



St. John's

Ev. Lutheran Church

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

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THE “MUCHNESS” OF GOD’S SABBATH

Busyness is the new black. It’s stylish. We spend an inordinate amount of time comparing how busy we are with everyone else. We compare our schedules, our kid’s schedules, how productive we are and how much we have because of it to everyone around us. And if we don’t do or have what the next guy does or has, we just get busier and produce more so that we can.

This consumes our conversations and thoughts. And this should give us pause: Who is consuming whom, here? Are we the consumer or are we those consumed? It’s no accident that our adversary the devil is described as a lion prowling around seeking to devour us, to consume us. He gives us the liturgy of this world, the liturgy of productivity and consumption. For if he can keep us busy in “muchness” and “manyness,” he can be satisfied.

And this is why the Lord, after finishing all His work of creation, rested on the seventh day. This is why He established the Sabbath day—to give His people rest from all their work. As they rested, He continued to work for them, to satisfy them, to fill them with His gifts—food from heaven by His Word and Promise.

That day came when from our Lord’s cross and in His death, He proclaimed, “*It is finished*” (John 19:30). And so His work of redemption was complete. And so His body rested in the tomb, the belly of the earth. Though He is the Lord God who always works, yet as the Lord rested on the original Sabbath, now Jesus kept the Sabbath by resting in the tomb and rising from the dead to live forever. For this is why He came. This is why He became man: to draw all to Himself so that He could give rest and refreshment to the weary and the heavy laden.

The Sabbath is a gift, not a burden. It is a gift of time free from the liturgy of this world, the liturgy of productivity and consumption. Sabbath is time for rest and refreshment, a time free from anxiety to enjoy the gifts God gives, all of them—His Word, His Promises, His Sacraments, His creation, everything. It is a foretaste of the rest we shall enjoy in heaven.

Sadly for many of us rest has become work. It’s become drudgery. We long for it but we aren’t able to do it because there’s so much to be done and so little time to do it. But really what’s the rush? Why are we so hurried and harried? Have we forgotten that Jesus is raised from the dead and lives forever?

Sabbath is God’s gift of time free from all of the anxiety and hurry of this world so that we can rest, be refreshed by the gifts God gives. Society won’t do it for us. They are addicted to the liturgy of productivity and consumption. Though we are in the world, we are not of it. We are the people of God,

His own children by water and Word, joined to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus lives. And so shall we. So rest in the promise of our Savior that sin, death, and time have not hold on you because Jesus is raised from the dead. Jesus lives. And so shall we, forever.

The above article came from the LCMS website as one of their monthly Stewardship articles.

Senior 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,

2016 OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

Following are the individuals elected or appointed to serve in a leadership capacity in St. John's Lutheran Church - Topeka, Kansas. We give thanks to God for their faithful and dedicated work.

President - **Al Goodpasture*

President Elect - **Dale Fritsch*

Secretary - **Clay Walters*

Treasurer - **Coleen Akers*

Financial Secretary - *Jim Gerhardt*

Board of Elders: *Steve Gehrke, Ron Revelle, Mark Pheasant, *Larry Beam, *Clayton Kinnett, Mark Pierce, John Kite, Roger Barr, *Pat Tierce*

Board of Trustees: *Marc Weir, Keith Powell, Joe Fergel*

Board of Parish Education: **Dave Weems, Jeff Zillinger, Myron Akers*

Board of Christian Stewardship: *Dave Graversen, *Andy Grittman, Dakota Sorensen*

Endowment Board: *Ryan Weir, Larry Meyer, Shirley Gorman, *Chuck McMullen*

Board of Missions & Evangelism: *Doug Jones, Mike Grau, *Guy Luebbe*

Nominating Committee: *Keith Powell, Mark Pierce, Myron Akers, Bob Berry*

TLS Board of Directors: *Jeff Pierce, Christy Sorensen, *Sarah Kirmse*

KS District Representative: *Stevin Gehrke; Clayton Kinnett (alternate)*

** newly elected/re-elected and appointed/re-appointed*

A SPECIAL "THANK YOU" FROM THE STAFF

Each member of the called staff and the support staff wish to thank the congregation for the thoughtful and generous Christmas gifts. We are most grateful for the support, love, and care each of us receives from you throughout the year. May God in His mercy continue to bless the Body of Christ in this place with His Presence and His work in us and through us to the praise of His glory.

