

## **NFAMLP - June 2025 - Letter to the Fellowship**

### **From Jesus to Church**

We just celebrated the “Ascension of the Lord.” Luke begins the second volume, the Act of the Apostles, with a brief transition. He offers the readers a synopsis of the Gospel in which he wrote “all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning until the day when he was taken up to heaven.” As Jesus begins to leave this earth, two men in white robes appear to the disciples on Mount Olivet. Some theologians say the two men were referred to as Moses and Elijah and were there to comfort the apostles. These were the same two who appeared on a mountain in shining white garments at the transfiguration of Jesus.

Imagine your sanctuary had a huge picture of Jesus on the wall behind the altar and the sun was shining on the stained-glass windows, Jesus coming down from heaven in the clouds. The clouds in some part dissolving into the background with Jesus’ penetrating eyes looking directly at you, with one hand pointing up into the heavens and the other hand waving goodbye. Just how do you fix your hearts and minds on heavenly things in this profound world of change and chaos? Do we at times find ourselves holding our head with our hands and staring into the heavens? What are our thoughts during these moments, what do we expect to see or hear? The ascension of Jesus is a moment of loss and transition, as well as a moment of glory. We read it with mixed emotions, Jesus points not to the future but to the power of the Holy Spirit in the present.

In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus teaches us to go into our “inner room” to pray. I believe the room in which Jesus was speaking refers to our heart and soul, the place where we are also with God. He urges us to pray in secret because he also knows we need a sanctuary, a place of refuge. When the hurricanes of life are brewing and the weatherman tells us to find a safe place in our homes. Our inner self should be like that if only for a short period of time. A place of shelter if only briefly, we never know when and how the storms of life will hit us.

It is our task to share the good news of the gospel of a Christ that we recognize the cross, the tomb, and the resurrection, as He descended into heaven, as he was preparing the disciples for his ascension. I remember when I was teaching Sunday school and one of the kids asked the question, “what magic will Jesus perform next”. For many of us, life is full of surprises but with Jesus, we count it all joy, for

where would we be without his tender arms of grace and mercy. He told the disciples, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." Jesus comforts us with the Holy Spirit and we are reminded that we are all children of the Most High God. We move from his ascension to Pentecost.

Pentecost is the Christian celebration of the descent of the Holy Spirit on the disciples of Jesus after his Ascension, held on the seventh Sunday after Easter. Pentecost marks the day when the Holy Spirit was poured out on all believers, fulfilling Jesus' promise that he would send them another advocate (John 14:16). It was a day that led to a world-changing moment and uncover the deeper meaning of the Promise. The Church was born and in spite of our differences, Christ church still grows. On the day of Pentecost, the church was born in Jerusalem. It was through the Holy Spirit the believers were empowered to bear witness to the saving grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Go and tell someone that He still lives today, He walks with us and talks with us along life's narrow way, He lives! He lives! Salvation to impart! You ask me how I know He lives? He lives within our hearts.

Grace and peace to our readers, see you September 9-11 at our Annual Gathering of National Fellowship of Associate Members & Local Pastors, Jumonville Camp & Retreat Center, Hopwood, Penn. Registration can be found on our website; [www.nfamlp.org](http://www.nfamlp.org)

*'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; You sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams, And on MY menservants and on My maidservants. (Acts 2:17)*

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