



St. John's

Ev. Lutheran Church

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

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NOVEMBER 2016

HOW'S YOUR APPETITE?

If you have ever had to skip a meal, you may recall that your appetite increased the longer food was absent. By the time something to eat became available, you were ravenously hungry. That's the natural way. Our Creator has designed our bodies to operate on the nutrients in good food, and hunger is a God-given instinctive desire to keep our bodies alive. When that hunger is satisfied, we no longer want food, at least for a while.

Our souls, likewise, are designed to grow and stay healthy on the rich spiritual food provided for us in the Word of God. But our spiritual appetite for God's nutrients performs in an opposite way to our physical appetite. Whereas our hunger for food increases with time, the longer we do without spiritual food the more our appetite for it decreases. If we miss gathering for worship a Sunday or two, it is easier to stay away the next week. The desire to be fed by God's Word lessens as time goes by until there is no spiritual hunger whatsoever.

It is not a natural thing for us to desire spiritual food, because outside of Christ, in our natural state, we are spiritually dead; and no dead person desires to eat. God places us into Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit in Baptism, forgives our sin, and makes us spiritually alive. But if we neglect to feed the soul through the means provided for us, if we stop coming to the place where we can be fed, then our soul will eventually die. The church is the place for sinners, and only sinners, hungry to be fed and nourished by Christ Himself.

Imagine that you are daily invited to an All-You-Can-Eat bar at no cost to you. You don't have to bring anything because everything you can think of, and more, is provided. Wouldn't you jump at the chance? You can eat to your heart's (or stomach's) content until you just cannot eat any more, at least for a while.

Now imagine that God invites you to His marvelous feast each Sunday at St. John's; in fact, He does! Your soul may feast on the Word preached and taught, and on the Physical Body of Christ in, with, and under the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper. The nutrients that feed your soul are in the rich food of forgiveness and salvation in Holy Absolution, in the spoken Gospel of Jesus Christ, and even in His Body given for you. The Holy Spirit works through these things to feed your soul and to keep you in Christ until the Last Day when faith will be sight.

The reason that we so easily decline to receive what God gives us is threefold: the world, our sinful flesh, and the devil. The world is our spiritual enemy because it tempts us with worldly pleasures of recreation, riches, power, and fame. Our sinful flesh is unrepentant, and full of pride that wants to be in control – to be our own god. The devil whispers doubt into our ears just as he did to Adam and Eve;

“Did God really say...?” He loves to cause division and strife in the church by encouraging God’s people to gossip, criticize and blame one another. We are powerless over these enemies.

But there is a solution! Jesus overcame sin, the devil, and the world, and He has given to us His perfect life in exchange for our sin. When we pray in the Lord’s Prayer, “lead us not into temptation,” we are praying “that God would guard and keep us so that the devil, the world, and our sinful nature may not deceive us or mislead us into false belief, despair, and other great shame and vice. Although we are attacked by these things, we pray that we may finally overcome them and win the victory.” (Luther’s Small Catechism, The Sixth Petition)

An interesting thing about spiritual food, unlike physical food, is that the more we get, the more we want. Spiritual food stimulates our appetite until it is insatiable. But oddly enough, our insatiable appetite is fully satisfied with the mercy and grace of God until we want more and more.

Come to the Feast, you sinners who hunger and thirst. The invitation is yours!

Deaconess Linda

Senior Pastor - Rev. J. S. Bruss, ext. 104

Associate Pastor – Rev. Devin M. Kerns, ext. 101

Deaconess - Linda S. Kinnett, ext. 102

Kantor - Rev. Roger M. Goetz

Topeka Lutheran School Teachers - Ashley Jensema, Andrea Kosmicki, Edith Kerns

CONTACT CHANGES OR GOING AWAY TO COLLEGE?

If you have any changes in your address, email address, or phone number, please notify the church office of these changes. You can phone us at 354-7132 or email us at secretary@stjlcms.org.

We would like to stay in touch with you!

NOVEMBER’S MONTHLY BREAKFAST

On Sunday, November 13, between services, the usher teams of St. John’s will host the monthly potluck breakfast. **Please bring your favorite breakfast casserole, meat dish, or anything else that we might enjoy for the morning meal.** Electrical plug-ins are available for crock pots, and the warming ovens will be ready for keeping dishes warm. If you bring something that needs to be cut (such as bread or cake), please do that ahead of time.

NEW ELDERS POLICY ON GUEST SPEAKERS

At the September Elder’s meeting, the board adopted the following policy: All guest speakers and presenters who come before St. John’s organizations must be approved by the Board of Elders in consultation with the full-time pastor(s). The organization shall seek approval prior to extending the invitation. The approval process is initiated by the organization contacting (one of) the pastor(s) or the chairman of the Board of Elders.

