



St. John's

Ev. Lutheran Church

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MAY 2019

ONE, HOLY, CHRISTIAN, AND APOSTOLIC

Some words are so pregnant with meaning that they can look in two different directions. Think, for example, of the word “Gospel.” That word looks *back* to what Christ has done in His life, suffering, death, and resurrection. It also looks *forward* to what Christ does for me and for all believers until the end of time, namely, that He offers, gives, and grants the forgiveness of sins through Word and Sacrament. In fact, you could say that you can’t have one without the other. Apart from Christ crucified Word and Sacrament can’t claim me; and apart from Word and Sacrament I can have no claim on Christ crucified. Same thing goes with the word “apostolic.” We say it every Sunday in the creed: “I believe in one, holy, Christian, and *apostolic* church.”

Probably for most people—this is the term looking *backward*—the word “apostolic” recalls for them that the church is “built on the foundation of the *apostles* and the prophets, Christ Jesus Himself the chief cornerstone” (Eph 2:20). Those words of Paul echo the description of the church in Acts 2:42, “They [the church the Holy Spirit gathered in Jerusalem] devoted themselves to the *apostles*’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.” To say that something is “church” is to say that it is devoted to, in conformity and agreement with, and zealous for the teaching or doctrine of the apostles. To teach what the apostles taught—we call that “orthodoxy,” or right teaching. Conversely, whatever does not adhere, etc., to the teaching of the apostles can’t possibly be church, no matter what it might claim. That would be a contradiction in terms, like saying that a creature with more than two legs, without wings, feathers, and a bill is a duck. As I said, that’s the glance *backward*, to the past-tense, to the church’s history.

But “apostolic” always means something *forward-looking*, as well. It means that the church is also *apostolic* in its activities and work, in its office and task—even until Christ Himself returns.

So get this: the word “apostolic” comes, ultimately, from the Greek word *apostéllō* (“I send out”—see Lk 10:1). “One who is sent out,” an emissary or ambassador of the one sending, is an *apóstolos*. It’s from that latter word, directly, that we get our word “apostle;” and it’s from that last word that we get “apostolic,” as in “one, holy, Christian, and *apostolic* church.” To put it in slightly different terms, this means that the “one, holy, Christian church” is also always, by definition, a *missionary* thing, an emissary and ambassador of Christ to the world. It’s this whenever and wherever its pastors proclaim God’s Word and administer His Sacraments. It’s this when and where it engages in works of mercy toward the world around it, as we do through Doorstep and LWML. It’s this when and where it broadcasts the message of CHRIST (“Christian”) through the work of our Lutheran Braille Workers. It’s this when and where it brings the unbaptized to the water of salvation. It is this when and where its members proclaim the forgiveness of sins in Jesus to their unbelieving neighbor. It’s also this when and where it supports, through gifts and prayer, the missionary work of missionaries “sent out” through the church, by Christ, to those who still

dwell in the darkness of their own sin and death and in the thrall of the devil. And what does it bring as Christ's emissary? Well, full-circle now: it brings the doctrine of the *apostles*, what we called "orthodoxy," above. Apostolic = orthodox. Apostolic = missionary.

Sadly, though, people try to "put asunder" what God has joined together. But now here's the thing: the two do and must go hand-in-hand. There's no such thing as an apostolic church that is not orthodox; nor an apostolic church that is not a missionary church. Zeal for orthodoxy must lead to zeal for mission; and zeal for mission must be equally zeal for orthodoxy.

God grant that we in our congregation may always be filled with zeal for both, that we be not only unapologetically orthodox, but that that orthodoxy erupt into the selfless, generous, and loving missionary work of the "one, holy, Christian, and apostolic church." Indeed, how could it be otherwise?



