



St. John's

Ev. Lutheran Church

VOL. 171 NO. 12 MONTHLY

DECEMBER 2022

PREPARE YOUR HEART

O Lord, how shall I meet you, how welcome you aright (LSB 334:1)? This should be the perpetual question of the Christian: how will I receive Jesus? Yet, this is also the special question asked during the season of Advent. It is a special question because we spend this time meditating on how Christ has come and how he will come again on judgment day. Advent prepares for the festival of Christmas, the glorious celebration of our Savior's birth. However, we do not spend Advent pretending like we are those Christians who are still waiting for the Messiah to come; we do not forget that Jesus has already become man. Instead, we remind ourselves concerning the person and work of Jesus Christ as we await his return on the day of the Lord. We answer the questions: who is Jesus, what has he come to do? These questions are answered in a unique way each Sunday in Advent, to prepare us rightly to welcome our Lord and Savior.

"O Lord, how shall I meet you?" Advent 1 (*Ad Te Levavi*) answers this, "as the Almighty King." In our Gospel reading, we hear of Jesus' triumphant entrance into the city of Jerusalem, days away from his crucifixion. We hear of the "Hosanna!", of the "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!", of the songs of joy to "the son of David." Although Jesus did not deliver the victory some of these expected (he was to die a shameful death), we know this death did conquer all the enemies of God (sin, death, and the devil). Remembering this great triumph, we lift up our prayers to the Lord to come quickly in the same magnificent manner. The pastor prays on behalf of the congregation, "Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come!" Just as Jesus came then, we hope and await for him to come now, riding this time on the clouds of his angels to enact the new heavens and the new earth.

"O Lord, how shall I meet you?" Advent 2 (*Populus Zion*) answers this, "as the glorious Judge." Jesus gives us vivid descriptions of how he will return at the end of days. Although we have been hearing of this during the last three Sundays of the church year (Nov. 6th, Nov. 13th, Nov 20th), this Sunday is marked by special attention to Jesus' return as our awaited hope. In the Gospel reading we hear, "Now when these things begin to take place, straighten up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near" (Luke 21:28). Yes, the day of the Lord will be a day of great judgment and destruction, but it is also for us a day of joy and rejoicing. With Jesus' arrival is the coming of our salvation, the final defeat over death. We look out for that day by waiting patiently, purifying our hearts and minds through faith in Jesus' promises.

"O Lord, how shall I meet you?" Advent 3 (*Gaudate*) answers this, "as the promised Messiah." We encounter this week John the Baptist as he questions our Lord about his true identity. Jesus testifies clearly that the people of Israel should wait for no other Messiah; he himself is the fulfillment of all God's promises. Jesus proves this by the works he has accomplished: the blind are healed, the lame are walking, the deaf are hearing. The gracious rule and reign of God is shown wherever Jesus appears, wherever he

teaches and heals. On this Sunday we are prepared to welcome him as both the fulfillment of God's promises and the one from whom we can expect mercy.

"O Lord, how shall I meet you?" Advent 4 (*Rorate Coeli*) answers this, "as the imminent Lord." As we inch closer to the great celebration of when God became man, that joyous Christmas day, we finish out our preparation by meditating on Jesus as the Lord who stands in our midst and furnishes us with his gifts. John the Baptist proclaims to us that there is someone greater than he, whose sandals he is not worthy to untie. John has been called to reveal this man. John testified that he was not this man, even though his powerful preaching led some to believe so. John was not this man, but he came to prepare the way for this man. After we have heard the call to repentance as John proclaimed, after we have been shown our need for a Savior, we are ready to receive the peace proclaimed by the God who is with us. We do not have to doubt if this Lord Jesus is in our midst. As we await his final return, we celebrate every time he proclaims his Word through the mouth of the pastor or he feeds us by his body and blood distributed from his altar.

