

Called by the Spirit, we serve Christ, sharing God's love with all.

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH WEBSITE: 1stlutherantopeka.org

1234 Fairlawn Road, Topeka, KS 66604 Church office: (785) 272-5302 CDO office: (785) 272-5999 All Members of First Ministers **Reverend Jennifer Jackson** Senior Pastor Pastor Bob Dealev Coordinator of Stewardship and Outreach Children's Day Out (CDO) Director Kathy Dale Caring for Kids 1st Director Julie Bradley **Organist** Jerry Anderson **Director of Music** Mark Fuller **Director of Handbell Choirs** Linda Anderson Secretary LaDonna J. Little Assistant Secretary Jill Loomans **Bookkeeper Cindy Crawford** Nurserv Attendant Tahira Schmidt Missionaries in Russia Rev. Bradn & Natasha Buerkle Missionaries in Guinea Jim & Dawn Anderson

WE WELCOME all who worship with us today! We extend a special greeting to our visitors and invite you to worship with us again soon. Please make yourselves known to our pastor and people.

COME TO THE FELLOWSHIP TIME BEFORE AND AFTER THE WORSHIP SERVICE Gather in the Nave Lounge to enjoy refreshments, talk with fellow worshippers, greet people you don't know, make new friends, enjoy your time at First and share the love of Christ.

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION Lutheran Christians believe that in the sacrament of Holy Communion, by the power of God's Word and Holy Spirit, we receive the body and blood of Jesus Christ, along with the bread and wine, for our forgiveness and salvation. If you share in this belief, you are welcome to participate with us. Non-communing children and adults may come forward to receive a blessing. White grape juice is available, as well as gluten free wafers. If you desire to receive communion at your pew, please alert an usher during the prelude.

A NOTE TO PARENTS: First Lutheran Church welcomes children of all ages to be a part of our worship services. Children's Bibles are located in the pews and a number of items are available on a cart in the Nave Lounge to help them (and you) have a pleasant worship experience. We hope you enjoy these activities in church and at home!!

CHILDCARE: If you prefer, you may leave your preschool children in our well-equipped, staffed nursery during the service. Or, if you need to take a walk with your child, our speaker system provides audio of the service in the Nave Lounge and Library.

WHEELCHAIR available in the north entranceway or in the church office. EARPHONES for the hearing impaired and LARGE PRINT BULLETINS.

PLEASE, NO FOOD OR DRINK IN THE MAIN WORSHIP CENTER.

THE CELEBRATION OF WORSHIP AT FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

HOLY COMMUNION - EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN WORSHIP, SETTING THREE

5:00 P.M. & 10:00 A.M.

MAY 18 & 19, 2019

Before worship, talk to God. During worship, let God talk to you. After worship, talk to your fellow worshipper.

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

PRELUDE "This Little Light of Mine"

(Traditional Spiritual / arr. J. Behnke)

Congregation shall stand or sit, as able.

CHIMES

CALL TO WORSHIP

- P: Blessed be the God of our Savior, Jesus Christ!
- C: God has given us a new birth in the living hope of the resurrection.
- P: God has given us an inheritance that is imperishable and unfading.
- C: In this we rejoice, even when we suffer trials.
- P: For although we have not seen Jesus, we love him; and although we have not seen him, we believe in him.
- **C:** For the outcome of our faith is the salvation of our souls.
- P: God has been made know to us in deeds of power, signs, and wonders, and will not abandon us if we confess the truth about our lives.
- C: God, you have made known to us the ways of life. Yet, too often, we put other things above you and turn away from the ways of life and toward the ways of death. Forgive us and guide us back into your presence, that we may know the fullness of joy. Amen.
- P: My friends, God is our refuge and will not abandon us. In Jesus Christ, we are reconciled to God. That is a promise of peace and joy. In the name of Christ.
- C: Amen.

Turn and face the back of the church. As the procession passes, turn and face the front of the church.