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

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

Kantor - Bethany M. Johnson

TLS Teachers - Andrea Kosmicki, Edith Kerns, Rachel Kathman, Joshua Grass, Erin Grass

SOUND WORDS ACADEMY

Children

Rhythm of Faith Choir (now – 8 May, 5:00-5:40 p.m.; Johnson) Rhythm of Faith uses God's gift of music to confess the truth of His Word in song. Develop life-long skills in singing, ringing, and reading music. Participate as a choir in Wednesday Evening Offices and Sunday services. Learn the rich heritage of Lutheran hymnody and liturgy. Enroll after Sunday services now through 9 September or contact Bethany Johnson.

Jr. Lutherans (now – 8 May, 5:55-6:50 p.m.; Sweet) This fast-paced Bible, Catechism, and Lutheran history quiz game places Lutherans aged 4 – 12 yrs. in competition with one another and teams from other congregations—with "trivia" that is hardly *trivial*. Enroll after Sunday services now through 9 September or contact Daniel Sweet.

Adults

The LCMS and the Other Denominations (20 March – 8 May, 5:55-6:50 p.m.; Bruss): Why doesn't our church have pulpit and altar fellowship with our neighbors' churches? What are the differences? Are they that big of a deal?

College Students and Young Adults

Paul Althaus, *The Theology of Martin Luther* (now – 8 May, 7:45-8:40 p.m.; Kerns) Martin Luther is the writer and Paul Althaus is the compiler. Join Pr. Kerns at Sound Words Academy as we go through one of his favorite Lutheran books. It is so good that once we come to the end of it, we will want to circle back around it again. Come drink from the fire-hydrant of good, confessional Lutheran thought.

Adult Catechesis

Adult Catechesis (now – 8 May 7:45-8:40 p.m.; Bruss now through May) The central teachings of the Christian faith. What does God say *about* me in His Law? What does God say *to* me in His Gospel? How am I to relate to God? And where can I find Christ and what He wants to give to me? This September

through May course, with breaks scattered throughout those 8 months, weaves together the teachings of Scripture and *The Small Catechism* and shows how God encounters you in the Divine Service. For those interested in becoming members of St. John’s or those seeking a refresher in the guts of Lutheran theology.

Youth Catechesis

YCat I (Wednesdays – 8 May, 5:55-6:50 p.m.; Kinnett) Typically for 6th graders. 1 year long.

YCat II (Wednesdays – 8 May, 5:55-6:50 p.m.; Bruss & Kerns) Typically for 7th and 8th graders. 2 years long.

ASCENSION DAY SERVICE

Thursday, May 30, 7 p.m.

The Feast of the Ascension of Our Lord is one of the five major festivals of the church year: Christmas, Easter, Ascension, Pentecost, and the Holy Trinity. Christ’s Ascension took place 40 days after His Resurrection. Do the math, and you quickly realize that Ascension Day *always falls on a Thursday*.

This year Ascension falls on Thursday, May 30, and we’ll be celebrating it at a 7:00 p.m. Divine Service. As in past years we plan on special music and will have this Divine Service in the Courtyard at the “old” St. John’s altar, with its painting of Christ ascending.

Mark your calendars now. We look forward to seeing you there.

2018-2019 STEWARDSHIP PLEDGE

Please remember that, as was announced by the church council last year, we have shifted our stewardship education from June until September. Along with that, just for 2019 only, our “pledge year” extends until 31 December. Our anticipation is that members of the congregation will maintain their current level of giving through that time. The next “pledge year” will begin on 1 January 2020 and end on 31 December 2020, and we’ll make our pledges for 2020 after our Christian Stewardship education at the end of September 2019.

These changes have been undertaken to align the fiscal year with the pledge year, which, we hope, will reduce complications for your paperwork and record keeping.

—The Board of Stewardship

CHORAL EVENING PRAYER SERVICE

featuring the Rhythm of Faith choirs

Wednesday, May 8 at 7:00 p.m.

We hope you can attend this beautiful service with special music provided by the children!

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 2019. We hope that you will find this information useful.

