



St. John's

Ev. Lutheran Church

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

VOL. 120 No. 8 MONTHLY

AUGUST 2018

GOD'S WORD, OUR HERITAGE

During the past couple of weeks, the Sunday School children have been learning the hymn, "God's Word Is Our Great Heritage," (LSB 582) during our regular Sunday School openings. Theologically sound? Of course. Harder to understand for preschoolers and Kindergarteners? Yes. Will they keep it with them their entire life? You bet they will.

*God's Word is our great heritage
And shall be ours forever
To spread its light from age to age
Shall be our chief endeavor
Through life it guides our way;
In death it is our stay.
Lord, grant, while worlds endure,
We keep its teachings pure
Throughout all generations.*

I'm sure you don't think too much of God's Word being a "heritage." I certainly don't. Of course, like all faithful Christians, when we think of God's Word, we think of Jesus. We think about the truth and clarity of the Scriptures written about the Word made flesh for us. We think about the Law for the proud and the Gospel for the brokenhearted. We think about this Word that gives us faith and brings us into God's family, the Church.

And how do we receive it? We are born again through baptism into God's name and received into the Church on account of Christ. God's Word is our birthright, our inheritance. And, like all inheritances, it is too great to store away for no one to see, or to be thrown away as if it were useless. Rather, it is alive and active, sharper than any two-edged sword. It should be a part of our daily life, spoken around the dinner table, sung together in church, taught to our children, and cherished until our Lord takes us from this valley of sorrow to Himself in heaven.

The children have learned the sign language to this hymn as well. We discovered that the same sign used for "heritage" is used for "age to age," and it is also similar to "generations." God's Word, given to us, shines with its light, the light of Christ, and it has been shining since creation

when God spoke and it came to be. God's Word guided the Israelites through the wilderness, and in the same way He guides us through life amidst sin, death, and the devil. Its truth about Jesus Christ continues to shine from one generation to the next.

"In life [God's Word] guides our way. In death it is our stay." In death, God's Word is our defense, our anchor. The VBS children learned that like fish, we have been caught into the net by God's Word and are safe within the "boat," which is the Church. This is why we refer to our worship space as the "nave," derived from the Latin word that means "ship." This is where you receive means of grace every week. The anchor for our boat, Jesus Christ, keeps us firm in the faith until our last breath comes. And when it comes, we dare not shrink away in doubt and fear but sing with all boldness and confidence, "Death, you cannot end my gladness: I am baptized into Christ! When I die, I leave all sadness to inherit paradise! Though I lie in dust and ashes, faith's assurance brightly flashes: Baptism has the strength divine to make life immortal mine." (LSB 594:4) This life right now is not forever, but our eternal life in Christ is forever.

What a blessing it is to hear this from the lips of children, even as they sing about their "dying day" (LSB 598) and their grave where they will "sleep secure" (LSB 594:5). God's Word is our heritage, not meant to be stored away for later; nor should it be put aside to be taught when it is easier to understand. It is the very means by which our faith is sustained and will be ours forever. May God grant this for all of us and the generations to come.

Bethany M Johnson

Senior Pastor - Rev. J. S. Bruss, ext. 104
Associate Pastor – Rev. D. M. Kerns, ext. 101
Kantor - Rev. Roger M. Goetz
Associate Kantor - Bethany M. Johnson
Vicar Christian Straeuli
TLS Teachers - Andrea Kosmicki, Edith Kerns, Rachel Kathman

PASTOR STAUDACHER

by Pastor Goetz

Pastor Theodore Louis Staudacher became St. John's pastor in 1979. Soon after, the leadership asked him about adding a second pastor to the staff (which was new for the congregation). He agreed on condition that the second pastor also have musical ability. Thus, I came to St. John's in 1980; and we worked together until he retired in 1999 because of health issues.

After retirement, he and his wife Carol eventually moved to Michigan to be near his mother and brothers. A few years ago, because of his health, they sold their Michigan home and bought a home in Pingree Grove, about 45 miles northwest of Chicago and a twenty-minute drive away from two of their sons, Timothy and Mark, both of whom are doctors of anesthesiology at the same hospital in Elgin, Illinois.

The Staudachers' new relative proximity allows Betty and me to visit them when we travel each summer and fall to a family reunion in Illinois. We've even been able to attend Immanuel Lutheran

Church in East Dundee, Illinois, with them. Among Immanuel's photo displays of former pastors is Pastor Staudacher as a young man with a flattop!