835 GATHERING SONG "All Creatures, Worship God Most High!"

GREETING

- P: Alleluia! Christ is risen.
- C: Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!
- P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
- C: And also with you.





PRAYER OF THE DAY

- P: O Lord God, you teach us that without love, our actions gain nothing. Pour into our hearts your most excellent gift of love, that, made alive by your Spirit, we may know goodness and peace, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C: Amen.

Congregation shall sit.

"Allelu, Allelu, Allelu, Alleluia, Praise Ye the Lord"

Children's Choir

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

RECOGNITION OF KATHY DALE, CDO DIRECTOR



WORD

God speaks to us in scriptures read, sung, and preached.

FIRST READING: Acts 11:1-18

In defense of his earlier baptism of pagan believers, Peter demonstrates to the members of the Jerusalem church that God's intention to love Gentiles as well as Jews is revealed in Jesus' own testimony. In this way the mission to the Gentiles is officially authorized.

¹Now the apostles and the believers who were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also accepted the word of God. ²So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him, ³saying, "Why did vou go to uncircumcised men and eat with them?" ⁴Then Peter began to explain it to them, step by step, saying, ⁵I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision. There was something like a large sheet coming down from heaven, being lowered by its four corners; and it came close to me. ⁶As I looked at it closely I saw four-footed animals, beasts of prev, reptiles, and birds of the air. ⁷I also heard a voice saying to me, 'Get up, Peter; kill and eat.' ⁸But I replied, 'By no means, Lord; for nothing profane or unclean has ever entered my mouth.' ⁹But a second time the voice answered from heaven, 'What God has made clean, you must not call profane.' ¹⁰This happened three times; then everything was pulled up again to heaven. ¹¹At that very moment three men, sent to me from Caesarea, arrived at the house where we were. ¹²The Spirit told me to go with them and not to make a distinction between them and us. These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered the man's house. ¹³He told us how he had seen the angel standing in his house and saying, 'Send to Joppa and bring Simon, who is called Peter; ¹⁴he will give you a message by which you and your entire household will be saved.' ¹⁵And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as it had upon us at the beginning. ¹⁶And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said, John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' ¹⁷If then God gave them the same gift that he gave us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could hinder God?" ¹⁸When they heard this, they were silenced. And they praised God, saying, "Then God has given even to the Gentiles the repentance that leads to life."

L: This is the Word of the Lord. C: Thanks be to God.

(Spoken Responsively with Lector) PSALM 148

¹Hallelujah! Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise God in the heights.

²Praise the LORD, all you angels; sing praise, all you hosts of heaven.

³Praise the LORD, sun and moon; sing praise, all you shining stars.

⁴Praise the LORD, heaven of heavens, and you waters above the heavens.

⁵Let them praise the name of the LORD, who commanded, and they were created,

⁶who made them stand fast forever and ever, giving them a law that shall not pass away.

⁷Praise the LORD from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps;

⁸fire and hail, snow and fog, tempestuous wind, doing God's will;

⁹mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars;

¹⁰wild beasts and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds;

¹¹sovereigns of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the world;

¹²young men and maidens, old and young together.

¹³Let them praise the name of the LORD, whose name only is exalted, whose splendor is over earth and heaven.

¹⁴The LORD has raised up strength for the people and praise for all faithful servants, the children of Israel, a people who are near the LORD. Hallelujah!

SECOND READING: Revelation 21:1-6

John's vision shows us that in the resurrection the new age has dawned; God dwells with us already. Yet we wait for the time when the tears that cloud our vision will be wiped away. Then we will see the new heaven, new earth, and new Jerusalem.

¹Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. ²And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,

"See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; ⁴he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away."

⁵And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true." ⁶Then he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life.

L: This is the Word of the Lord. C: Thanks be to God.

Congregation shall stand or sit, as able.



