



St. John's

Ev. Lutheran Church

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

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JUNE 2018

A FINAL NOTE

“Who is this mysterious stranger among you?” This is the question I posed in my first newsletter article at St. John’s in 2006. By now I hope I am not so mysterious and certainly not a stranger. This congregation has grown so very dear to me in the last 13 years. I thank you all for your love and support as it has been my joyous privilege to serve among you.

My journey to this point began many years ago while an active member of a church of another denomination. I became troubled by the theology which emphasized what I was to do rather than what God has done for me. It was burdensome. The Gospel was not clearly preached and taught, and I was confused as to why it was called Good News, when there did not seem as though there was Good News to share.

Someone pointed me to the radio station KFUE from the campus of Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. From there I heard the clear Good News through the daily bible study and *Issues, Etc.* I learned that infant baptism had been practiced in the Early Church and that “decision theology” (the idea that everyone must decide for Christ and ask Him into his heart) did not enter the church until the early 19th century. There were Christians before 1800, I thought, so how did they become believers if they did not make a decision? Blessed be God! I learned the marvelous truth that conversion is God’s work through Baptism and that the Holy Spirit keeps me in the true faith. It is not up to me to struggle to be good enough.

In 1995, I left my church, feeling like a traitor to my parents, but knowing that God was guiding me into truth. I was catechized at Trinity Lutheran Church (which interestingly was across the street from my church) and then confirmed in February 1997. At an organ workshop in Fort Wayne, I met Deaconess Pam Nielsen. She told me about the deaconess program and gave me brochures. Over the next three years, I kept those pamphlets and read them over and over. I thought it would be wonderful to be a deaconess, but my life situation did not lend itself to pursue that path.

In 2002, my marriage ended, and I needed a way to support myself. Out came those brochures, and September of that year found me on the campus of Concordia Seminary St. Louis, taking theology classes with 25-year-old young men studying to be pastors. Some of those young men were from Africa, India, and China. What an enriching experience! After receiving an M.A. in systematic theology, I went to the seminary in Fort Wayne for deaconess training and some church history classes, and I was one of the first two deaconess students to be sent out into the field from that institution.

St. John’s was my place of internship, after which the church graciously called me to be your deaconess in 2006. The picture of the position has somewhat evolved as the needs of the congregation were matched with my gifts and time. I have had many doubts as to my diaconal abilities. There are so many women in

this congregation who are extravagantly hospitable. I have worked with women who pour out compassion in spiritual and human care. There are women at St. John's who excel in teaching the faith. I am constantly awed by them. One thing I remember from my training is the phrase, "there are lots of people who serve the congregation, but the deaconess is there to see that the job gets done." I hope I've done that in some way.

Looking back over my years here, I can only boast of all kinds of flaws and failures, and I own those. The successes are the result of God's work through Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit. I do not take credit for good results, and I cannot do anything in my own power about my flaws. I am helpless either way. Why did God choose me as His own child? Why has He chosen me to work in His vineyard? Only out of His mercy and grace.

I am most grateful to God and to the members of St. John's for giving me this opportunity to receive God's gifts, to express my faith, and to serve among you.

Deaconess Linda

Senior Pastor - Rev. J. S. Bruss, ext. 104
Associate Pastor – Rev. D. M. Kerns, ext. 101
Deaconess - Linda S. Kinnett, ext. 102
Kantor - Rev. Roger M. Goetz
Associate Kantor - Bethany M. Johnson
TLS Teachers - Ashley Brandmahl, Andrea Kosmicki, Edith Kerns, Rachel Kathman

RETIREMENT CELEBRATION FOR DEACONESS KINNETT
JUNE 3, 2018

Our congregation will honor *Deaconess Linda* and thank her for "thirteen years of faithful service" to St. John's while enjoying a *Potluck Dinner* in Luther Hall immediately following the late service on June 3.
 (Bring your favorite potluck dish!)
 Drinks and table service will be provided.
A basket will be available for cards and gifts.

NO JUNE MONTHLY BREAKFAST

Because of the Going Away Luncheon for Deaconess Linda the first Sunday in June, there will not be a June breakfast on the second Sunday. Thank you.

2018 STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN
PLEDGE SUNDAY IS JUNE 24

Once again, we come to the time to initiate our *annual stewardship* campaign. The pledge period for this campaign runs July 1 – June 30 of 2019. Our *annual stewardship* campaign raises funds for our annual operating budget, while our "**Paid in Full**" campaign works to retire our building debt. Pledge cards for the annual stewardship campaign are totaled and form the basis for establishing our next calendar year operating budget.

You will soon or may already have a letter explaining our annual campaign along with your pledge cards. We will also have bulletin inserts on Sundays in June to provide further information. Biblical stewardship education is an education in living in one's Christian vocation, not just or even primarily, to raise money. The goal of biblical stewardship isn't meeting the budgetary needs of the church, but growth in our vocation as Christians and within the Christian vocation, the joy of giving in spontaneous but intentional thanksgiving for God's goodness and mercy.

