



St. John's Lutheran Church

Missouri Synod

901 SW Fillmore Street • Topeka, Kansas • 66606-1445 • 785.354.7132 • www.stjohnlcmstopeka.org

VOL. 85 NO. 8 MONTHLY

AUGUST 2015

WHAT DO WE DO NOW?

Very often it is difficult to say, “Thy will be done.” St. John’s congregation has recently struggled with that prayer as our beloved Pastor Lange was called by the Kansas District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod to be its president. I don’t know about you, but I’m selfish and I don’t want to share him! I still fight back tears when I think about it.

Pastor Lange was duly elected by the district in its triennial convention on June 5. God uses His people to bring about His will as they follow good order set up by the Church and based on the Lutheran Confessions. Pr. Lange did not seek this position; the Holy Spirit moved His people in the Kansas District to nominate him, and consequently to elect him. God does not directly call individuals, but works through means – in this case, His people. Just as St. John’s as a congregation called Pastor Lange in 1999 to be its Minister of the Word at this place, the Kansas District, its congregations and representatives, have duly called him to serve all of the congregations of the district. We have lost a faithful pastor, but the Kansas District (which includes us) has gained a faithful pastoral president.

But we do not grieve; we rejoice in the gifts that God has given to Pastor Lange and through which God works to enrich and nourish His kingdom. No pastor wishes to gather a following so that the “success” of the congregation depends on him as a man. St. Paul warns against that very thing in 1 Corinthians 1:12-13, 3:4-9, where he admonishes the church at Corinth for divisions resulting from placing a pastor or anyone else above Christ. St. John’s will not fall apart, for Christ is the head of the body, the church. Christ promises to come to us in His Word and Sacrament, and He does. As long as the Word is preached in its truth and purity and the Sacraments are administered rightly, we do not need anything else. We have “church” as we gather around His gifts and receive His forgiveness, life, and salvation.

God is clearly a God of order. We see that in creation and in history. There is proper order and procedure to follow when calling the pastor that God already has in mind for us. We must not become impatient, but carefully and in good order seek the will of God for the ongoing Ministry of the Gospel at St. John’s. Our mission has not changed; our purpose has not changed; the Holy Spirit has not changed. God the Holy Spirit will guide us as we trust His leadership, through nothing else but His Word and His healing Sacraments.

“Let us. . .not neglect to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near” (Hebrews 10:25). What we do now is what we have always done: we come to church to receive His gifts, we study the Scriptures, we pray, we love one another. We do not criticize, complain, or compare. We do not take a vacation from the church. We unite as brothers and sisters in Christ, loving God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, and loving our neighbor as ourselves.

The Lord bless you, Pastor Lange, Marcia, and family. Thank you for serving us faithfully where God placed you sixteen years ago, and may He continue to bless you where He has placed you now.

Assistant Pastor - Rev. Jon S. Bruss, ext. 104
Deaconess - Linda S. Kinnett, ext. 102
Kantor - Rev. Roger M. Goetz
Visitation Pastor - Rev. Glenn R. Bitter
Day School Teachers - Ashley Jensema, Andrea Kosmicki,

KRISTIN LANGE ON THE WITTENBERG PROJECT

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Greetings in the Name of the Lord! It is with great joy and hopefulness that I write to you, the formative home congregation of my youth, about the exciting time our Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod is in. We're gearing up to celebrate 500 years of our Lutheran heritage, a heritage woven into each of our lives and uniting us together here at St. John's, by the grace of God. While we rejoice and commemorate this rich history of Martin Luther's Reformation, we also pray that the Lord use us as witnesses to carry the Good News of His salvation into all nations and to all people, as He has commanded us. The Wittenberg Project aims to do just that by once again establishing a confessional Lutheran presence in the birthplace of the Reformation. My missionary role in Wittenberg is to make it possible for Christians from all over the world to come learn and deepen their appreciation of the blessings that came out of the Reformation, and to bear witness and share the knowledge of these blessings to those who have not heard, especially in and around Wittenberg.