Budget Receipts through March, 2019	\$170,559.00
<u>Actual Receipts through March, 2019</u>	<u>\$171,914.53</u>
Over (Under) Budget Year to Date	\$ 1,355.53

GIFT COLLECTION FOR BABY BRANDMAHL

Joshua and Ashley Brandmahl are awaiting the arrival of their baby, due June 12. For those who are interested in giving them a gift, they are registered at Target. Diapers and wipes are also appreciated! Gifts can be collected in the courtyard on May 5, 12, and 19, or at the office throughout the week, but no later than May 19.

Contact Bethany Johnson (bjohnson@stjlcms.org) for any questions.

RHYTHM OF FAITH MUSIC CAMP

“Music through the Church Year”

What?

This music camp is a week-long opportunity to use your voice and hands to sing and play music written throughout the Church Year while learning more about music, hymnody, theology, and the architecture of our church. Snacks, games, and fun with friends included!

Who?

Children entering grades K-8th

Whether you have been in choir or not, all are welcome!

When?

Monday-Friday, June 17-21, 2019, 9:00 – 11:30 a.m.

We will be singing in nursing homes on Friday, June 21.

Where?

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

What now?

Fill out the registration form found on our website: <http://stjohnlcmstopeka.org> or fill out the Google Form (<https://forms.gle/Qm6puAAyZyCkwjX36>) by June 3. Payments by cash or check can be made prior to or on the first day, June 17.

Cost?

\$40 per child per week

\$30 per child per week for families with 3+ children attending

Questions?

Please contact Bethany Johnson at bjohnson@stjlcms.org or 469-400-4382.

HYMN OF THE MONTH FOR MAY

LSB 483 “With High Delight Let Us Unite”

Introduction

In the Third Article of the Apostles’ Creed, the Church is defined as “the communion of saints” centered around the “forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.” The Church is not a mere outward observance of fellowship and worship; it is, more specifically, the fellowship around the same Gospel, or doctrine, by which the Holy Spirit delivers Christ’s gifts of salvation to us through faith. The Church is the community of all believers who are living members of Christ’s body, meaning that they possess eternal life through faith. So, when we unite together at church around God’s gifts of Word and Sacrament, we are also uniting with all believers in heaven and on earth.

The Easter hymn, “With High Delight Let Us Unite” centers upon Christ’s resurrection for us. First Corinthians 15:17-18 says, “And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.” Though we still face earthly death, we as believers in Christ have true comfort in the hope of the resurrection and eternal life.

Background & Text

. Georg Vetter (1536-99) wrote the text to this hymn, and Martin Franzmann (1907-76) translated it, preserving the richness and vitality of the text. Like any good Lutheran hymnwriter, they believed that theology must sing. He who fails to hear doctrine preached and sung will forget what the true Gospel is and how important it is to our faith. Not only that, but singing good theology helps spread this Gospel to our neighbor. Stanza 1 of this hymn gives us, the pure in heart, the invitation to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ who died and rose for all. In fact, it is our privilege to do so. This stanza not only teaches us that we should sing this Good News to others, but it also shows us *how* to sing: with “high delight” and with joy.

Stanza 2 includes the wonderful imagery of Christ bursting from death to life, undoing death’s power over us. Along with being true God and true man, Jesus is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. He is both the firstborn of creation and the firstborn of the dead. As the head of the Church and firstborn of the dead, Christ gave up His life for us and defeated death, giving us the victory over “death and grave.”

As we “let [our] praises ring” (stanza 3), our faith sings with delight in thankfulness to God for giving us eternal victory over death. While we still struggle with sin and suffering in this life, it is tempting to wander away from God’s Word and seek other places that have only temporary “hope.” Our true hope and consolation are found in Christ, whose love from above – from outside of us – brings us not only a spiritual victory but also a resurrection of the body that we will receive on the Last Day. Let us unite (with high delight!) as the community of all believers, who have been given this Easter victory, to sing what we believe, that is, the wonderful Good News of forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation won for us in Christ.