CONTINUING THE JOURNEY REQUEST

As most of you know, our church has contracted with Wittenberg Church Consultants to help us with the next three-year campaign to hopefully pay off our building debt. This campaign won't be completed until late Spring. Since our most recent three-year campaign ended December 31st, we have a gap between that campaign and when our new campaign starts receiving pledge contributions. We would like to encourage members to continue with their giving toward the building fund during this interim period. Any gifts received during this period will help toward our ultimate goal of raising enough in pledges to retire our debt in 2018. Your 2016 envelopes still have the yellow "Continuing the Journey" envelopes in your box. We encourage you to continue to use these envelopes until the new campaign has been initiated. The Board thanks you for your prayerful consideration of this request.

The Board of Christian Stewardship

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.

TOPEKA LUTHERAN SCHOOL - FOLLOW-UP

Thank you to many of our faithful donors and friends for your response to the recent TLS appeal for additional contributions. **We are especially grateful for the generosity of Pastor and Mrs. Roger M. Goetz of St. John's Lutheran Church, who have offered to match all donations to the TLS Daily Fund (excluding Thrivent donations) made from 11-1-2015 through 1-31-2016, up to a total of \$20,000.** Pastor and his wife Betty, a former teacher at TLS, have shared that this offer is being made for two reasons:

1. In thanksgiving to God for the high quality of education their daughter (Class of 1988) and grandson (Class of 2007) received at TLS which has been academically more rigorous than that offered in area public schools; and more importantly:
2. In recognition of the solid education in the Christian faith provided at TLS, which is unavailable in public schools

Please consider making a contribution—through January 31, your donation to TLS Daily Fund will be essentially doubled with this generous match. Please make your check payable to TLS Foundation.

MORE TLS NEWS

From Parent Teacher League at Topeka Lutheran School: Mark your calendars for our annual PTL Chili Supper January 29 from 5-7 PM. Our silent auction will be slightly different this year so stay tuned for updates! Please contact Jenn Ayres at [785-230-6379](tel:785-230-6379) or jenn_ayres@yahoo.com with any questions. We are grateful for your support of Topeka Lutheran School!

2016 CONTRIBUTION ENVELOPES

Contribution envelopes are available to be picked up in the breezeway. Please use the instructions on the clipboard located on the tables with the contribution boxes to locate your box of contribution envelopes. If you have any questions regarding contribution boxes/envelopes, please speak with Yvonne Berry in the church office.

INTERESTED IN BECOMING A VOTING MEMBER?

The new constitution of our congregation defines “voting member” as a communicant member who has reached the age of 18 years and been received as a voting member upon application for such privilege upon approval of the voters of the assembly. This means that, unlike in the past, communicant women age 18 and above are eligible to join the voters assembly. **We encourage all eligible St. John’s members to join the voter’s assembly.** You can contact the office to get instructions on how you can become a voter.

NEW ADULT CATECHESIS CLASS IN JANUARY

A new Adult Catechesis class will begin in late January/early February. This class is designed to lead toward communicant membership at St. John’s or simply to serve as a great review of basic Lutheran theology. Several regular visitors to St. John’s have already indicated their desire to participate in the class. We’re penciling in a Thursday evening class, but that’s open to negotiation. All are welcome, including long-time Lutherans. Please contact Pastor Bruss for details regarding meeting time, duration, etc.

WOMEN’S BIBLE STUDY

We meet on Tuesday mornings at 9:00 in the Undercroft, so come join us! Class resumes on January 5, with an overview of the Old Testament, beginning with *Exodus 25 – 40*, *Leviticus 24*, and *Numbers 6* and 15, where we learn about public worship and discipline of the Israelites in the wilderness. It is interesting to note that our worship today is rooted in the ancient worship prescribed by God.

ST. JOHN’S ANNUAL MISSION FESTIVAL

On Sunday, January 24, featuring one of the St. John’s-supported missionaries, Pr. Daniel Johnson. Pr. Johnson will be accompanied also by Bp. Vsevolod Lytkin of the Siberian Evangelical Lutheran Church. Bp. Lytkin will serve as preacher at both Divine Services that Sunday, and Pr. Johnson and Bp. Lytkin will speak during the Bible Study hour. The Board of Missions and Evangelism will also distribute missions pledge cards that Sunday. Our ambitious goal this year is, as a congregation, to rise to the support not only of Pr. Johnson, but also of Pr. Krikava (Czecho), Kristin Lange (Wittenberg), and Prs. Panchu & Furs (Saratov). To meet our commitments to support the precious work of these missionaries in bringing Christ where He’s not known, we aspire to gather \$14,000 in extra-budgetary missions giving. Please give prayerful consideration to the support you might offer.