The Wittenberg Project was established in 2007 as a joint effort between the LCMS, our fellow synod in Germany, the Independent Evangelical Lutheran Church (SELK), and Concordia Publishing House (CPH). Run by the International Lutheran Society of Wittenberg (ILSW) representing all three groups, the "Wittenberg Project" is housed in the Old Latin School (OLS), which hosts the International Lutheran Center (ILC). Having served as a parochial school for a number of centuries, OLS was purchased by ILSW and completely renovated for the purposes of the ILC. There, people from throughout the world are invited to come and stay to deepen their understanding of the Reformation by being in and around Wittenberg. Unlike the museums and empty churches that remain engulfed in scaffolding as Europe prepares for this grand anniversary, the newly-dedicated ILC is a living center that invites all to grow in the Word and go forth with a deeper appreciation of God's blessings! Museums pay tribute to what was once living; at ILC what the Holy Spirit began through Martin Luther is very much still alive today.

I had the privilege last month to attend the dedication of the ILC held in conjunction with the International Conference of Confessional Lutheranism, and I saw first-hand just how widely and beautifully the Church has spread to people of all nations. The ILC hopes to be a home for all. With eleven dorm-style rooms, a common area and kitchen, a CPH bookstore, access to classrooms, and a beautiful chapel, this building that dates to 1564 is equipped to see many more years. Individuals and groups of all sorts—churches, youth groups, seminary students, pastors, college groups, etc.—will stay there to gain a deeper appreciation of the Reformation and how it shaped Church history. The visitors themselves will in turn be a witness to the local community just by virtue of being there. This will open the door for the other main focus of the Wittenberg Project—bringing the Gospel to the Wittenberg area.

Sadly, although many of us may highly regard the Reformation, many living in and around the places it happened have little knowledge or interest in it. Wittenberg is in the former East Germany, where Communism reigned and tried to stomp out Christianity. Just over one hundred years before that, the Lutheran and Reformed churches were forced by the Emperor to become one state Protestant church, thus destroying the theological identity that made Lutherans Lutheran. That's why Wittenberg is such a

rich field to witness in right now. In the birthplace of the Reformation where so many Scriptural truths were once revealed, now only 13% of the population claim to be any sort of Christian. There are many relationships to be built here, and that will be my goal as a missionary. For God's Word is word indeed, and words are shared through trusted conversation. In working closely with German pastors and laity from the surrounding areas, we hope to gather the nucleus of a SELK congregation around the Word and the Sacraments in the chapel in the ILC. By the grace of God, we will continue what was once begun in this quaint town on the Elbe.

I ask for your prayerful support in this endeavor. Many of you know that Germany has always been on my mind, and that doing something with the Wittenberg Project specifically has been my prayer since I first heard about it. I have no doubt that it is my vocation. God has graciously guided me to this point, which could not have happened without the community of believers He has placed me among throughout my life. Thank you for being that, and I ask that you pray blessings upon all that is to come in Wittenberg.

Your sister in Christ,

Kristin Lange

Please come to hear my in-depth presentation about my missionary service and how you can partner with me, on August 2nd, during the adult Bible study hour at 9:45 a.m.

INTRODUCING BETHANY MARIE WOELMER

Bethany Woelmer is the daughter of Pastor and Mrs. James Woelmer. He is the Senior Pastor of Faith Lutheran Church in Plano Texas. Bethany graduated this spring from our Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod's Concordia University Wisconsin (CUW), located in Mequon, a suburb of Milwaukee. Incidentally, her classmate there at CUW, Steve Wurst, gave an organ recital at St. John's on May 31. Both Steve and Bethany had the same university organ professor, John Behnke, a noted composer of church music, including music for handbells. Years ago, Dr. Behnke was the organ professor at St. John's College in Winfield, Kansas, where our member Mitch Bean also studied organ with Dr. Behnke.

Early this August, Bethany will be moving to Lawrence, Kansas, to begin working on her Master's of Church Music at the University of Kansas. St. John's has hired Bethany to help in three ways with the music program at our church.



Bethany Woelmer

One way in which Bethany will be helping us out is by playing the organ once a month from this September through next April.