SOUND WORDS ACADEMY

It still is not too late to get involved

“Hold fast the pattern of sound words,” Paul instructs Timothy (2 Tim 1:13). To that end, the Board of Parish Education is dedicating Wednesday evenings at St. John’s to **Sound Words Academy**, running through the week before Memorial Day. Breaks largely coincide with USD 501 breaks. Mid-week educational opportunities will be concentrated on this evening. The schedule of offerings for this fall includes the following:

5:30-6	Lite dinner (Luther Hall; supported by free-will donation)
6:-6:50	The Rhythm of Faith (grades 1-5) (Woelmer) Youth Catechesis I (Kinnett) Youth Catechesis II (Bruss) Philippians (Kerns; high school and adults) Lifelight (Hintz)
7-7:45	Evening Prayer, Vespers, or Compline (Nave; open to everyone)
7:50-8:45	Adult Catechesis (Kerns) Women’s Bible Study on Jesus’ “I AM” statements in John, 7 weeks (Kinnett) Young Adults/College Students (Bruss)

At the core of each evening is the Office of Evening Prayer, Vespers, or Compline, to which not only those taking classes but all the congregation are invited. A lite dinner is served beginning at 5:30, supported by a free-will donation. It is our sincere hope that you will find at least one study to join in and attend the 7 p.m. Office of Evening Prayer, Vespers, or Compline. Bring along friends and family. Please enter by the south, aka glass, aka Luther Hall doors. All other doors will be locked.

2016 & 2017 FLOWER CALENDAR

Please check the Flower Calendar on the bulletin board outside of the church offices. A couple dates for this year are still available: November 27 and December 11. The *2017 Flower Calendar* will be posted by Sunday, November 6. If you would like to provide flowers for a particular service this coming year, please sign your name and phone number by the date of your choice.



TLS NEWS

TLS Open House will be held Sunday, November 6 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. at the Main Campus, 701 SW Roosevelt. The Beginning and Advanced Band will perform and tours of the school will be held. Please share this information with your family, friends and neighbors who have school-aged children and let them know of the blessings that TLS has to offer. Your help with recruiting new families is very important!

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME ENDS

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2016 AT 2 A.M.

Set your clocks back before you go to bed Saturday evening, November 5.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU'RE MOVING

If you're moving in town and plan to remain a member of St. John's, please let the church office know your change of address (you can also fill in your new address on the attendance cards). If you're moving out of town, please contact Pastor Bruss or Pastor Kerns so they can provide you some help in finding a solid congregation near your new home and help you arrange a transfer. If you already have moved, please also the contact Pastors, as well. You can also use the link on the bottom of the St. John's homepage that says "Evangelical-Lutheran Liturgical Congregations" as a good guide.

FROM HEAVEN ABOVE TO EARTH I COME

Is the title to this year children's Christmas program. The program will take place **Wednesday, December 21 at 6:30 p.m.** and the program is set within the Evening Prayer.

SHARE THE HARVEST

This year, St. John's members will again have the opportunity to "Share their Harvest". This donation goes to local agencies to assist the needy in the Topeka area. The Harvest will be gathered at services on Thanksgiving Day and the following Sunday.

Through "Share the Harvest" we direct those in need of assistance to a local agency that we support. Last year, \$1254 was distributed in support of *Topeka Rescue Mission (25%), Let's Help (25%), Doorstep, Inc. (25%), and St. John's Human Care (25%)*. We deeply thank you for your contribution to this human care effort. "*Give thanks to the Lord for He is good; His love endures forever.*" Psalm 107:1

NOVEMBER VOTER'S MEETING

There will be a Voters Meeting Sunday, November 20 at 2 p.m. in the church nave. Items of business will include:

1. Reports from Treasurer, Financial Secretary, and Board Chairs
2. Presentation of the Proposed 2017 Congregational Budget for voter approval
3. Presentation of the ballot of nominees for congregational officers and board members for 2017

WOMEN'S LEAGUE NEWS

LWML Bazaar & Luncheon: It's that time of year again. Please mark Friday, December 2, 2016 on your calendar for the St. John's LWML Bazaar and Luncheon. It's time to think about what you can bring to this event to insure we have another successful bazaar. The ticket price for an adult is \$8.00 and \$3.00 for a child. Booths open at 10:30 a.m. and the Luncheon is from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. In addition, we also will have one of the largest "Cookie Walks" in Topeka. The price for the cookies is \$6.00 a pound. As in the past few years, we will be selling woodworking items, homemade craft items, gift items, paintings, quilts, etc. We will again be offering a baked goods area and the Sweet Shop. The proceeds will be divided among many different local and national missions. Without the contributions from St. John's members and the participation from the general public, this would not be possible. We thank you in advance for your help. Items may be brought to church on Wednesday, November 30 and Thursday, December 1, from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Additional information will be available in the Sunday bulletins.

PROVIDING HOPE FOR DETROIT — ACTS 2 ENTERPRISE

LWML Mission Grant #18 – Amount: \$100,000

- An intentional undertaking of the churches in Detroit to reconnect with the communities, evangelizing and spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ through a full range of programs.