This Advent season, and every Advent, prepare your hearts for the return of our Lord Jesus by taking this journey of preparation. Just as the Lord has come in great pomp and glory, he comes to you now through the ministry of his servants. Jesus has not left us abandoned until his return. He desires all men to believe in him and to welcome him gladly when he comes riding on the clouds with his angels, ready to punish the evil and reward the good. Through his all-sufficient sacrifice on the cross we glory to be counted among those whom he has made good and has prepared for life everlasting. – Vicar John Kastner

ADVENT SERIES

On Wednesdays in Advent, we will be holding our Advent Vespers scheduled for noon on Wednesdays November 30, December 7 and 14. Our evening Vespers will be at 7 p.m. on Wednesdays November 30 and December 7. On the evening of December 14, our Children's Christmas Program will be held at 6:30 p.m. Sound Words Academy will not be held Wednesday December 14, 21 or 28.

ST. JOHN'S MUSIC ACADEMY

You are invited to join us for our first Christmas recital on **Sunday, December 11 at 4:00 p.m.** in the courtyard on the beautiful grand piano. Pieces will be performed by students and faculty on various instruments: piano, violin, and trumpet. A light reception will be provided afterwards.

Organ students will also be providing preservice music for the Sunday School Christmas service on **Wednesday, December 14 at 6:30** (remember: preservice starts around 5-10 minutes beforehand!). We hope you can attend this service not only to receive God's Word during this season but also to support the younger generation of our Church.



Thank you for your support for St. John's Music Academy

Check us out on Facebook!

Interested in private lessons for piano, organ, trumpet, violin or flute? Contact Bethany Johnson
(bjohnson@stjlcms.org)

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM A SHEPHERD'S CHRISTMAS

Summary published by Concordia Publishing House:

“The *Quempas* goes 'round” is the expression that has been used for several hundred years to describe *Quempas* singing, a delightful custom that dates back to the Middle Ages. The name *Quempas* comes from the first two words of the carol in the original Latin language: “Quem Pastores.”

Though it can be performed in a variety of arrangements, much symbolism is involved in the celebration of *Quempas*. The light of the candles reminds us of the Light of the world, Christ our Savior. Carrying the light to the four corners of the church can remind us of our privilege and responsibility to carry God's redeeming message to the “four corners of the earth.” Hearing the message being sung from all four corners reminds us that God's love—and Good News—is all around us. The passing of the “song” from congregation to choirs can remind us of the support we give one another in the body of Christ as we go about the task of being His messengers. The emphatic refrain, sung by all, reminds us of the oneness we have in Christ. Tonight's celebration of the *Quempas Carol* is interspersed with the reading of the Christmas story from the Gospel of Luke and the singing of familiar Christmas carols.

In many churches, the *Quempas* constituted the principal item of carol singing on Christmas Eve; in fact, the service was not considered complete without the singing of the *Quempas Carol*—“God's own Son is born a child; God the Father is reconciled!”—is drawn from another very old carol: “Resonet in Laudibus.” The antiphon for tonight's psalm is based on the melody of “Resonet in Laudibus,” indicating that the Psalms point us to Christ and His incarnation.

The Evening Canticle used in this service, known as the *Phos Hilaron*, is one of the oldest Christian hymns, dating from around AD 200. Only one other extra-biblical hymn is older (“Shepherd of Tender Youth”). The *Phos Hilaron* (Greek for “Joyous Light”) has been used during the lighting of lamps at the evening service for centuries.

We hope you will join us for this service and hear the wonderful music the children will provide!



ST. JOHN'S YOUTH

Youth K–12 Christmas party will be Sunday, December 4. We will be adopting a family to provide Christmas presents. Keep an eye on the bulletin and youth board for details and how you can shop for our adopted family members. We will wrap the presents at the Christmas party and enjoy food and fun.

CHRISTMAS CAROLING

Saturday, December 10 at 10:00 a.m.

Meet at St. John's Courtyard at 10:00 a.m. We will split into two groups and be finished by 11:15 a.m.

Note: This will take place immediately after the Sunday School children's rehearsal that morning to encourage families and children to take part in this service. Snacks and water will be provided prior to leaving for caroling.

Join us as we serve others with the Christmas Gospel message of salvation through song!

NO MONTHLY BREAKFAST IN DECEMBER

There will be no monthly breakfast in December. Our next monthly breakfast will be potluck on Sunday, January 8 in Luther Hall after our early Divine Service.