P: The Holy Gospel according to Saint John the 13th chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: John 13:31-35

After washing the disciples' feet, predicting his betrayal, and then revealing his betrayer, Jesus speaks of his glorification on the cross. This deep complicated love of Jesus, even to death on the cross, will be the distinctive mark of Jesus' community.

³¹When he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. ³²If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. ³³Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, "Where I am going, you cannot come.' ³⁴I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. ³⁵By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

P: The Gospel of the Lord. C: Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SERMON

595 HYMN OF THE DAY "Jesus Loves Me!"

Congregation shall stand or sit, as able.

NICENE CREED

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,

maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,

begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures;

he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son,

who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,

who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A: Trusting God's promise of new life, we pray for the renewal of the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

A: Send your Holy Spirit upon your church. Awaken in us renewed commitment to our baptismal promises: to build community, to worship together, to share our faith, to serve others, and to work for justice and peace. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: Forgive us for the ways we have caused creation to suffer. Inspire creativity as we explore new ways of reducing our consumption of earth's resources. Restore forests and waterways. Replenish the habitats of all endangered and threatened species. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

- A: Call all nations to the repentance that leads to life. Empower legislators to craft laws reflecting your commandments to love and serve. Bless police officers, firefighters, paramedics, and first responders who put themselves at risk to care for others. Hear us, O God.
- C: Your mercy is great.

A: Make your home among us and shelter us from storms of death, mourning, crying, and pain. Draw near to those who weep and to those who are lonely. Restore health and wholeness to those who suffer *(especially - see bulletin page 12)*. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

The Assisting Minister offers additional prayers.

- A: We give you thanks for those who carry out the ministry of hospitality: greeters, ushers, those who make coffee and bake cookies, all who welcome newcomers and care for children, and all who extend a hand of peace to neighbors. Hear us, O God.
- C: Your mercy is great.
- A: You promise new life for all the faithful departed. Renew us in faith and hope until the day death is no more, when you will dwell with us in the new heaven and earth. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

- P: We commend these and all our prayers to you, O God. Come near to us with your saving help, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our risen Lord.
- C: Amen.

 PEACE
 P: The peace of Christ be with you always.
 C: And also with you.

 The ministers and the assembly may greet one another with a gesture of Christ's peace, and may say these or similar words:
 Peace be with you.

Congregation shall sit.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING *Please place attendance form in the offering plate.*

"Come to the Table of the Lord"

Senior Choir Linda Anderson, Guest Conductor (Albrecht/Althouse)

Congregation shall stand or sit, as able.

377 OFFERING SONG "Alleluia! Jesus Is Risen!" Stanzas 1 & 5

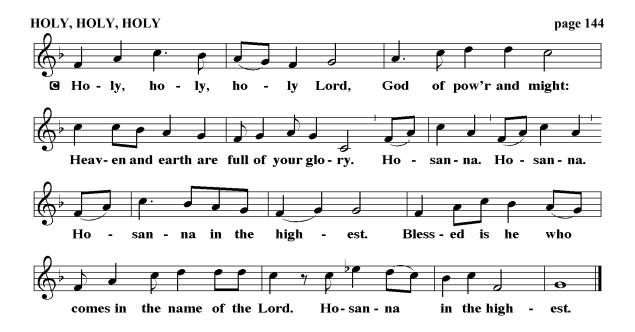
OFFERING PRAYER

- A: Risen One, as you broke bread with the disciples on the shore,
- C: meet us now in this meal. Nourish us to follow you, using our gifts to feed the hungry and tend the weary, and all for your love's sake. Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

- P: The Lord be with you.
- P: Lift up your hearts.