Because of health issues arising last January, Pastor Staudacher was hospitalized and eventually wound up living permanently in Presence Pine View Care Center in St. Charles, Illinois (Carol still lives in their home). On our most recent trip up that way Betty and I were able to visit them there for two days.

When I walked in the first time, he greeted me and, with difficulty, stood up out of his wheelchair and gave me a big hug! Not long after, he referred to his and my favorite joke (about two Irishmen in a pub in Dublin) which he had told me back in 1981. We still joke about it!

Both afternoons, the four of us played the Skip-Bo card game as we have done in years past. He did just fine even though he has congestive heart failure, and a form Parkinson's Disease. Both evenings we four went out to eat at a restaurant.

When we left the last time, he asked me to give his greetings to the members of St. John's; and I hereby give them to you.

Writing this page brought back an old memory of Pastor Staudacher's delightful sense of humor. As was common in those days, he referred to each of our children as a PK (preacher's kid). After some years, he blew me away by telling me that each of our children was a TO. Mystified, I asked him what that meant. He told me with a big grin, "Theological Offspring." I loved it! After that he always used the term TO instead of PK.

What a wonderful gift of God he was to St. John's! Please keep him and Carol in your prayers!

Pastor Goetz

AUGUST MONTHLY BREAKFAST

Bring your favorite breakfast food to share on August 12, between services. Sit down and enjoy the meal with someone new! (Don't forget to pick up your dishes from the serving table so that those cleaning up will have less to do.)

2018-2019 SOUND WORDS ACADEMY TO BEGIN

Sound Words Academy (SWA) is slated to fire up again on Wednesday, 12 September, with *Midweek Madness*. Keep your eyes on the bulletin, the September *Newsletter*, and your email for more details about that evening.

Over the summer, of course, we evaluate SWA and all its programming and make improvements here and there. For this coming year we plan on some major changes to most of our children's programming. Rhythm of Faith choir as well as Jr. Lutherans are undergoing major enhancements to enrich both of those offerings; and we are presently working hard to revise our Youth Catechesis II curriculum to make it both more user-friendly and to make use of the newly-issued synodical *Small Catechism and Explanation* that came out just last year (but not in time for us to make these changes in 2017-2018!). Parents, all of these things—Rhythm of Faith, Jr. Lutherans, and Youth

Catechesis—are fantastic tools you can use to teach your children the faith. We hope you'll take full advantage of them.

Adult Bible study course topics for 2018-19 will include the following (tentative list, with more coming):

Everyone His Witness	The Resurrection of the Flesh
The Bible in 4 Weeks	The Missouri Synod and Other
The History of the Reformation in 2 Weeks	Denominations
	Bible Difficulties

A detailed schedule along with course descriptions will come in the September *Newsletter*. Just like last year, topics will change on a 2-6 week basis to keep interest levels high. We trust that everyone will be intrigued by at least one of the many things we plan to bring.

As always, the center of the evening—of our life together in Christ—is to gather worshipfully around His holy Word in one of the three evening offices. This year once again the heart and core of SWA will be this 7:00 p.m. occasion, and over the course of the year we'll sing Evening Prayer, Vespers, and Compline. For those of you who have difficulty making it to church on Sunday morning, this is an excellent way to gather with your brothers and sisters in Christ to receive His Word read and proclaimed.

We also plan to continue meal service from 5:00 p.m. until 5:55 p.m. to help make it easier for everyone to attend and benefit from SWA.

We sincerely look forward to seeing all of you! If you've never taken in a SWA evening before, we encourage you to do so. In fact, why not reserve Wednesday, 12 September, to try it out? If you've been a regular, we look forward to having you back and encourage you to invite others both within and from outside of our congregation to join you. SWA is simply a fantastic way to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ for all ages.

2018 STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

As of July 17, we had received 162 pledges totaling \$527,676.50 for our July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019 pledge year. If you have not been able to turn in your pledge, you may still do so. Additional pledge cards can be picked up in the office. If you have not yet pledged, 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 do not pledge and you know your giving pattern is going to be modified during this time frame—it would be very beneficial to the Stewardship Board for budgeting purposes—if you make Yvonne Berry aware of the modification. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

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

HEADING TO COLLEGE?