2016 FLOWER CALENDAR

Please check the Flower Calendar on the bulletin board outside of the church offices.

Many dates are still available. Some upcoming available dates are:

January 3, 24 & 31; February 7, 14 & 28; March 6, 13 & 20

MONTHLY BREAKFAST JANUARY

On Sunday, January 9, the Youth will host a potluck breakfast between services. Bring your favorite breakfast food to share and enjoy conversation with fellow St. John's members.

THANK YOU'S

To the entire congregation, thank you for the wonderful reception at my installation on 29 November and for the warm cards and gifts to mark the installation, and for your continued prayers and support. Please accept our deep gratitude.

Pastor Bruss & Family

My dear St. John's Family,

It's been quite a busy August, September, October and November on the road, all the way from New Jersey over to California, from Omaha down to Houston, and many stops in between! And you got to kick it off! (I've learned a thing or two since being at St. John's - each presentation develops.) ☺

I want to thank you so much for supporting my missionary service in Wittenberg with your donation. I truly and in the most basic sense, can't begin to do this work without support by my fellow family in Christ. And I couldn't dream of going into this without your prayer either! Your support is such a blessing me, especially from the church I grew up in.

Thank you again for helping me spread the Gospel, that Christ did it all for us on the Cross, with the souls living and passing through in Wittenberg. Lord willing, I will be there soon to share this message! God's blessings to you in this month of giving thanks—you give me much to be thankful for!

Kristin Lange

VOTERS MEETING - JANUARY 24, 2016

The **Annual Voters Meeting** of St. John's will be held on Sunday afternoon, January 24, beginning at 2:00 p.m. in the Nave. Each board and committee will present its annual report for the work of this past year and indicate plans for this coming year. The 2015 year-end reports of the Treasurer, the Financial Secretary, and the Eagle Foundation Treasurer will be presented.

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN REPORT

Wittenburg Church Consultants (WCC) will be visiting St. John's again on Friday January 8 and Saturday, January 9. These dates will be used to train our various campaign team leaders. The actual campaign will kick off in late February, but you will see mailings and other information on what will be taking place prior to that. Team leaders will be looking for members to serve on their teams. If you are asked to serve as part of one of the campaign teams we ask that you give prayerful consideration to the request. We believe that the success of this campaign will have a very significant effect on the future ministry at St. John's.

DOORSTEP NEWS

Doorstep staff and volunteers would like to thank everyone who donated to Doorstep during the holiday season and throughout 2015. With the 250 households they adopted through the Christmas Bureau and community needs ever present Doorstep was able to assist more of our neighbors in need because of your generosity. Along with the start of a new year also comes the cold weather and high utility bills. Please remember your neighbors who are struggling to pay those high bills when looking for a place to donate. Doorstep offers utility assistance to individuals and families throughout the year as funds are available.

Souper Bowl Sunday is February 7th! Just around the corner! On this weekend Doorstep asks its member congregations to collect soup and crackers to help restock their food pantry. A can of soup can be a meal and in the past with a successful collection they have had soup and crackers to last into the summer months! Please remember Doorstep when you go grocery shopping and pick up a few items for your neighbors in need.

Also, mark your calendars for the 13th Annual Operation Soup Line! This year it will be on Tuesday, February 23, 2016 and Doorstep will offer lunch and dinner again!

WOMEN'S LEAGUE

Thank you to all who helped in various ways to make the 2015 Christmas Luncheon and Bazaar another success. To those who Provided items for sale, to those who worked hard in all ways, to those shopped and brought friends and family and to those who had Lunch. Without all of you we would not have had the success we did. The great community of Topeka was also a big part of this success. Many people get together once a year here, have lunch, shop and we are thankful they chose our lunch and Christmas bazaar as a time to spend together.

There are some special people we would like to thank and those are the men that came and spent their day helping us. Where would be we without them? They did a marvelous job. There are those that do not belong to the circle and are giving of their time to help. St. John's is family; we work together for the glory of God. Thank you all again and again. A wonderful time was had by all visiting with old and making new friends. Our preliminary Net Profits are \$8400.00. We will again this year be able to support the many Mission projects as in the past. We will post a list of the Mission projects after our meeting in February.