BECOME A VOTING MEMBER

Our constitution 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 and approval of the voters of the assembly. **We encourage all eligible St. John's members to join the voters assembly.** If you would like to become a voting member of our congregation, you can contact the office, pastor, or your elders to get instructions on how you can become a voter.

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 2022. We hope that you will find this information useful.

YTD Projected Budget Receipts through October 2022	\$619,270.00
Actual Receipts through October 2022	\$559,215.10
Year to Date Receipts Over (Under) Budget	\$(60,054.90)

WOULD YOU LIKE TO HELP?

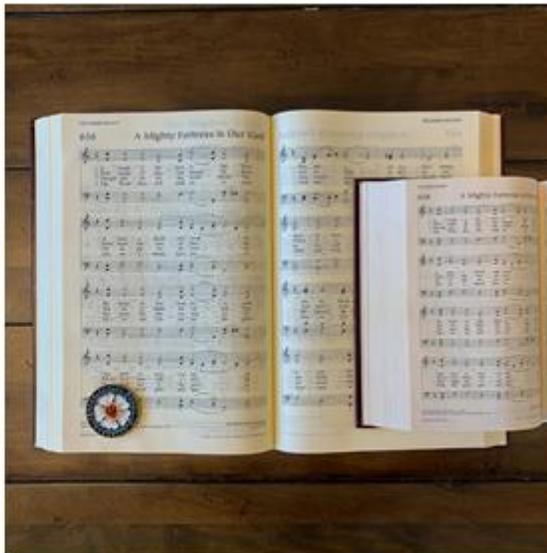
We are still looking for 1-3 more volunteers to help with church upkeep. Volunteers are needed 1-2 times a month to assist in cleaning the Nave, bathrooms, and Sunday School rooms (wiping tables and chalk boards, etc.). Many hands make light work! Consider contacting the church office if you are willing to volunteer.

LARGE PRINT HYMNALS NOW AVAILABLE

If you are in need of larger print, the St. John’s office has a few new large print hymnals available. You are welcome to borrow one for services and return to the office, or purchase one to keep. Contact Erika in the church office for more details.

Larger Text, Same Hymnal

All the LSB hymns, psalms, and services you love are included, with a 40% font increase. The Large Print Edition keeps the same page numbers and footnotes as the original, so worship can continue without needing to adjust for different hymnals.



THANK YOU

St. John’s has received several thank you cards from members that received gift cards during this time of Thanksgiving. We greatly appreciate your support and love of your fellow brothers and sisters in Christ.

FROM OUR MISSIONS



Dear friends at St. John’s, we are very thankful for your contribution for the ministry here in eastern Africa, including your most recent gift. We are nearing the end of the semester. I have finished writing eight final exams and soon it will be review week. The students are working hard. Your support is making a difference for our students and the churches of eastern Africa. God’s blessings to you in all that you do, and in the upcoming holiday season.

– Rev. Vance Becker

6

You're Invited!!



**St. John's Women's League (LWML)
Christmas Bazaar & Cookie Walk**

Crafts, Gift items, Baked Goods, Sweet Shop

Friday Dec 2 & Sunday Dec 4, 2022

**Booths open: Friday 9:30 am - 2:00 pm
Sunday 8:00 am - 12:30 pm**

Come shop before or after worship services

Proceeds will be donated to Missions
Monetary donations can be given using
donation boxes when entering church
or in Luther Hall

Volunteers are welcome and needed!

Contact Ruth Scott or Nancy Taylor

You may bring your items on:

Thursday 9-3 pm

Come to the south glass doors

Be sure to price your items!

**Please pick up any
unsold items**

**Monday
from 9 am - 12 pm**

ST. JOHN'S WOMEN'S LEAGUE

Our circles will not meet in December. We will resume in January 2023. We wish everyone a Merry and Blessed Christmas and Happy New Year.

Ladies of all ages! We invite you to check out our circles, come and enjoy a good time of fellowship with bible study.

Sarah circle meets the 2nd Monday of the month at 6:00 p.m. for bible study, a short meeting and fellowship.

Dorcas circle meets the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 1:00 p.m. for bible study, a short meeting and fellowship.