Do you have someone in your family who's at college or going off to college? St. John's would love to help the college-bound find an LCMS church and LCMS-U chapter near their school. Please contact Pr. Bruss (jbruss@stjlcms.org or 354.7132) with their email address and cell number so we can get a pastor

near their school in touch with them. Remember, too, that for those who attend Washburn, St. John's is the local LCMS-U chapter, serving Washburn students on Sound Words Academy evenings with Evening Prayer and our Young Adults and College Students Bible Study afterwards.

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.

Budget through June 30	\$377,032.00
Budget Receipts through June 30	<u>\$303,306.24</u>
Over (Under) Budget YTD	(\$73,725.76)

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 are on the table in the breezeway.

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.

LUTHERAN WITNESS SUBSCRIPTIONS

A monthly publication, *The Lutheran Witness* speaks directly about what is important to today's Lutherans: Christian life, missions and ministries, and people of faith. Subscriptions are available through the church office. The deadline is August 5. Just write a check for \$18 made out to St. John's and write Lutheran Witness on the check memo line. One check will be submitted from the church for all subscriptions.

WORSHIP CONFERENCE

St. John's will be hosting our second annual Worship Conference to provide continuing education and conversation for pastors and church musicians, along with congregation members who might also find it useful. Our keynote speaker will be Pastor Richard Resch, a treasured pastor and musician of the LCMS who spent most of his ministry as Director of Chapel Music at Concordia Theological Seminary and as the Kantor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Fort Wayne, Indiana. He is now retired but is serving a vacancy at The Lutheran Church of the Triune God in Minneapolis, Minnesota. One of his many

contributions to the Church is the production of the DVD, “Singing the Faith: Living the Lutheran Musical Heritage.” We are delighted that he will share with us what it means to be “singing the faith.”

“Singing the Faith” Worship Conference

Saturday, August 25, 2018

9:00 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.

St. John’s Lutheran Church (901 SW Fillmore, Topeka, KS)

Cost: \$25, lunch included

More information on the schedule and workshops for pastors and musicians is found on our website at <https://www.stjohnlcmstopeka.org/worship-conference-2018.php>.

ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

(There is still time to sign up)

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 29

Registration forms are in the breezeway.

Support St. John’s Lutheran Youth Fellowship

THANK YOU’S

Pastor and Betty Goetz give thanks to God and to the many, many people for such a wonderful celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of his ordination. The worship, sermon, and music were excellent! Thanks also for the fabulous reception and the cards and gifts! God bless you all!!

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 (8 a.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. Please do 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 to have as much help as we can be from members of the congregation

WOMEN’S LEAGUE

School Kits Only

LWML is preparing School Kits for August and 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

2018 FLOWER CALENDAR

The following services are available this year if you would like to provide flowers for any of them: August 12; September 30; October 7 & 28; November 11 & 18; December 2 & 30.

DOORSTEP NEWS

Doorstep would like to thank everyone who donated items for Christmas in July! As kids are getting ready to go back to school, now is the perfect time to stock up on school supplies. Doorstep provides new school supplies to the children they adopt at Christmas to replenish them for the second half of the year. If you can help with these items while supplies are plentiful, and on sale, they would greatly appreciate your donations!

In the heat of summer Doorstep is seeing more requests for hygiene kits. In 2017, they gave out 852 hygiene kits! They are in need of deodorant, bar soap or body wash, shampoo/conditioner in one, razors and shaving cream, sunscreen and chapstick. Thank you in advance if you can help!

Doorstep is open Monday – Friday from 8 a.m. – 3 p.m. for donations. They are located at 1119 SW 10th Avenue (10th & Buchanan).

DOORSTEP'S NEIGHBOR HELPING NEIGHBOR WALK/5K RUN!

Saturday, October 6 is the date for Doorstep's inaugural event! They are planning on this becoming their second annual fundraiser each year!

You can sign up to participate yourself for \$30 including a t-shirt (deadline September 10 to order a shirt) or sponsor a walker/runner! Those getting sponsors will get a free t-shirt with pledges of \$100 or more. All proceeds will benefit Doorstep, Inc.

It will start/end from shelter houses 1 & 2 at Lake Shawnee. The Walk/Run will start at 9:30 a.m. with celebrity starter, Chris Fisher from WIBW-TV 13. The Topeka High School Drum Line will get everyone pumped up and ready to go! After the walk/run return to the shelter houses for a continental breakfast of fruit, granola bars, bagels, juice and water.

