



St. John's

Ev. Lutheran Church

VOL. 130 NO. 06 MONTHLY

JUNE 2019

LUTHER AND THOSE DARN ENTHUSIASTS

Enthusiasts, as the word implies, are those who seek God within themselves, through reason, feelings or experience. Paul Maier writes that Enthusiasts maintain, “an interior spirituality,” (n. 1; all notes below) whereby the Holy Spirit is believed to speak to the individual by means of private revelation.

A major front in the battle being waged during the Reformation was against the Enthusiasts. Most think Luther’s focus was solely on the errors of the Papists, but Luther had conflicts within his own camp; his professorial colleagues who, as Richard Marius writes, were “dissident Christians who had followed him (Luther) but who now wanted to go beyond him.” (n. 2) Luther’s clash with the Enthusiasts came after his return from seclusion at the Wartburg. Maier writes,

... it was the beginning of the second front, the battle he had to wage for the rest of his life against the left wing of the Reformation, the radical approach which set the Spirit in opposition to Scripture or any other external means or aid, ranging from the Lord’s Supper and Baptism to music, art, and stained glass. The Spirit needed none of this, the enthusiasts insisted. They would now be led directly by God as Spirit-filled individuals, whether clergy or laity, to restore the primitive Christian church. (n. 3)

Luther’s colleague Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt did not think Luther had gone far enough in his efforts to reform the Church. Karlstadt, “...had a spiritualist streak which manifested itself in his off-again, on-again opposition to scholarly pursuits and his occasional belittling of the ‘external works’ of hearing and reading Scripture.” (n. 4) Having a “spiritualist streak” is another way of saying Karlstadt was an Enthusiast, who, ultimately caused a tremendous uproar while Luther was sequestered in the Wartburg. Harry Leowen notes that Luther warned the Wittenbergers against the teachings of the enthusiasts writing,

When these men talk of sweetness and of being transported to the third heaven, do not believe them. Divine Majesty does not speak directly to men. God is consuming fire, and the dream and visions of the saints are terrible. Prove the spirits; and if you are not able to do so, then take the advice of Gamaliel and wait. (n. 5)

Upon returning to Wittenberg, Luther, preached eight consecutive sermons (March 9 to 17), directed against the enthusiastic reformers, especially Karlstadt, but Luther refrained from mentioning him by name. Then, in, *Against the Heavenly Prophets* Luther addressed Karlstadt directly. He wrote,

But if we are so to treat our faith that we bring our pet ideas into Scripture and deal with Scripture according to our understanding, attending only to what is common to the crowd and generally accepted notions, then no article of the faith will remain. For there is none in Scripture that God has not placed beyond the reach of reason. On this account, Dr. Karlstadt’s error reveals itself in his attitude towards faith and the Word of God, namely that reason readily and willingly accepts it, while in reality reason balks at the Word of God and the articles of faith. (n. 6)

Luther's tone against Karlstadt and his fellow Enthusiasts was scathing, something Luther was heavily criticized for. Yet, before writing *Against the Heavenly Prophets*, Luther wrote a letter to the Christians at Strassburg. In it, still speaking against the Enthusiasts, Luther said, "They make for confused, disturbed, anxious consciences, and people to be amazed at their great skill, but meanwhile Christ is forgotten." (n. 7)

For the rest of Luther's life, he rebuked the false teachings of the Enthusiasts, which included, the mysticism which underlay Karlstadt's subjective notions. Luther called such people Schwärmer, a word often translated "enthusiasts" but more correctly rendered as "fanatics." The word suggests also the swarming of insects that sting and bite, an implication that they disturbed the peace. Summing it up, Luther wrote,

The Divine Majesty does not speak to men immediately, as they call it, so that they have vision of God, for He saith, "No flesh shall see me and live." Human nature could not survive the least syllable of the Divine utterance. So, God addresses man through men, because we could not endure his speaking to us without medium. (n. 8)

Notes:

- (1) Paul L. Maier, "Fanaticism as a Theological Category in the Lutheran Confessions," *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 44 (July 1980), 173.
 - (2) Richard Marius, *Martin Luther: The Christian Between God and Death* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1999), 393.
 - (3) Maier, *op cit.*, 175.
 - (4) David Steinmetz, *Reformers in the Wings* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971), 175.
 - (5) Harry Loewen, *Luther and the Radicals: Another Look at Some Aspects of the Struggle Between Luther and the Radical Reformers* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University, 1974), 34-35.
 - (6) Martin Luther, *Luther's Works*, 40:148.
 - (7) *Ibid.*, 70.
 - (8) Robert Alfred Vaughan, *Hours with the Mystics: A Contribution to the History of Religious Opinion* (London: John W. Parker and Son West Strand, 1856), 2.21.
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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

Sound Words Academy is on summer break, but we have only 96 days to go...and counting. We'll resume on Wednesday, 4 September, with the same good stuff. Mark your calendars!

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.

ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

August 3, 2019

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, July 27th

Registration forms are in the breezeway.

Support St. John’s Lutheran Youth Fellowship

2018-2019 STEWARDSHIP PLEDGE

We have mentioned this before, but it’s worth saying again, we have shifted our stewardship education this year from June until September. Along with that, for 2019 only, our “pledge year” extends until December 31. 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 January 1, 2020 and end on December 31, 2020. 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

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 April, 2019	\$227,412.00
<u>Actual Receipts through April, 2019</u>	<u>\$244,881.00</u>
Over (Under) Budget Year to Date	\$ 17,469.00

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

Schedule, registration, and presentation summaries found at our website:

<https://stjohnlcmstopeka.org/learning/worshipConference/>

ATTENTION SUNDAY SCHOOL STAFF

Our quarterly meeting will be held in the library on Saturday, June 1, at 9:00 a.m.

We will discuss the summer curriculum and VBS.

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: <https://stjohnlcmstopeka.org/learning/musicCamp/> 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

Plan to be a part of...

THE NEIGHBORHOOD BLOCK PARTY NATIONAL NIGHT OUT AGAINST CRIME SATURDAY, AUGUST 10, 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 June!

HYMN OF THE MONTH FOR MAY

LSB 497 “Come Holy Ghost, God and Lord”

Introduction

Martin Luther wrote the Small Catechism to assist the teaching of the Christian faith through the family. The teaching of this faith unites the family together around God’s Word, and, most importantly, assists in uniting the Church. But how is this accomplished? How are we brought to faith? These questions are answered in the explanation of the 3rd article of the Apostles’ Creed: “I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith. In the same way He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.” Faith and its expression, meaning the good works that flow from it, are not dependent on our will, but by the Holy Spirit, who works only through the Word of God, which is our life and our light.

Explanation

The hymn, “Come Holy Ghost, God and Lord,” is the hymn of the day for Pentecost, the time in the church year in which we focus on the Holy Spirit and His work among God’s people. God brought true unity of the Spirit to His people at Pentecost. This unity is found in the Gospel, which is “the power of God for salvation” (Romans 1:16).

This hymn was originally a Latin chant from the 11th century and was used during the Vespers of the Vigil of Pentecost. Martin Luther, who was familiar with the German version of the hymn, considered it a core hymn of the Reformation. As with other hymns, he added additional stanzas (in this case, two more) to the hymn to allow for more opportunity to teach the faith within hymnody.

The first stanza recognizes the Holy Spirit as “God and Lord.” As the third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit has authority and power as God Himself. He outpours His graces by imparting God’s love to each believer, uniting the Church, and spreading the Gospel to “ev’ry land and ev’ry tongue.” The “brightness of [His] light” is connected only to the Word of God, the Word made flesh that brought life and light into our darkened world.

The second stanza continues this theme of light by calling the Holy Spirit, “holy Light, guide divine.” He is the one who causes the Word of life to shine and teaches us how to “know our God aright” and how to address Him as our Father – with delight! Not only does the Spirit’s light point us to the Gospel, but it also makes us aware of our errors as He gives us the Law. We pray that the Holy Spirit would keep us from error and guide us in the faith given to us in our Baptism.