Quilting is resting until January 5. We will continue to meet the 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month. There will be a Women’s day out on Sunday, January 22, 2023 to meet from 2:00-4:00 pm in the Undercroft and work on quilts. Watch the January newsletter and bulletins for more information. Donations for quilt projects continue to be accepted. Items needed at this time are bed sheets of any size or color. Thank you in advance.

December Mites Highlight from the Kansas District LWML Mites? What are mites?? Mite boxes are used to put spare change or any amount in which we give to fund all our Mission Grant projects to the Kansas District LWML and the National LWML. As you leave church on the first Sunday of each month, you will see Mite boxes at each door. Any amount you drop will go to these projects.

Fairmount Ministries (Mission Grant project) Located in Wichita, KS, in Fairmount Neighborhood directly across the street from Wichita State University (WSU), Fairmount Ministries is a Recognized Service Organization (RSO) of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS).

Their mission is Matthew 28:19-20. *Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.*

Fairmount Ministries’ vision is to provide opportunities to foster relationships, encourage community, and promote dialogue about faith and life, for the university and the community in order to bring people closer to Jesus Christ.

The Spring LWML Topeka Zone Rally will be held April 2023 at St. John’s LCMS in Topeka, Kansas. Registration and Servant Event will begin at 9:00 a.m. with the meeting following at 10:00 a.m.

Mission Statement *Empowered by the Holy Spirit, the Lutheran Women’s, Missionary League Kansas District will nurture, motivate, and prepare The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod women to serve the Lord with gladness.*

<u>Dates to Remember</u>	
December 2 & 4, 2022	Christmas Bazaar
December 5, 2022	Clean the Kitchen
January 22, 2023	Women’s Day Out Quilt tying
April 2023	Zone Gathering, St. John’s, Topeka
June 22-25, 2023	National LWML Convention, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

DOORSTEP NEWS

December is all about Christmas Adoption Project, and the 800+ individuals whose holidays will brighten with food, gifts & more! Doorstep will not have the ‘Store’ this year; the adopted households will come to Doorstep to pick up food, gifts and cards. Each household adopted from the Christmas Bureau will receive a food order, health kit, blanket, a household item, gifts, games and toys (for children), school

supplies if appropriate, and a \$20 gift card per person in the household. There is a large collection of new clothing, so Doorstep will also offer clothing items this year.

Distribution week is Dec. 11th – 16th. Volunteer opportunities below:

Sunday, December 11th ~ 2:00pm – 5:00pm ~ move clothing to First Nazarene Church, start set-up and unbox items. Pick-up Trucks also needed.

Monday, December 12th ~ 8:30a–2:30p (2 shifts), finish set-up, shop for families. (No lunch)

Tuesday, December 13th ~ 8:30a–12:30p / 12:30p–5:30p. (Lunch provided) Shop for families, cart runner, stock clothing items.

Wednesday, December 14th ~ 8:30a–1:30p / 1:30p–7:30p. (Lunch and dinner provided) Personal shopper, stocking, carts

Thursday, December 15th ~ 8:30a–12:30p / 12:30p–5:30p. (Lunch provided) Personal shopper, stocking, packing boxes, carts

Friday, December 16th ~ 8:30a–12:30p clean-up, pack clothing, move back to Doorstep. Volunteers & pick-up trucks needed.

Call the Doorstep office (785.357.5341) to sign up and help during distribution week!

Current Needs for Christmas: By December, school supplies & health kits will be completed and there will be enough blankets ready for distribution. **But, help is still needed monetarily for the gift cards, food, etc. which will total \$33,000 or more.** You can mail a check, or go to our website (www.doorsteptopeka.org) to donate by credit card. Please note you are a member of St. John's Ev. Lutheran with your donation.

Please note the following dates in December:

No donations of used clothing or household items will be accepted from Dec. 5th – Dec. 16th .

Doorstep will be CLOSED FOR ALL SERVICES AND DONATIONS December 12th – 16th.

Doorstep Holiday Hours:

- Closed from Noon on December 22nd through December 26th & January 2nd.
- Open for donations only December 27th – 30th, January 3rd, 9am-2pm.
- Closed for ALL services December 27th – January 3rd for year-end wrap-up.
- Resume normal operation on Wednesday, January 4, 2023.