Sarah Circle met at McFarland's Restaurant at 6:30, December 14, for our annual Christmas gathering. Our ingathering was for Door Step. The project was personal hygiene items for both women and men. There were 15 full bags of items collected and they have been delivered to Door Step. They were excited to get these as this is something that is not thought about and the need is big for these things.

"SHARE THE HARVEST" AND THANKSGIVING DAY OFFERINGS

The donations for "**Share the Harvest**" totaled \$1,107.46. This amount was divided equally between *Topeka Rescue Mission, Doorstep of Topeka, Let's Help* and St. John's Human Care. If you still have a "Share the Harvest" canister at home, please return it, (empty or full) as we will use them again next year. Thank you for your generosity.

The **Thanksgiving Day** offering totaling \$660.75.00 was divided 10% for *The Marian Clinic*, 10% for *Let's Help*, 25% to Doorstep, 10% to Topeka Rescue Mission, 20% for *St. John's "General Fund"*, 15% for *LCMS World Relief*, and 10% to the *Children's Christian Concern Society*. We are grateful to our gracious Lord for prompting many of our members to generously share with the needy of the community and the world through these contributions!

St. John's Board of Missions & Evangelism

SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR DECEMBER 2015

January 3:	“An Angel Visits Joseph”	Matt. 1:18-25
January 10:	“The Birth of Jesus”	Luke 2:1-20
January 17:	“The Presentation of Jesus”	Luke 2:22-40
January 24:	“The Visit of the Wise Men”	Matthew 2
January 31:	“The Boy Jesus in the Temple”	Luke 2:41-52

Bible Words for January:

Early Childhood

- January 3: *Call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.*
Matthew 1:21
- January 10: *For unto you is born . . . a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.*
Luke 2:11
- January 17: *My eyes have seen Your salvation.* Luke 2:30
- January 24: *Jesus Christ . . . is the true God and eternal life.* 1 John 5:20
- January 31: *Whoever hears My word and believes . . . has eternal life.* John 5:24

Elementary Grades

- January 3: *Faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.*
Romans 10:17
- January 10: *For unto you is born . . . a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.* Luke 2:11
- January 17: *My eyes have seen Your salvation.* Luke 2:30
- January 24: *We saw His star when it rose and have come to worship Him.*
Matthew 2:2
- January 31: *[Jesus] grew and became strong, filled with wisdom.* Luke 2:40

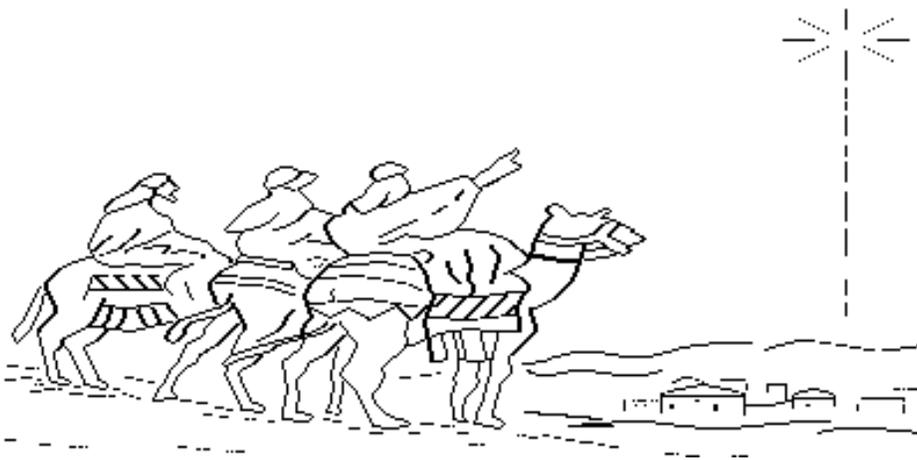
Thank you, parents for bringing your children to Sunday School and church.

“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.

ST. JOHN'S CPH RESOURCE CENTER NOTES

Concordia Publishing House suggests these Arch Books to supplement the Sunday School lessons for Winter 2015 : Growing in Christ "God Sends His Son to Save Us." Some of these listed, and many more, are available now in our resource center, located adjacent to the Sunday school classrooms on the second floor. If you cannot find the books you are looking for, go to www.cph.org

<u>Arch Book Title</u>	<u>Item</u>
His Name Is John	59-2207
Once upon a Clear, Dark Night	59-2243
The Shepherds Shook in Their Shoes	59-2234
When Jesus Was Born	59-2209
Jesus Visits the Temple	59-1544



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.