The Klingerei Suspended for the Time Being; Ecclesia Bells Our New Handbell Choir

The Klingerei will not practice and perform during the Academic Year 2015-2016. However, Bethany will be starting a new handbell choir at St. John's so she may freely use what she learned at CUW and not have to try mold herself into the traditions of the Klingerei. She has named the new bell choir "Ecclesia Bells," which recalls an article that recently appeared in *The Lutheran Witness* online (<http://blogs.lcms.org/2015/church-bells-are-calling>). In the New Testament, "ecclesia" is the Greek word for "church" and basically means "those who are called out." Christians are called by God out of the world to be in the body of Christ, the Holy Christian Church; at the same time, we are called by God to go into the world to call others to Christ.

Volunteering for Ecclesia Bells

Communicant members of St. John's who read music, including members of the Klingerei, are invited to volunteer to be in Ecclesia Bells. A maximum of 15 people can be regular ringers and additional people may be substitutes. Rehearsals will be on Thursday evenings from 6:30 to 7:15 p.m. beginning on Thursday, September 10 (the Thursday after Labor Day). Members of Ecclesia Bells are expected to attend every rehearsal. Occasional absences for illness or school/work conflicts are acceptable as long as they are not frequent. Those wishing to volunteer to be in Ecclesia Bells should let the church office know by Tuesday, August 18.

The Sunday School Choir Begins

Finally, Bethany will be starting a new Sunday School Children's Choir which will rehearse on Sunday mornings at 9:45 a.m. for about ten minutes. This choir will sing in church on Sundays roughly once a month (except in December and January).

YOUTH CATECHESIS

Classes for the first, second, and third year catechesis are set to begin on Monday evening, September 14. If you have a student in the 6th, 7th or 8th grade or high school who is eligible for catechesis, please watch your mailbox and the Notes and News in the weekly bulletins for details. Pastor Bruss also plans to meet with all families/guardians of catechesis-aged students to discuss expectations and give some tips for doing well in the classes. In catechesis, students learn the Faith more deeply, learn Scripture passages and the Catechism by heart, and attain skills that will aid them in their spiritual journey to the end of life. We look forward to having your children in class.

OUR SINCEREST THANKS TO ALL OF OUR VOLUNTEERS

We give thanks to our gracious God for His continued gifts of the means of grace through which He establishes and nurtures our faith and life. We also give thanks to God for all the support of the mission and ministry of St. John's by our members of all ages, in both financial and time devoted ways. Without the willing hands and hearts of our members, much work would go undone that is vital for the efficiency of the congregation's ministry. Once again, we express our appreciation to all volunteers in the numerous capacities in which they serve. For those of you that would like to know what "Opportunities for Involvement" are available at St. John's, see the St. John's brochure located in each pew or at the Information Center.

2015 STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

We thank the many congregation members who have shared in their gifts from God with their pledge for St. John's. Through July 21 a total 165 households have pledged, totaling \$506,448. Last fiscal year, a total of 186 households pledged a total of \$554, 552. Sunday, July 5, 2015 was "First Offering Sunday". While the fiscal year runs January through December, our pledge year runs July 1 through June 30 of the following year. This is done to allow the church to develop a budget based upon actual pledges which will be approved at the voter's meeting in November. If you still have not completed a pledge card you can pick up a pledge card from the office, or find them at the end of each pew. Just fill it out and place it in the offering plate or drop it off on the secretary's desk. If you have any questions about your pledge card or about the nature of your commitment, please contact Yvonne Berry at 354-7132. Thank you and God bless.

2015 Board of Christian Stewardship

NO MONTHLY BREAKFAST

Due to the recent major events at St. Johns, including Pastor Lange's farewell celebration and his installation, and the upcoming Neighborhood Block Party on August 8, there will be coffee and cookies in the Courtyard on August 9, instead of the monthly breakfast in Luther Hall.