The third stanza addresses the Holy Spirit as our “comfort.” In the midst of trials, temptations, weakness, and even death itself, we are given strength and true comfort only in Christ, that we may contend with whatever may come our way in life. “In your service to abide” refers to God’s service to us. We pray that the Holy Spirit may come to us daily through faith in Christ, uniting us around God’s Word, where He promises to be present among us and where He promises to give us forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation.

Bethany M Johnson

NEW MEMBER MONTHLY BREAKFAST IN JUNE

Join members on Sunday, June 9 for a potluck breakfast between services. Bring your favorite breakfast dish to share and join in the fellowship. Also at this time, Pastor Bruss will be introducing new members to our congregation. This is a great time to put names and faces together and welcome them as brothers and sisters in Christ. We are delighted to count them as members of the Body of Christ here at SJELC!

2019 KANSAS DISTRICT PENTECOST OFFERING JUNE 9

West Africa has a pressing need for well-trained, faithful Christian pastors. **YOU can help** by participating in the 2019 Kansas District Pentecost Offering, which once again will support students at the Lutheran Center for Theological Studies in Togo. If we raise \$5000, we can cover the costs of one student for a year. \$15000 would cover all three CLET students from Guinea. \$30,000 would cover three CLET students plus one year of local training at the newly established Guinea Institute. **Every gift matters!**

CONTRIBUTION COUNTERS NEEDED

Are you an early morning person? Do you have a desire to serve your Christian neighbors within the congregation but just haven’t found the best fit for your available time and talents? Prayerfully consider becoming a contribution counter at 6 am on Monday morning. No experience needed and training will be provided. You can serve in this capacity for one or more Monday mornings per month or as needed. Counting is completed by 7 am.

ST. JOHN'S WOMEN'S LEAGUE

It's that time again, The Women's League, Caring Mission committee, (LWML), is collecting the following item for personal care kits that will be sent to Lutheran World Relief. We are doing this through the months of 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. We have found that the best buys are at the Dollar General store. If you would rather let us do the shopping, momentary gifts will be accepted by:

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.

The Women's League will again have our annual Bargain and Bake sale, the dates are August 22 and 23, 2019. Time of sale will be announced in the next newsletter. Our project this year Topeka Lutheran School Foundation: You may bring your item stating, Monday, August 19, 6-8, pm, Tuesday, August 20, 10-5 and Wednesday, August 21, 10-2. You may bring bakes items on Wednesday or early Thursday morning. We ask that NOT bring any electronic items please.

Please check the church kitchen for any dishes that you may have left from breakfasts or dinners, if there are no names on them, they will also be put in the sale.

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.

TLS NEWS

1. **Capital Campaign Update.** Thank you to those who purchased a "IAMTopekaLutheran" t-shirt and supported recent events with prayers, commitments, and gifts. Guests who attended the dinner and initial presentation held March 29 included eleven alumni and eight former faculty members. Pastor and Mrs. Roger Goetz generously offered a \$10,000 match that evening in memory of Dr. Don Pierce. The TLS students performed their spring concert on April 12 to a packed house! All guests enjoyed singing together the TLS Alma Mater to close the show. On May 3, a TLS art festival was held and included artwork from students, alumni and friends. A special art piece was contributed by artist Pastor Karl Fay (TLS 1996). We thank God for His many blessings to TLS and especially to the generous hearts of our donors and friends! Go to www.topek Lutheran.org to the Capital Campaign page for updates on events, gifts received to date, etc.
2. **Campaign Events** are being finalized for July, August and September. Watch as details will be announced soon.
3. Attached is a **TLS Success Story** from Eric Larson (TLS Class of 1991) who has served the Lord as a Lutheran high school teacher and a DCE. He is now a student at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. Eric is the son of Dale and Sue Larson, members of Faith Lutheran.
4. **Summer Reading Camp** is scheduled for June 17-21 and July 8-12 at TLS, for incoming kindergarteners through 4th graders. The camp is devoted to build reading and writing skills. To register or for more information, call the TLS office at 785.357.0382.

TLS SUCCESS STORY – ERIC LARSON, CLASS OF 1991

(This TLS alumni shares how Topeka Lutheran School affected his life and helped to build a foundation for his faith and academic education. This will be shared with the TLS association churches and published on the TLS website.)