- C: And also with you.
- C: We lift them to the Lord.
- P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
- C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.
- P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy......we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



THE CONSECRATION

P: In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying:

This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

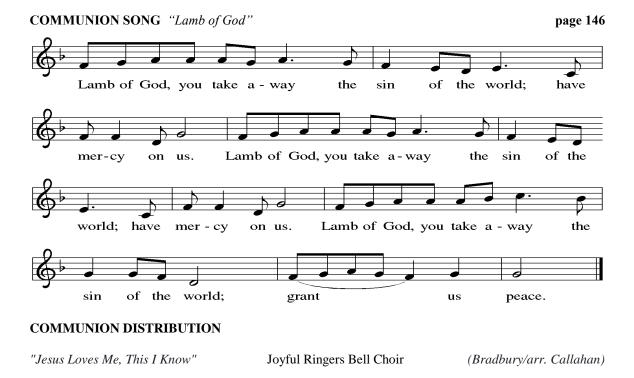
Do this for the remembrance of me.

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

P: Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, gives everyone a place at the table. Alleluia! Come to the feast.

Congregation shall sit.



781 COMMUNION HYMN "Children of the Heavenly Father"

Congregation shall stand or sit, as able.

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

A: Living God, you have greeted us in our brokenness and nourished us with the body of Christ, broken for us. Risen to new life with you, send us now to bear your healing love into the wounded world, in the name of our risen Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

C: Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING

- P: The blessing of the living God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, surround and sustain you, keep you from harm, and fill you with courage.
- C: Amen.

As the cross passes please turn and face the back of the church.

677 SENDING SONG *"This Little Light of Mine"*

DISMISSAL

A: You are the body of Christ raised up for the world. Go in peace. Share the good news. Alleluia! C: Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

POSTLUDE "Postlude"

(G. Young)

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ALTAR FLOWERS are given by Phyllis Houston in memory of her late husband, Dean and in honor of her son, Tad.

ETERNAL CANDLE FOR MAY is given by Ken & Nancy Sherbert in thankfulness for those who care for her mother, Lois Lykins.

PARENTS' take this bulletin home for a fun game with your kids! Have them search through the bulletin and circle or highlight **this week's word: LOVE**.

THE PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH ARE REQUESTED FOR THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE:

Charlie Vaughn (Stormont Vail Hospital), Paul Reed (home), Jeani Anderson (home), Ann Sanders (KU Med in KC), Pat Wild (home), Rob Peterson (home), Breck Edds (home), Ann Johnson (home), Mike Wilson (home), Vera Pearce (home), Ken Sherbert (home), Charlotte Weddle (CDO Teacher), Julie Bradley (Caring for Kids 1st Director), Jerry Manning (friend of Nancy Sherbert), Tim Brunkhorst (Ann Sanders' brother), Steve Magee (Kim's husband), Rick Watson (Lisa Arndt's father), C.A. Brunkhorst (Ann Sanders' father), Ken Buch (Verla's son), Mary Roesch (Tracy's mother-in-law), Micah Ewing (friend of the Luber's), Betty Fleming (LaDonna Little's aunt), Joan Stahlman (Joyce Koenig's sister-in-law), Lynette Kottas (Eileen Caspers' mother), Pete Godlove (Michelle Black's father), Lewis Crawford (Cindy's husband), Dan Lykins (cousin of Nancy Sherbert), Nancy Isley Wolfe (friend of the Wolgast's), Linda Deines (Karen Papp's sister), Ben Beery (friend of Haden Roark), Jerome Gutierrez (Dolores Ussery's nephew), Heather Roesch (Tracy's sister-in-law), Norm Stahl (friend of Carolyn Olson), Katelynn Herring (Jeanie Schuler's great niece), Bob Avery (friend of Carolyn Olson), Robin Michael (daughter of friend of Nancy Vaughn), Mary Lou Brunkhorst (Ann Sanders' mother), Linda Myers (Trudi's daughter-in-law), David Metzenthin (Bud & Lois' son), Annika Lundgren (friend of the Engelhardt's).

REMEMBER THE "BLESSING BOX" NEEDS FILLING.