Watch for a sign-up table and more information in August, and plan to join us for our first Neighbor Helping Neighbor Walk/5K Run on October 6!

TLS NEWS

Installation of new TLS teachers. Installation service for Mr. and Mrs. Joshua Grass, new called teachers for 2018-2019 school year, is scheduled for Sunday, August 12 at 1:30 p.m. at Christ Lutheran Church. Joshua will teach middle school math and science; and Erin will teach music and physical education for K-8 grades. Please check the TLS home page (www.topekalutheran.org) for photos and more information.

TLS/Foundation Timeline and Benchmarks. Please find below updates to the four-year projected plan and benchmarks developed for TLS and the Foundation to address current budget challenges and ensure financial sustainability for the school. This plan was approved by the TLS association church membership following informational forums held in February:

Consultants were hired by the TLS Foundation in March to guide the planning and feasibility of embarking on a **major capital campaign initiative**. Meetings have been held with board members, donors, TLS parents, and former faculty members. Please watch for your opportunity to provide feedback directly to the consultants regarding this initiative by responding to a survey planned for distribution in the near future to all members of the association churches. The consultants will present a report to the Foundation Board in August for determination of next steps regarding the proposed \$2.5 million capital campaign effort.

As of mid-July, **total enrollment** for school year 2018-2019 is 12 new kindergarten students, with 77 students returning to TLS. Recruitment efforts continue in order to meet the goal of 14 new kindergarten students and 104 total enrollment K-8 for the new school year. It is anticipated that 6-8 additional students will enroll yet before the beginning of school year. Total enrollment as of May 2018 for classes K-8 enrollment was 92 students.

Parents were notified in March 2018 of a **tuition rate increase** for 2018-2019 from \$5,500 to \$6,300. As recommended in the projected four-year plan/benchmarks, a modest increase in tuition rates will occur annually through school year 2022.

VICAR STRAEULI FAREWELL

Vicar Christian Straeuli and his wife, Kristin, are departing from the United States and moving to Wittenberg, South Africa. In October, he will begin his official vicarage with his home church body, the Free Evangelical Lutheran Synod in South Africa (FELSISA), a sister-synod of the LCMS. The Straeulis will remain in Wittenberg for one year and upon completion of his vicarage, Christian will be ordained into the Office of Holy Ministry. Vicar Straeuli anticipates a pastoral call thereafter, somewhere in South Africa. Christian and Kristin thank St. John's for the warm welcome and wonderful learning experience these past summer months!

WELCOME ERIKA ROBINSON, SECRETARY

We are elated to welcome Erika Robinson (St. John's member) to our St. John's support staff. Erika serves as secretary. She will be providing a warm welcome to members and visitors. She will be responsible for many of the administrative tasks necessary to prepare the church for worship. She will also have many behind the scenes responsibilities that support the ministry of the Word and Sacraments here and help keep things running smoothly. She brings a calming presence, good organization, and an endearing Christian disposition to this position. Erika is married to Joe and has four children, Kinley, Campbell, Cruz and Kalise. We are exceedingly thankful that the Lord is giving her the opportunity to utilize her talents and abilities at St. John's.

WE BID GODSPEED AND FAREWELL TO THE BRANDMAHLS.

Starting this fall Joshua, will begin his studies at Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana, pursuing his Masters of Divinity to become a pastor. This is a 4-year program with the first two years in the classroom, a vicarage year, and then a final year back in the classroom. Ashley has received a call to teach middle school social studies and health at Central Lutheran School in New Haven, a town just outside of Fort Wayne. Even though they are excited, they are going to miss St. John's and its members very much. They want to thank everyone for their love and support over the past few years, and they ask for your prayers in their new vocations.

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS FOR JULY 2018

We recently discovered an exciting new Sunday School curriculum for grades 1 through 8 entitled “The Acceptable Year of the Lord,” which follows the one-year lectionary. This means that the children will be studying the same Scripture lessons that the pastors will use for the texts of their sermons. This reinforces the Gospel lesson and encourages the children to listen more carefully to the sermon.

- August 5: The Tenth Sunday after Trinity The Lord's Visitation - Luke 19:41-48
- August 12: The Eleventh Sunday after Trinity The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector -
Luke 18:9-14
- August 19: The Twelfth Sunday after Trinity Ephphatha – Mark 7:31-37
 *August 19 is Promotion Sunday
- August 26: The Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity The Good Samaritan – Luke 10:23-37



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)