As in the past, we are sending out the pledge cards early to give members/families time for prayerful consideration of their commitment for 2018. Handing in a completed commitment card during the June 24 service will be completely voluntary. If you're unable to attend on Stewardship Sunday, you may leave your completed commitment card in a sealed envelope in the collection plate or in the church office at a future date.

Finally, we'd like once again to assure you that there will be no home solicitation to ask people to complete cards. We only ask that you give prayerful consideration to how best to use the gifts we all receive from God. St. John's is truly blessed with a giving congregation.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Andy Gritman, Stewardship Chair.

BOARD OF STEWARDSHIP: BUDGET AND RECEIPTS REPORT

In an effort to keep our congregation informed about our financial situation, the Board of Stewardship has agreed to publish monthly budget reports. These reports are designed to give you a snapshot of our congregational support of the budget adopted by the voter's assembly for 2018. We hope that you will find this information useful.

Through the month of April:

Budget through April	\$251,354.76
Actual Receipts through April	<u>\$202,728.76</u>
Surplus (Shortfall) through April	(\$ (48,625.91)

Plan to be a part of...

THE NEIGHBORHOOD BLOCK PARTY NATIONAL NIGHT OUT AGAINST CRIME SATURDAY, AUGUST 11, 6-8 PM

(Hosted by the Neighborhood Care Team and many additional St. John's volunteers)

Signup sheets to volunteer at the block party will be posted on the Human Care bulletin in July!

DORCAS CIRCLE LUNCHEON

Dorcas Circle will meet for lunch at 11:30 at Perkins on June 12. We would be happy for the ladies of Sarah Circle and any other ladies from the congregation to join us for a time of food and fellowship.

ATTENTION SUNDAY SCHOOL STAFF

Our quarterly meeting will be held in the library on Saturday, June 2, at 10:00 a.m.
We will discuss the summer curriculum and VBS.

JUNE 10TH GATHERING FOR ST. JOHN'S WOMEN

Please mark your calendars for June 10 at 2:00 p.m. for "A Time to Celebrate" with entertainment in our Courtyard by Heartland Harmony (of whom one of our own, Carolyn Schneider, is a member)! Following will be refreshments and a short program celebrating Kansas and St. John's Lutheran Women's Missionary League, which began 75 years ago! You may choose to wear purple and a vintage or any type of hat to make it a fun afternoon. Also, to help the Personal Care Kits for Lutheran World Relief, please see the list below. All ladies are invited to come and enjoy the music of the early 1900s, the food, and the fellowship.

WOMEN'S LEAGUE CARING & MISSION

Personal Care Kits for Lutheran World Relief will be prepared in April through June.

Items needed are:

- Light weight bath towels, dark colors: 2 sizes – 52" x 27" and 20" x 40"
- 2 or 3 bath-size soap bars (4 to 5 oz., any brand, original wrapper) totaling 8 to 9 oz.
- Sturdy combs
- Metal nail clippers
- Adult-size toothbrush in original wrapper

If you would rather let us do the shopping, monetary gifts will be accepted.

YOUTH NEWS

Family Summer-Fun Potluck Picnic on Saturday, June 9 at The Lighthouse: The Lutheran student center for Haskell Indian Nations University in Lawrence, Kansas! Come join us starting at 3:00 for a fun afternoon of getting wet on a huge, bounce-house style slip-n-slide and other water events. Feel free to bring your super soakers. There will also be yard games like volleyball and/or badminton, ladder ball, croquet, frisbee, bubbles & sidewalk chalk for little kids. We will serve the potluck meal inside with music and AC at 5:00. Please sign up on the hallway bulletin board and list what food(s) you might be bringing. Also bring along some dry cloths if you want to stay and watch a movie with us on the LH big screen. I'm hoping that *I Can Only Imagine* will be available for rent by then, but I'm open to other suggestions. This is for grades 6-12 and your family and friends. You will love this interesting Native American facility located at: **137 Pawnee Avenue (right across the parking lot from the Haskell Cultural Center)**. Call/text Kathy at 785-727-3943 for directions, information and to sign up. A fun way to kick off your summer vacation!

ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

August 4, 2018

Forbes Golf Course

Registration begins at 7:00 with coffee and donuts

Shotgun start at 8:00 a.m.

Lunch and prizes will be provided

Cost: \$250 per team or \$65 per person

Registration deadline: Sunday, June 11

Registration forms are in the breezeway.

Support St. John's Lutheran Youth Fellowship



TLS NEWS

TLS will be hosting **Camp Invention**, a national STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) camp developed by the National Inventors Hall of Fame from 9:00am to 3:30pm on June 18 - 22. We could use your help with:

- Several additional counselors (9th grade or higher) are needed to assist the children;
- There are still open spots for additional campers - register your child(ren) online;
- Please drop off any recyclable item i.e. plastic bottles, cardboard tubes, boxes, aluminum cans, etc. during office hours (9:00 am to 1:00 pm) at the school. No glass will be accepted.