Bethany M Johnson

2019 WORSHIP CONFERENCE

“RESTORING LUTHERAN SACRAMENTAL PIETY”

Saturday, August 17, 9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

St. John’s Ev. Lutheran Church

Dr. Joseph Herl, keynote speaker

More information to come in the June newsletter

Questions? Contact Bethany Johnson (bjohnson@stjlcms.org)

MONTHLY BREAKFAST IN MAY

There will be no monthly breakfast in May, as the usual Sunday is Mother’s Day. The Lord’s richest blessings to all mothers as they live out their vocations in Christ.

ST. JOHN’S ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

Save the date: Saturday, August 3, 2019: St. John’s Annual Golf Tournament this summer will be held at Forbes Field. This is a fundraiser for the youth group and their activities. Plan to participate as a golfer, a sponsor, or as a volunteer! More details will be forthcoming.

LCMS STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY

Newsletter Article – May 2019

Stewardship is not just about giving money to the church. It includes this, to be sure, but it is not limited to it. Stewardship involves our whole life – everything we have and everything we are.

Let us not, though, fall into the trap of thinking that because we give of ourselves in one area we can neglect giving in another. Stewardship is not stealing from Peter to pay Paul. It is not a game we play whereby we justify ourselves in not giving a tenth of our income because we have given in some other way. This is why our Lord warns:

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others.” (Matthew 23:23)

We are given to do both – tithe of ourselves and what we have. And so it is that St. Paul makes his appeal to us:

“I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.” (Romans 12:1-2)

We are to present our bodies as a living sacrifice to God. We are not to have the mind of the world, where we exchange equal weight of this for an equal weight of that, and then think that we have done what God has required.

Our whole life is given over for service in and for the Church of God. This is to be done in thanksgiving for what God in Christ has accomplished for us. This is our spiritual worship, the reasonable response to what He has done for us – not one for the other, but all in all.

But what does this look like? St. Paul never lays down a general principle without also giving us some practical application of what shape that principle is to take concretely. He gives the general principle that our bodies are to be living sacrifices to God, and, after admonishing those who have been given particular gifts of grace to serve the church, St. Paul then speaks generally of what is expected of all. He says:

“Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.” (Romans 12:9-13)

This is what it looks like to present your bodies as living sacrifices. This is how we live out the grace of God here in time.

Let us then heed the apostle’s teaching. Let us present our bodies – everything that we have and everything that we are – as living sacrifices to God, our reasonable response to what God in Christ Jesus accomplished for us by His death and resurrection.

Through this we have forgiveness of sins, a new life in Christ, and eternal salvation. And through this worship, the grace of God is made manifest in His saints – for the church and the world.

ST. JOHN'S WOMEN'S LEAGUE

It's that time again, Women's League caring Mission, is collecting the following item for or personal care kits that sent to Lutheran World Relief April-June:

Light weight dark colored bath size towels (52" x 27" or 20" x 40"), 2-3 Bath size bars of soap, (4-5 ounces, and any brand in original wrappers) totaling 8-9 ounces), Sturdy Large Combs, Metal nail clippers, Adult size tooth brushes in original wrappers.

Please join us at the Lutheran Women in Mission Christian Life Retreat

"Fearless Women, Redefining Beauty Boldly"

Guest speaker: Heidi Goehmann:

November 1 & 2, 2019

Salina, Kansas

Sponsored by the

LWML Kansas District

Brochures are available in the Choir robing room.

The Women's League are also collecting Best Choice labels, ask you friends and family to save them for you, you may put them in the box in the Courtyard that is labeled stamps.

There is still room on the District LWML bus if you are thinking about going to Mobile, Alabama. The bus will leave on Monday, June 17 and return on Tuesday, June 25th. If you are interested you may email pd728@yahoo.com for more details.

TLS NEWS

TLS Success Story – Pastor Karl Fay, Class of 1996 (submitted April 2019)

How has your education at Topeka Lutheran School prepared you for your life? The education I received at TLS provided a wonderful foundation for everything that has followed. I learned to love reading through Barb McComas, and Margaret Schaefer magically made English grammar genuinely enjoyable for me as a middle schooler. These are gifts that keep giving as I speak, write, and lead. I received opportunities that I may not otherwise have had to participate in sports and there developed grit and perseverance and competency in teamwork.