Doorstep Christmas Project ~ 2022

Doorstep is adopting 260 households with 800+ individuals from the Christmas Bureau again this year. We have been collecting items for a few months now to help spread out the requests.

We still need the following NEW items: (No later than 12/6/22)

- *Blankets - Full/Queen & King Only (NO THROWS)
- *Skillets Sets *Bakeware Sets *Pots & Pans
- *Basketballs, Footballs & Soccer Balls (regular size)



Our biggest need is Money for the Gift Cards & Food each household will receive. Mail your donation or bring it to Doorstep, 1119 SW 10th Avenue, M-F, 8am-3pm. Please note your member congregation for credit.

You can also give online at www.DoorstepTopeka.org under Donate.



Each household we adopt will receive:

Blanket ~ Health Kit ~ School Supplies (if appropriate) ~ One household item ~ Christmas food order ~ gifts and toys for household members ~ clothing ~ \$20 gift cards per person in the household.

We have Volunteer Opportunities this year!

Sunday, December 11th ~ from 2:00pm – 5:00pm ~ move clothing from Doorstep to First Nazarene Church, start setting up and unboxing the items.

Monday, December 12th ~ from 8:30am – 2:30pm (2 shifts), finish clothing set-up, and begin selecting items for families picking up on Tuesday. (No lunch provided)

Tuesday, December 13th ~ opportunities from 8:30am – 12:30pm and 12:30pm – 5:30pm. (Lunch provided)

Wednesday, December 14th ~ opportunities available from: 8:30am – 1:30pm and 1:30pm – 7:30pm. (Lunch and dinner provided)

Thursday, December 15th ~ opportunities available from 8:30am – 12:30pm and 12:30pm – 5:30pm. (Lunch provided)

Friday, December 16th we will be cleaning up, packing clothing back up to move back to Doorstep from 8:30am – 12:30pm.

Call Doorstep. (785) 357-5341. to sign up & help during distribution week!

Doorstep is located at 1119 SW 10th, 66604 (10th & Buchanan). Donation hours are Monday - Friday, 9am - 2pm. You can mail your monetary donations, or use our website: DoorstepTopeka.org under the Donate Tab.



Growing God's Children
for generations to come
Topeka Lutheran School

PRAYER

Lord God, Heavenly Father, whose we are and whom we serve. As we approach the Advent Season and Christmas when we celebrate the birth of your Son, Jesus Christ we remember that we are but sinful human beings in need of a Savior so we thank You for Your mercy on us in sending Christ to the earth to redeem your lost creatures. We ask You to continue to bless Topeka Lutheran School, its staff and support personnel that work so hard to make sure our school continues to teach the children of Your Great Mercy on us. All this we ask in Christ's Holy Name, Amen.

SUPPORT TOPEKA LUTHERAN TODAY!

<https://www.topek Lutheran.org/pledge-tracker>

TOTAL COMMITMENTS

Growing God's Children Capital Campaign

Total Amount Committed: \$846,943

Total Pledged Gifts Received: \$842,359

Total # of Pledges Received: 125

Watch for a mailing the early part of 2023 from Campaign Directors Darrel and Kim Savage who will be highlighting the campaign's purpose, goals met, and how the campaign will be wrapped up. Thank you to the many families, alumni, and friends of TLS for your generous support for this campaign and a special "thank you" to those who have extended their capital campaign gifts through the end of this year!

TLS GGC BUILDING UPGRADE COMMITTEE

The committee presented its recommendations and cost estimates for upgrades to the building and grounds to the LSAT Board of Directors in early December, to be forwarded on to the Foundation Board for review and next steps. These upgrades and additions include the recommendations made by KS Dept of Education to strengthen campus security, aesthetics, and visibility. All related costs will be covered by the balance of capital campaign gifts.

TLS UPCOMING EVENTS

- December 9: TLS PTL Christmas Shoppe, TLS Gym
- December 13: K-8 Christmas Concert, 6:30pm, TLS Gym
- December 15: K-8 Caroling at Topeka Public Library, 12:30 to 1:00pm
- December 19 thru Jan 2: Christmas Break, No K-8 Classes
- January 23-27: Nat'l Lutheran School Week Celebration
- January 27: TLS PTL Annual Chili Feed, 5:00pm, TLS Gym

THANK YOU!