For more information please call the TLS Office at 357-0382 or go to www.campinvention.org.

New Teachers for TLS. As announced previously, Mr. Joshua Grass accepted the call to teach middle school math and science and a religion class for 2018-2019 school year. We are pleased to announce that Mrs. Grass (Erin) has accepted the call to teach music and physical education for K-8 grades. We thank God for guiding these dedicated servants to TLS and will keep you updated on their arrival to Topeka!

SMORGASBORD THANK YOU & RESULTS

The Smorgasbord Committee would like to THANK all the wonderful workers who helped make the 60th Mission Dinner such a success! The number of people served was close to 300, and with the help of Thrivent Action Team funds, most of the monies will go to the Mission Projects listed in the bulletin flyer. Total net raised was \$2,945, and with St. John's match of Thrivent Choice Dollars, we will be able to send \$3,940 to missions. Thanks again to all those who set up, helped in the kitchen, dining room, take tickets, clean up. The list of tasks is endless and all the time spent is greatly appreciated! Smorgasbord Committee Members include: *Sharon Berner, Marge Gehrt, Jane Schlicher, Kelly Ferrell, Sherry Fergel, Chuck & Norma McMullen, Jim & Linda Simpson, Terry & Nancy Scheuerman*

WOMEN'S LEAGUE NEWS

It's that time again. The Women's League of the LWML will be having a **Bargain and Bake Sale Thursday August 23 (8 a.m. -5 p.m.) & Friday, August 24 (8a.m.-1 p.m.)** in Luther Hall. For the 3rd year in a row our profits will be given to the Paid in Full campaign. So clean out those closets, drawers and cupboards and bring your items on over to the church. There is some room to store items in the basement. We would ask that you not bring any electronics, which includes TV, computers, DVD or VCR players.

With this being a project sponsored by Women's League, but for the benefit of St. John's, it would be appreciated for as much help as we can gain from members of the congregation. If you are willing to help in set up, clean up and/or work the event, please contact Ruth Scott, 272-4971 or Nancy Scheuerman, 246-0912. Ruth or Nancy will be glad to give you the details.

2018 FLOWER CALENDAR

The following services are available in the next few months if you would like to provide flowers for any of them: July 22; August 12; September 16, 23 & 30

WOMEN'S LEAGUE MISSION GIFTS

Mission Gifts (Received in 2017 – Distributed in 2018)

The St. John's Women's League would like to thank each of you that helped with the Bazaar and Luncheon. The following is a breakdown of how the funds were dispersed towards missions:

Bethesda Lutheran Home & Services, Inc. \$150.00	Haskell Indian Lighthouse \$300.00
LCMS World Relief/Human Care Missions \$500.00	LWR Quilt & Kit Shipping Fund \$100.00
Seminarian Student Support-Joshua Brandmahl \$300.00	Ft. Wayne Student Assistance \$300.00
KS District LCMS Kansa Seed Deaf Ministry \$200.00	Ks. Dist. LCMS – Disaster Relief \$500.00
Lutheran Bible Translators \$150.00	Laborers for Christ \$200.00
Concordia Theological Seminary Military Project \$300.00	Soldier of the Cross \$400.00
Old Latin School Wittenberg \$300.00	Let's Help \$300.00
Concordia University – Seward, Dennis Hintz Scholarship \$200.00	The Apple of His Eye Ministry \$100.00
Lutherans for Life \$300.00	LCMS National Offering Global Missions \$250.00
Concordia Seminary St. Louis Student Assistance \$300.00	The Orphan Grain Train \$100.00
Lutheran Heritage Foundation \$250.00	LCMS World Relief/Human Care – Disaster \$500.00
Doorstep \$300.00	Topeka Lutheran School Daily Fund \$1,000.00
Topeka Lutheran School Center For Young Children \$200.00	Lutheran Hour \$300.00
Topeka Rescue Mission \$500.00	

Distributed in February of 2018 Total: \$8,000.00

DOORSTEP NEWS

Topeka Gives 2018 is Tuesday, June 5 at Fairlawn Plaza Mall from 7am - 6pm. Doorstep will be there again this year with a table. Please stop by and see them and make a donation for Doorstep! Donations must be made in person. You can donate \$25 - \$1,000 to Doorstep on this day at Fairlawn Plaza, and the Topeka Community Foundation will match it proportionately. This year there is \$65,600 available for the match. Last year Doorstep made \$17,404 from their donors to help with agency needs. Donations were down in 2017, and they have had to make some hard decisions this year, such as the recent closing of the Dovetail Shop. If you can, plan to attend Topeka Gives on June 5 and **Give to Doorstep!**

Topeka Gives – a fun day of giving is sponsored by the Topeka Community Foundation.

FOR
GOD
SO
LOVED THE WORLD
HE
GAVE
HIS
ONLY
SON



THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH

“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. (*Augsburg Confession*, Article 5)