LUTHERAN WITNESS SUBSCRIPTIONS

There is no better way to keep up on what's new in The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod. The flagship magazine of the LCMS, *The Lutheran Witness* offers synodical news, reports from Lutherans around the world, features, columns, Q&A's, a Bible study, and so much more. This is the premier magazine for Lutherans who want to be informed and stay informed! A monthly publication, *The Lutheran Witness* speaks directly about what's important to today's Lutherans: Christian life, missions and ministries, and people of faith. Subscriptions are available through the church office until August 20. Just write a check for \$17 made out to St. John's and write Lutheran Witness on the check memo line. We will submit one check from the church for all subscriptions.

TLS NEWS

Great news! TLS is once again offering a one year tuition credit of \$500 to new families who enroll for the 2015-2016 school year. In addition to this offer, TLS will provide the currently enrolled referring family with a tuition credit of \$500 for the 2015-2016 school year for each new family they refer to TLS who meets the following criteria.

- The new family must:
- Name the referring family,
- Apply, be accepted, enroll and complete the 2015-2016 school year

How to register for the program:

1. A current family refers a prospective family to TLS and notifies the school by filling out and submitting the referral form with the referring and referee family's names, contact information and signatures to TLS.

Upon receipt of a referral form, TLS staff will contact and verify the referral relationship for correct crediting of the discount.

The form must be signed by the prospective family and the referring family.

2. Terms and conditions:

1. "New student" is defined as one without any other siblings currently enrolled.
2. The referral credit may only be applied to the 2015-2016 tuition and has no cash value.
3. Current families may receive multiple new-family referral credits, not to exceed their total tuition obligations for the 2015-2016 school year.
4. The bonus is for each newly enrolled family, regardless of the number of children in that family. If a current family refers a prospective family that enrolls more than one child, the current family will receive one \$500 bonus for that family.
5. Credits are for tuition only and may not be used for other school-related fees.
6. Eligibility for tuition assistance is not a factor in receiving the bonus for either the current family or the prospective family.
7. If a referred family joins after the school year begins, the tuition credit will be pro-rated based on a percent of the full-year tuition.
8. The \$500 will be credited to the referring family's tuition bill as soon as administratively feasible.

Topeka Lutheran School
ADMISSION REFERRAL FORM FOR 2015-2016

Please see the Terms and Conditions above for all the details regarding the program.

Family/families you referred to TLS:

Name _____ Contact # _____

Date _____

_____	_____
Referring family member signature	Date

_____	_____
Referee family member signature	Date

TLS Needs: Topeka Lutheran School is still looking for candidates for a combined 1st and 2nd grade classroom teacher and a middle school math and language arts teacher.

NATIONAL NIGHT OUT AGAINST CRIME

Plan to be a part of **The Neighborhood Block Party**—National Night Out Against Crime Event
Saturday, August 8, 6-8 PM.

Hosted by Historic Old Town NIA, St. John's Neighborhood Care Team,
and many additional St. John's volunteers.

The signup sheet is on the bulletin board in the breezeway.

Volunteers are still needed.

The *National Night Out Against Crime* is a great way for St. John's:

- To promote and enhance safety in our neighborhood and throughout Topeka
- To help and support our partner leaders in the Historic Old Town Neighborhood Improvement Association.
- To build bridges for further sharing of the Gospel with those in our neighborhood.
- To love those around our church "in deed" as well as "in talk" (1 John 3:18).

WOMEN'S LEAGUE BARGAIN AND BAKE SALE

Thursday, August 20, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. & Friday, August 21, 8 a.m. – 1 p.m.

If you have good, clean articles you no longer need, save them for the upcoming St. John's Women's League Bargain and Bake Sale. Furniture, dishes, linens, shoes, clothes, etc. will be accepted. No computer equipment please. Donations of baked good, jellies, etc. will be welcome. Help with the sale will also be welcome.

Non-food donations should be brought by 2 p.m. on Wednesday, August 19.

Donation Hours

Items may be brought to Luther Hall the following times:

6 pm – 8 pm Monday, August 17

10 am – 5 pm Tuesday, August 18

10 am – 2 pm Wednesday, August 19

Half of our profits will be donated to Mites for LWML Mission Projects.

