories truly can last a lifetime (and eternity!). The Bible is God's Story, which reveals to us who God is and what He has done in Christ. In fact, all of Scripture is about Jesus and what he has done for us (Luke 24:44-49).

I've often heard the silly excuse that people don't like reading the Bible because they don't see how it applies to their daily lives. However, if we are going to use what the Scriptures say in our lives, then we need to know what they actually say. We can't bring what the Bible says into the 21st century without knowing what the Bible is about and what the text says. That means we actually have to read it. The motivation behind reading the Bible should stem from a genuine desire for God and His Word.

This means we may have to make it a habit each day to read God's Word. Finding a specific time in our daily routine is vital. Without deliberately incorporating it, reading the Bible tends to be neglected. Linking it to a regular, concrete part of our schedule, such as waking up in the morning or eating dinner, ensures that it becomes an integral part of our daily lives. Experiment with what works best for you. This might vary depending on the season of life. For instance, waking up early before breakfast may not work for you. In such cases, choosing the time slot after dinner might work better. Don't like reading? There are numerous audio bibles available for you to listen to as you exercise, commute, or do chores.

There will be days when the desire to read may be lacking. When you don't feel like reading, it is crucial to continue reading, trusting that God knows what's best for you. Even when the desire is present, the demands of the world, temptations from the devil, or our own sinful nature can try to distract us. Maintaining our habit of Bible reading will often require practical strategies and adaptation according to different seasons of life. So, it is necessary to approach Bible reading with a measure of common sense.

Jesus thought that God's Word was necessary when he said, “Man must not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God” (Matthew 4:4, CSB). We certainly need to eat food and drink water on a daily basis. But even more, we need a regular daily diet of God's Spirit-breathed word. God has given us a powerful and wonderful gift in His Word. By reading it, we're not only spiritually educated but also spiritually fed. If you prioritize Bible reading and incorporate it into your daily routine, you create space for spiritual growth and a closer relationship with God.

Your servant in Christ,  
Pastor Matthew



- Aug 1 Sara Boyce, Emily Hammond, Elaine Troester (90)
- Aug 3 Randy Peterson
- Aug 5 Whitney Goodsell, Ron Jones, Scott Loder, Louise McIntyre
- Aug 6 Henry Reinholdt
- Aug 7 Lee Fritts, Candie Grimstad
- Aug 8 Kirsten Baker
- Aug 9 Daniel Kleiner, Mike Larson, Ricky Ledesma
- Aug 10 Micah Fenn, Austin Galbraith
- Aug 11 Kit Bedard
- Aug 12 Aidan Hanson, Toni Hilmer, Dani Larson
- Aug 14 Len Brokenshire, Addisyn Even, Cary Krusemark
- Aug 15 Nicholas Cary, Larry Hanson, Tyler Winterboer
- Aug 17 Allison Gibbons, Diana Krusemark
- Aug 18 Stefanie Galbraith
- Aug 19 Zane Goodsell, Caitlin Schotter
- Aug 21 Gayle Anfinson, Evelyn Herrmann, Elizabeth Wild
- Aug 22 Anabell Hakes
- Aug 23 Zane Schmitz
- Aug 24 Truman Kaiser (94)
- Aug 25 Darlys Braun, Maria Drewes (94), Marlow Gray
- Aug 26 Rose Beier (103), Bob Buschbom
- Aug 27 Daren Breid, Sterling Shields
- Aug 28 Brittney Gerst
- Aug 29 Lois Osness (101)
- Aug 30 Nolan Breid



- Aug 1 Len and Beth Brokenshire (25)
- Aug 6 Keith and Marsha Bock (57)  
Aaron and Meggen Hibben (12)  
Tony and Traci McNally (40)
- Aug 8 Lyle and Kathy Buhr (59)
- Aug 10 Ashley and Robert Reinholdt (10)
- Aug 15 Dave and Barb Else (59)
- Aug 16 John and Brooke Heuer (9)
- Aug 19 Steve and Jan Moore (50)
- Aug 20 Ron and Sandy Jones (40)  
Danny and Anna Rohrs (12)
- Aug 24 Marlyn and Lois Jerke (60)
- Aug 26 Adam and Sara Boyce (5)  
Tom and Janet Freed (50)  
Jerry and Nancy Koester (51)  
Dave and Cindi Mason (56)
- Aug 30 Harold and Kathleen Schuhmacher (53)



**July 29-August 5**

**Annual Cedar Falls Bible Conference**

Brochures available at church or search the internet or Facebook for "Cedar Falls Bible Conference"

**August 10**

**PRAYER FOR STUDENTS/STAFF/SCHOOLS**

Ascension believes in the power of prayer! Let's take a bit of time before the start of the school year and pray over our Ascension people who are involved in the schools as students or staff! We will travel to several schools and each and every Ascension student from Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade, as well as teachers and staff, will be included in the prayers.

**WHEN:**

**August 10 @ 11:45**

Meet in Ascension parking lot to carpool, depart at 12

**WHO:**

Whoever wants to come and pray

**WANT TO COME:**

Help us plan by letting the office or Shanda know you are coming

CAN YOU DRIVE? We want to carpool, so if you are willing to drive and take a few friends with you, please come with the car gassed up.

*Coffee Outreach:* We will also offer coffee to any staff or teachers who are there as well as any other people we might encounter. Who will God put in our path?

**QUESTIONS? Ask Shanda**

**August 13 & 27**

**CIRCLE OF FRIENDS**

A community outreach opportunity at Lincoln Park in Waterloo. Volunteers will help prepare, transport, setup, serve, and clean up. All of this to help spread God's love through spiritual and physical food.

**THANK YOU NOTES**

Thank you notes are now posted on a new bulletin board hung next to the World Missions' bulletin board.

## 2023 AALC Youth Conference

### TRUTH

Based on John 8:32  
"You will know the truth,  
and the truth will set  
you free."



*The students had an amazing time in Colorado learning about God's TRUTH and it's ability.*



Thank you to everyone who continue to support the youth of Ascension. Ask a youth about what they experienced. *Lives are being impacted for and by the Lord!*

Miss seeing the full church calendar? Head over to the church website.

All information on the website calendar is current and available to see at any time.

Website: [ascensionwaterloo.com](http://ascensionwaterloo.com)

Click: Calendar tab (may take a few seconds to load)