LAY MINISTERS TODAY	10:00 am
Assisting Minister	Anita Wolgast
Lector	Pastor Elwyn Luber
Candlelighter / Crucifer	Jon Black / Connor Black
Communion Assistants	Ted Ensley, John Hanna
Presenting the Gifts	LaVerne Engelhardt, Anita Nelson
Council Member Team	Bill Barker / Eileen Caspers
Altar Guild	Karen & Bob Wollin
Ushers	John & Kim Rasmussen
North Door / South Door Greeters	John & Judy Hedeen / Lu Heisler, Carolyn Olson
Coffee Hosts	John & Judy Hedeen
Bus Driver & Host/Hostess	Joe Montague, Leslie Malone
Saturday Lector / Altar Guild / CA	Sherrie Petersen / Karen Wollin / Sherrie Petersen
Stephen Minister 5/20-26/2019	Sara Welch

LOOKING FORWARD TO NEXT WEEK

May 26th – SIXTH EASTER

Assisting Minister Lector Candlelighter / Crucifer Rail Communion Assistants Presenting the Gifts Council Member Team Altar Guild Ushers North Door Greeters South Door Greeters South Door Greeters Coffee Hosts Bus Driver & Host/Hostess Saturday Lector / Altar Guild / CA Stephen Minister 5/27-6/2/2019

10:00 am	
Camp Tomah Shinga Staff	
Camp Tomah Shinga Staff	
Madison Liby / Makenzie Liby	
Camp Tomah Shinga Staff	
Ruth Denno, Catherine Esquibel	
Shirley Waugh / Anita Wolgast	
Elna Ensley, Jeanie Schuler	
Camp Tomah Shinga Staff	
Marvin & Penny Boleski	
Velma Roblyer, Tracy Roesch	
Susan & George Bales	
Randy Debenham, LaVerne Engelhardt	
Ron Bessler / Nancy Sherbert / Ron Bessler	
Jean Abbe	



† IN THE FIRST PLACE THIS WEEK **†**

CDO (Children's Day Out) Preschool Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday 9a-3p Thursday 9-11:30 a TODAY FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER Thursday, May 23 Pastor Jenny's Day of Reflection **CDO SUNDAY &** 10:00 a.m. - Adult Bible Study at Thornton Place **KATHY DALE RETIREMENT** Friday, May 24 8:40 a.m. - Adult Education Pastor Jenny's Day Off 9:40 a.m. – Senior Choir Warm-up Saturday, May 25 10:00 a.m. - Holy Communion 11:15 a.m. - VBS Planning Team Meeting 5:00 p.m. – Holy Communion (Chapel) Monday, May 20 Sunday, May 26 12:30 p.m. - Staff Meeting SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER 7:00 p.m. – Boy Scouts Troop 175 (PH) MEMORIAL SUNDAY **CDO Final Fun Day** Tuesday, May 21 9:40 a.m. - Senior Choir Warm-up 6:30 p.m. - Cub Scout Den Meetings (115, 116) 10:00 a.m. – Holy Communion Wednesday, May 22 **CDO Final Fun Day LESSONS MAY 25 & 26** 9:00 a.m. - What-Sew-Ever Acts 16:9-15 Psalm 67 6:00 p.m. – Wednesday Grace Worship (Chapel) Revelation 21:10, 22-22:5 John 14:23-29

> Monday, May 27 HOLIDAY – OFFICE CLOSED



PARISH NOTICES

USHERS: To provide consistency, a list of usher responsibilities have been developed. Please review and follow the laminated list of usher responsibilities placed on top of the bulletins and/or in the drawer of the table at the back of the sanctuary where the bulletins are placed.

WEEKLY WEDNESDAY GRACE WORSHIP

ALL ARE INVITED to Come and Worship Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m. in the Chapel. This is a service unique from our weekend worship and provides a different atmosphere. This worship is a wonderful service for folks busy on the weekends, for folks wanting to bring friends to church for the first time, for families with wiggly kids, and for all who need to stop mid-week to pray, worship, and be renewed by God's promises and community. Invite your friends as we look forward to this new opportunity to reach more in our community.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE SOME MAGIC?