Acts 2 Enterprise (A2E), through local congregations, is intentionally undertaking the reconnecting of Detroit, Michigan with the communities, in which they reside, evangelizing the city with the Good News of Jesus Christ. They are doing this through a Christ-centered presence in the areas of: literacy, job partnerships, parenting classes, sports camps/VBS, leadership, and community beautification. A2E will strategically provide before and after school tutoring which would be facilitated by Lutheran leaders which will also include computer classes, learning strategies to enhance reading and comprehension, test taking skills, life skills, and biblical teachings along with sharing the Gospel. **The money collected in the Mite Boxes on the first Sunday of each month goes to support this grant.**

THANKSGIVING/CHRISTMAS BASKETS & POINSETTIA DELIVERY

The Welfare Fund provides monetary assistance to members who have special needs. If you wish to contribute to this cause, please make your check payable to St. John's Ev. Lutheran Church, "Welfare" on the memo line.

In addition to monetary gifts, The Crisis Response Team, under the Human Care Team and The Board of Missions, prepares and delivers meals and purchases groceries and gift certificates at Christmas time and for members in need of assistance throughout the year. If you would be willing to assist in providing meals and/or delivering poinsettias during the Christmas season, please contact Deaconess Linda lkinnett@stjlcms.org or call the office at 354-7132. This is an immediate need.

THE THREE USES OF GOD'S LAW TO ENHANCE OUR LIVES

Pastor Goetz will be offering a two-session Bible Class on the topic "The Three Uses of God's Law to Enhance Our Lives." It will be held in the church nave between services on Sunday, October 30, and Sunday, November 6. This class should be quite useful in light of all that is happening around us.

For example, our member, Dr. Douglas Jones, has noted the following:

Occam's Razor suggests that when numerous events are occurring simultaneously, there is frequently a single cause. Our nation is currently experiencing numerous serious epidemics: depression, suicide, drug addiction, compulsive eating, sexual addiction and codependency to name a few. These are merely symptoms of a common underlying disorder. One way of describing this is "addictive thinking."

All of this points to the fact that we are born in sin and thus have something missing in our life. This problem has been described as having a hole in the soul. The items in Dr. Jones's paragraph give examples of some ways people try to fill the hole in the soul and thereby stop the pain and discomfort which may bother us at times in various physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual ways. Studying the three uses of the God's Law can help us learn to recognize, understand, and deal with this hole in the soul in useful ways. Adults **and youth** are invited to attend.

PAID IN FULL CAMPAIGN UPDATE

We are getting close to one of our campaign benchmarks, where we will have received 1/3 of our \$1,000,000 goal for our campaign. We still have a ways to go, but considering that we are just 4 months into our 3-year campaign, we are truly blessed by such a giving congregation.

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 voters assembly.** Contact the office to get instructions on how you can become a voter.

DOORSTEP NEWS

The beginning of the holiday season is upon us! Each year Doorstep adopts 250 households from the Christmas Bureau. There are over 700 individuals within these households and they provide Christmas for them all. This year the Christmas Bureau started taking applications October 24th and will end on November 5th. Sign up is for our neighbors in need who cannot afford to provide a Christmas for their families. These are families and individuals who meet the federal poverty guidelines. They are working, but not making a living wage; they are disabled; they are struggling to provide the basic needs of life for their families and need a little extra help at Christmas.

Doorstep’s Christmas Store is a unique experience and different from anything else they do at Doorstep! They need your help with gifts, monetary donations to purchase the food, and volunteers to help during the five day process. The Store is such an uplifting experience you can’t help but feel good about your time spent volunteering there! Please mark your calendars for December 11th – 15th, and watch for more information on specific days and times for volunteering. Doorstep’s Christmas Store is possible largely due to the generosity of member congregations and their members. Neighbors helping neighbors is what Doorstep was founded on and what they continue to do today!

SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR NOVEMBER 2016

November 6	<i>Saul Becomes King</i>	1 Samuel 8-10; 11:12-15
November 13	<i>David and Goliath</i>	1 Samuel 17
November 20	<i>David and Jonathan/David Becomes King</i>	1 & 2 Samuel
November 27	<i>God Forgives David</i>	2 Samuel 12:1-23

Bible Words for November:

Early Childhood

- You did not choose Me, but I chose you.* John 15-16
- Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.* 1 Corinthians 15:57
- [Jesus says], “Love one another as I have loved you”.* John 15:12
- Bless the Lord who crowns you with steadfast love.* Psalm 103: 2-4
- [Jesus says], “Your sins are forgiven.”* Mark 2:5

Elementary Students

To the king of ages . . . be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen. 1 Tim. 1:17

Thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 15:57

We love because he first loved us.

1 John 4:19

Bless the Lord. . . who crowns you with steadfast love.

Psalm 103: 1, 4

If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins. 1 John 1:9

“Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”

Ephesians 6:4

Sunday school is one important tool for parents to nurture the faith given to your children in Baptism. Don't let your children miss out on this opportunity to grow spiritually and to get the life-giving Word into their ears, in their hearts, and on their lips. Parents, be an example for your children by attending Bible class while the children are in Sunday school.



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.