What is one thing you would want people to know about Topeka Lutheran School that they might not think about? The relationships formed at TLS with teachers, students, and other parents far outlive one's life as a TLS student. They are a lasting treasure.

How has the teaching and modeling of Jesus' salvation received at Topeka Lutheran School impacted your trust in the Lord? I learned to love Jesus, the Bible, and the church at TLS. The teachers were for me some of my first encounters with Jesus and his love. I probably wouldn't be a pastor today had these early experiences not been such positive ones.

Please list some accomplishments that you have achieved since leaving TLS.

Topeka High School, '00

B.A. Studio Art + Pre-Seminary Program, Concordia University, NE, '04

MDiv, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, '09

(Note to readers: Pastor Fay has graciously offered his own art creation for the TLS “Growing God’s Children for Generations to Come” capital campaign. Please join us on Friday, May 3 at the First Friday Art Show where his creation will be unveiled.)



About the artist **Karl Fay**:

Karl Fay (TLS 1996) is married to Kendra (née Schmidt, TLS 1997). They have four children June, Ruben, Iris, and Ezra, and they live in the Chicago suburbs where Karl serves as Senior Pastor of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church. For recreation, he creates highly detailed word art.

2019 FLOWER CALENDAR

We have had a great response in signing up for the Flower Calendar on the bulletin board outside of the church offices. If you would like to provide flowers for a particular service this coming year, please sign your name and phone number next to the date of your choice. Upcoming dates available: June 23 & 30; July 14; August 11; and October 6.

DOORSTEP NEWS

Earlier this year the Topeka Community Foundation announced there would no longer be a Topeka Gives event. In the six years of the event, Doorstep was in the top three for our number of donors each year! In light of the news we wanted to come up with some event of our own to keep the ball rolling! During that time the Topeka Performing Arts Center has started the **Topeka Day of Giving** set for **June 12 from 2pm-8pm**. There is no match money involved in this event, but rather a gathering of non-profits in the community in one place. Doorstep will be there, and we will be encouraging, and accepting donations at our table on that day.

Save the date...

We will have one food sale fundraiser this year! We will take orders for **Cinnamon Rolls and Tamales September 6 – 22**, with delivery the weekend of October 11th. Mark your calendars to stock your freezers!

Doorstep’s 2nd Annual Neighbor Helping Neighbor Walk/5K Run is Saturday, October 5 at Lake Shawnee, Reynolds Lodge. Plan to join us in getting some exercise around the lake, and raise funds for Doorstep this October. There will be more information closer to the event!

2019 CONTRIBUTION ENVELOPES

If you have not picked up your contribution envelope—they are now located in the church office. If you have any questions regarding contribution boxes/envelopes, please speak with Yvonne Berry in the church office. Thank you!

SUNDAY SCHOOL CHOIR (GRADES K-5) SCHEDULE

Rehearsals: 9:45 a.m. every Sunday morning before Sunday School
May 12 (beginning of both services)

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS FOR MAY 2019

May 5: Easter 3	Good Shepherd Sunday	John 10:11-16
May 12: Easter 4-Jubilate	Sorrow will Turn to Joy	John 16:16-23
May 19: Easter 5 - Cantate	The Work of the Holy Spirit	John 16:4-15
May 26: Easter 6 - Rogate	Jesus Christ has Overcome the World	John 16:23-20

Save the Date

Vacation Bible School will be held June 24-28. This year our theme will be Sanctified with a focus on the 10 Commandments. We are going an extra half hour this year! VBS will be each morning that week from 9:00-Noon. Registration is open and online. Check us out at <https://vbsmate.com/stjohnstopeka>. You will also find a copy of the registration form attached to this newsletter. Looking forward to seeing you all them. If you have any questions or would like to volunteer, please see Andrea Kosmicki.



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)