On **Sunday, June 2**, you will have the opportunity to be dazzled and entertained as you have never been before, as First Lutheran Church hosts the first of three **MAGI MOMENTS**. Under the tutelage of Alan Hageman, Joe Montague and Pastor Bob Dealey, children, youth and others are invited to share and demonstrate their gifts of magic, in conjunction with a Parish Life Committee-sponsored **POTLUCK LUNCH** that will be held in the Parish Hall, immediately following the 10:00 a.m. worship service.

Originally conceived as a means to build self-esteem and self-confidence in children and youth, children and youth are encouraged to perform an illusion of their choice at the potluck. No performer is required to reveal how they performed their illusion and the audience is requested to affirm and encourage those who perform.

All potential performers are invited to contact Pastor Bob by phone at (785) 272-5302 or by email at <u>Rtdealey@sbcglobal.net</u> to make arrangements for their performance on June 2nd. You are welcome to bring family and friends to the potluck and the performance.





We have so many in our congregation with musical gifts to share. Please consider sharing your gifts during worship, especially during the summer **10:00 a.m. worship services**. Please contact **Mark Fuller** (554-3849) or the church office (272-5302) with the **NEEDED INFORMATION:** your name, if playing an instrument or singing, and the date(s) you'd like to share your God given talents. *"Music is a fair and glorious gift from God" - Martin Luther*

PLEASE SEE THE "IN THE FIRST PLACE" NEWSLETTER FOR ACTIVITIES Let's Help, Doorstep, VBS, Confirmation Camp, Shepherd's Center, etc.

FALL EVENTS

Two fun fall events require advance reservations.

Please see Dean Johnson or Phil and LaVerne Engelhardt for more information and reservations.

- September 28th WOODFEST at Camp Wood west of Emporia a Kansas City symphony outreach includes dinner and a fun sunset outdoor concert \$50 per person or \$150 for 8 (what a deal!!!)
- 2. October 18-19 HYLLINGSFEST in Lindsborg. Friday-folk dancing, shopping, outdoor eating, evening meal is a Scandinavian smorgasbord followed by a concert by Smoky Hills Men's Chorus at Bethany church. Saturday morning is a fun parade. A group of us is planning to attend the two day event. Folks can attend either day, but the smorgasbord on Friday requires advanced reservations which are limited. The price of the smorgasbord is almost \$30. Please see one of us if you are interested. Each of these events can be researched online. Bring some friends and join us!!!

A TRIP TO THE YMCA OF THE ROCKIES IS BEING PLANNED FOR THE END OF JULY 2020. PLEASE SEE THE POSTER IN THE NAVE LOUNGE AND FEEL FREE TO TAKE AN INFORMATION SHEET.

A Legacy of Love

The Easter season brings renewed energy and hope to faithful disciples in every generation. The Holy Spirit keeps calling us to join the great cloud of witnesses who can say "We have seen the Lord!" This is a tremendous legacy that we receive by grace through faith, and we pass it on to others who will also be known as disciples of Jesus.

A legacy is more than a monetary inheritance. It is a call to honor someone's memory and to keep alive the traditions, values, and visions that this person hoped would continue. The legacy of Jesus involves all these things and so much more. He has empowered us to find hope at the foot of the cross, life in an empty tomb, and light amid darkness. He tells us that we can live a new life, and he says in the clearest language possible: "Everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35).

This legacy is the foundation of all that we do as the church of Jesus Christ. It fills our lives with meaning and purpose. It calls us to live with both courage and humility. It gives us a new hunger for God's justice and peace. It reminds us that we belong to Christ—and we are called to live as disciples of the one who was crucified and who rose from the grave to make all things new.

Rejoice in this great calling! Even as we face the difficult challenges of living faithfully in a complex world so wounded by the power of sin, God makes it possible for others to see that Christ is alive in our hearts. This may be more than we were expecting, but day by day this legacy lives on. Open your hearts to the gift of a love as great as this!

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