- To the many families (and our new donors!) who made it possible to meet the recent \$20,000 match gift opportunity. Over \$40,000 was forwarded to TLS for immediate staffing and facility needs. We thank God for your generosity and faithful prayers.
- To the TLS families and friends who supported TLS Night at Chipotle's! Proceeds from that event will help with the 8th Grade Class Trip scheduled for Spring 2023.
- To the thoughtful and generous friend of TLS who has offered to collect aluminum pop cans for recycling and will donate any cash received to TLS. The Drop Off site (look for the TLS logo sign on the recycling house!) is east of 18th and Gage, across the street south of Faith Lutheran Church. Slide open the top of the roof and drop in your cans for recycling! Thank you all for your support!

MESSAGE FROM PRINCIPAL JOHNSON

Thank you to the members of Faith Lutheran for welcoming TLS students and families on November 13 to join in your worship services. We appreciate the prayers and support for TLS shown by the many friends at Faith Lutheran Church!

We are pleased to announce a new partnership with the St. John's Lutheran Church Music Academy. For those students (TLS and home schooled) participating in the Academy, instructors will now provide private lessons at the school at the end of the school day. The intent is to offer more convenience for families and also encourage others to take advantage of learning more about the rich heritage of classical, Lutheran sacred music. The new STEM classroom held its first classes on November 15! Teachers and students look forward to additional creative opportunities in the areas of science, technology engineering, and math. Thank you again to the several families who generously offered financial support as well as volunteering their time to make this new classroom a reality!

All of us here at TLS wish you and your family a blessed Christmas as we celebrate the birth of our Savior and a happy New Year!

December 2022 St. John's Lutheran Church - Topeka, Kansas

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	28	29	SAINT ANDREW, APOSTLE 30 10am WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY 12pm ADVENT VESPERS 2:45pm TLS CHAPEL 5:15pm SOUND WORDS 7pm ADVENT EVENING VESPERS	1 6:15pm ECCLESIA BELLS 7pm TLS BOARD 7:15pm KANTOREI	2 9:30am LWML BAZAAR	3
8am DIVINE SERVICE 8am LWML BAZAAR 9:20am COFFEE & DONUTS 9:45am BIBLE CLASS/SS 11am DIVINE SERVICE 3pm YOUTH CHRISTMAS	5	6	10am WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY 12pm ADVENT VESPERS 2:45pm TLS CHAPEL 5:15pm SOUND WORDS 7pm ADVENT EVENING VESPERS	8 6:15pm ECCLESIA BELLS 6:30pm ELDER CALLING 7pm ELDERS 7:15pm KANTOREI	9	9am CHILDRENS CHRISTMAS REHEARSAL 10am CHRISTMAS CAROLING
8am DIVINE SERVICE 9:20am COFFEE & DONUTS 9:45am BIBLE CLASS/SS 11am DIVINE SERVICE 4pm SJMA RECITAL	12	13	10am WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY 12pm ADVENT VESPERS 2:45pm TLS CHAPEL 6:30pm CHILDRENS CHRISTMAS PROGRAM	15 6:15pm ECCLESIA BELLS 7:15pm KANTOREI	16	17
RORATE COELI 10am DIVINE SERVICE	19	NEWSLETTER DEADLINE 20 4pm PARISH ED 4:30pm TRUSTEES 5:30pm STEWARDSHIP 6:15pm MISSIONS/EVANG	21	22	23	CHRISTMAS EVE 24 7pm CHRISTMAS CAROL CANDLELIGHT SERVICE 10pm CHRISTMAS CANDLELIGHT DIVINE SERVICE
CHRISTMAS DAY 10am CHRISTMAS DAY DIVINE SERVICE	26 OFFICE CLOSED	27	10am WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY	29	30	31 EVE OF CIRCUMCISION & NAME OF JESUS



901 SW Fillmore, Topeka, KS 66606-1445



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)