How has your education at Topeka Lutheran School prepared you for your life? Topeka Lutheran School challenged me to work hard academically and taught me about my Savior. My teachers were models for me of faith, love, and learning. I am incredibly blessed by their faithful Christian service and for all that they taught me.

What is one thing you would want people to know about Topeka Lutheran School that they might not think about? Lutheran schools are a great way to teach our young people that all life and learning are centered on the foundation of Jesus Christ. They are not a retreat from the world. They are a witness to the world that all knowledge and life come from God.

How has the teaching and modeling of Jesus' salvation received at Topeka Lutheran School impacted your trust in the Lord? My teachers, my church, and my parents all nurtured my faith in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Their example is an encouragement for me to teach and proclaim what was given to me.

Please list some accomplishments that you have achieved since leaving TLS. I served for 16 years as a congregational Director of Christian Education in Matteson, Illinois and Sioux Falls, South Dakota. I also served for 2 years as a Lutheran high school teacher in Baltimore, Maryland. I am currently studying at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri to be a pastor. I am blessed to be married to a wonderful woman, Judy, and to have three energetic kids James (9), Joy (6), and Joseph (2).



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 & 27; November 3, 10, 24; and December 1 & 29.

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 in number of donors each year! In light of the news Doorstep wanted to come up with some event of their own to keep the ball rolling!

Introducing... ***Doorstep's Summer Cash Bash!*** Make a donation to Doorstep anytime from June 1st – June 15th and help Doorstep earn 'match money'! You can mail your donation in, bring it to the office, go online or stop by our table at the Topeka Day of Giving. Let them know your member congregation, and that it is for the 'Summer Cash Bash' and it will be credited towards their goal. If you drop a check off here at St. John's so designated, we will also see that it gets to Doorstep.

If they raise \$15,000 they will receive a \$2,500 match, BUT, if they **raise \$20,000 they will receive \$5,000** in 'match money' from a generous, anonymous donor!

In the past, funding received from the Topeka Gives events has carried Doorstep through those lean summer months! And, this year is no different. They need your donations this June 1st -15th, to help them earn additional match money!

Doorstep will also be at the Topeka Performing Arts Center on June 12th from 2pm-8pm for the **Topeka Day of Giving**. They will have a table at the event and will be accepting donations towards Doorstep's Summer Cash Bash!

Save the date...

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

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

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS FOR JUNE 2019

June 2: Easter 7- Exaudi	He will Testify of Me	John 15:26:16:4
June 9: Pentecost	The Holy Spirit will teach you all things	John 14:23-31
June 16: Trinity	One God, Three Persons	John 3:1-15
June 23: 1st Sunday after Trinity	The Rich Man and Lazarus	Luke 16:19-31
June 30: 2nd Sunday after Trinity	The Parable of the Great Supper	Luke 14:15-24

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL IS COMING

June 24-28, is the week of learning, fun, and worship in Vacation Bible School, for children age 3 through those going into the 6th grade. All kinds of helpers are needed, so prayerfully consider your gifts and talents and share them with the children. Please note the registration form below and contact Andrea Kosmicki if you can help with any of the volunteer opportunities shown on the enrollment form. You can also register online at www.vbsmate.com/stjohnstopeka.

VBS Enrollment Form

July 16 – 20, 2018

9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. "Sanctified-10 Commandments"

Children’s classes are available to children age 3 years through those entering the 6th grade this fall.

Name _____ age ____ grade (in the fall) _____

Name _____ age ____ grade (in the fall) _____

Name _____ age ____ grade (in the fall) _____

Parent/Guardian _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Address _____

Emergency Contact _____

Phone _____

Alternate Pick Up Name _____

Phone _____

Student Allergies

“I will be volunteering and will need child care for these children under age three:”

I would like to volunteer to help with:

Crafts ____ Snack ____ Preschool ____ Registration ____

Games ____ Small group guide ____

Decorations and set up ____ Infant/childcare ____

Place place the completed form in the blue box at the Information Center soon!

Even if you have never done so before, please consider helping with VBS! You’ll be tired but glad you did! Contact 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)