WOMEN'S LEAGUE CARING & MISSIONS

We are preparing SCHOOL KITS for August & September. Items needed are displayed on the table beneath the LWML bulletin board, with a basket beneath the table for collection.

Items needed at this time:

- 70 sheet notebooks of wide or college-ruled paper 8 ½" x 11"; no loose-leaf paper
- 30 cm. ruler or a ruler with cm on one side and inches on the other
- Pencil sharpener
- Blunt scissors (safety scissors with embedded steel blades work well)
- Unsharpened #2 pencils with erasers
- Ballpoint pens (no gel ink)
- Box of 16 or 24 crayons
- Eraser approximately 2 ½" long

Thank you in advance for your donations. Again, monetary gifts will be accepted.

Geri Tate 272-0886; Marcia Wade 286-1119; Carol Ravins 266-7088

DOORSTEP'S NEEDS

Doorstep is in immediate need of the following: They are out of several staple items in their food room. Unfortunately, this means they are not able to give out complete food orders to their clients. If you can help they need the following items:

Egg Noodles	Oatmeal
Canned Fruit	Cold Cereal
Pinto Beans – 1 lb.	Jelly
Canned Peas	Hamburger Helper
Pork & Beans	

There is still time to give to Doorstep's Christmas in July. You can see items needed on the display in the hallway near Luther Hall. Doorstep always needs blankets (full/queen is most popular) as each household receives a blanket. You can check the 'Clearance Section' at your favorite stores as you may still find great deals on blankets, household items, clothing for all ages and maybe even some toys!

The Christmas Store has a ‘Family’ section which has knick-knacks of all sorts, but it also has household items that people need and are always thankful to receive. Items like toasters, coffee pots, pots & pans, hand mixers, new sheet sets, dishes (set), silverware, are items that are greatly appreciated. Please look over the Christmas in July flyer in this newsletter and see how you can help. Doorstep’s success depends on their member congregations working together to provide for their neighbors in need. If everyone pitches in just a little, big things can happen! Last year with your help they provided Christmas to 679 individuals.

SUNDAY SCHOOL WORKERS MEETING

All Sunday School workers are encouraged to attend the meeting in the church library on Saturday, August 22, at 10:00 a.m. to review the new reorganization of the Growing in Christ curriculum, to network, to mentor, and to ask questions. We look forward to seeing you there. Thank you for loving the children by passing on the faith.

SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR AUGUST 2015

Second Article of the Creed: I believe in Jesus Christ, His Son, our Lord

August 2: *Jesus Will Return: The Parable of the Ten Virgins*

Third Article: I Believe in the Holy Spirit

August 9: *The Spirit Creates Faith: Jesus Teaches Nicodemus*

August 16: *The Spirit Renews Us: Mary Shows Her Love for Jesus*

August 23: *The Spirit Produces Good Works: A Widow’s Offering*

August 30: *The Spirit Makes the Church Grow: Philip and the Ethiopian*

BIBLE WORDS FOR AUGUST:

The Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel . . . And the dead in Christ will rise first. 1 Thes. 4:16

No one can say “Jesus is Lord” except in the Holy Spirit. 1 Corinthians 12:3

If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. 2 Corinthians 5:17

We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. Ephesians 2:10

As the Father has sent Me, even so I am sending you. John 20:21

“And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise” (Deuteronomy 6: 6-7). Parents, this command from God’s Word is for you, and the Sunday school is here to support you in the nurture of your children’s spiritual growth. Please accept God’s invitation to bless your children through the Sunday school and worship service each week.

2015 FLOWER CALENDAR

The following services are available in the next few months if you would like to provide flowers for any of them: August 23 October 18 & 26 November 8 & 15 December 27

Just sign your name and phone number on the date of your choice on the Flower Calendar posted outside of the church office. The office staff will call to remind you.



THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH

[Jesus said] “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.” Matthew 28:19–20a

So that we may obtain faith in Christ, God instituted the ministry of teaching the gospel and administering the sacraments. Through the gospel and sacraments, as through means, God gives the Holy Spirit who produces faith, where and when He wills, in those who hear the gospel. The Augsburg Confession, Article 5.