



He will
baptize you with
the Holy Spirit and fire

LUKE 3:16

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

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

WEBSITE: firstlutherantopeka.org

1234 Fairlawn Road, Topeka, KS 66604

Church office: (785) 272-5302 CDO office: (785) 272-5999

Ministers
Senior Pastor
Coordinator of Stewardship and Outreach
Children's Day Out (CDO) Director
Caring for Kids 1st Director
Organist
Director of Music
Director of Handbell Choirs
Secretary
Assistant Secretary
Bookkeeper
Missionaries in Russia
Missionaries for Ripe For Harvest World Outreach

*All Members of First
Pastor Jenny Jackson
Pastor Bob Dealey
Julie Lamott
Julie Bradley
Jerry Anderson
Mark Fuller
Linda Anderson
LaDonna J. Little
Jill Loomans
Cindy Crawford
Rev. Bradn & Natasha Buerkle
Jim & Dawn Anderson*

A BRIEF WORD ABOUT WORSHIP PRECAUTIONS.

MASKS: A mask must be worn during the entire time in church, covering the mouth and nose. This is done to provide protection for others and for your own safety.

MAINTAINING SOCIAL DISTANCING IS A HIGH PRIORITY AT ALL TIMES DURING IN-PERSON WORSHIP: All members are to maintain a 6-foot distance from other people/households at all times. This includes gathering in the parking lot, arriving or exiting through church doors, or standing in the fellowship areas. Ushers and greeters will be present to help with arrival, seating, communion, and departing church.



THE CELEBRATION OF WORSHIP AT FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

AN ADVENT EUCHARIST

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

DECEMBER 11 & 12, 2021

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 “*Nun komm der Heideb Heiland*” BWV 659
 (“*Savior of the Nations, Come*”)

(*J. S. Bach*)

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

Congregation shall stand or sit, as able.

CHIMES

CALL TO WORSHIP

A: We are called to wake from sleep,

C: to wake up and hear, to wake up and see.

A: What has the Lord to show to us?

C: A new life, a new world,

A: a different set of priorities,

C: freedom from the tyranny of desiring and acquiring.

A: Wake up, wake up! Hear the invitation that echoes down the centuries.

C: O Come, O Come Emmanuel, come into our lives today.

248 GATHERING SONG “*People, Look East*”

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who alone does wonders, who lifts up the lowly, who fills the hungry with good things.

C: Amen.

P: Let us confess our sin, trusting in the tender mercy of our God.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: God for whom we wait,

C: in the presence of one another, we confess our sin before you. We fail in believing that your good news is for us. We falter in our call to tend your creation. We find our sense of self in material wealth. We fear those different from ourselves. We forget that we are your children and turn away from your love. Forgive us, Blessed One, and assure us again of your saving grace. Amen.

P: God, in Christ Jesus, has looked with favor upon you! Through the power of the Holy Spirit, † your sins are forgiven. You are children of the Most High, inheritors of the eternal promise, and recipients of divine mercy. God strengthens you anew to follow the way of peace.

C: **Amen.**

LIGHTING OF THE THIRD ADVENT CANDLE

A: In the height of our Advent walk, grant us the courage to experience joy.

C: **Joy in the face of apathy, Joy in the face of sorrow, Joy in the face of uncertainty. Amen.**

ADVENT HYMN “*Light the Candle*” Stanza 3 JOY (*The third candle is lit.*) **See Bulletin Page 11**

A: We light this candle as a symbol of the joy to be found in your kingdom on earth.

C: **For the Lord elevates the lowly, releases the captive, and brings sight to the blind.**

A: We rejoice in his justice and mercy, faithful to all generations.

C: **Come Lord Jesus, Come!**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the preaching of John, that, rejoicing in your salvation, we may bring forth the fruits of repentance; through 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.

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

P: Amid much confusion, signs leading away from you, we seek your truth. Open our hearts to the wonders of your work and the wisdom of your Word.

C: **Amen.**

WORD

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

FIRST READING: Zephaniah 3:14-20

The prophet Zephaniah's message is mostly one of judgment for sin. This reading, however, which comes from the conclusion of the book, prophesies joy for Judah and Jerusalem. Judgment has led to repentance, and God's salvation is at hand.

¹⁴Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem! ¹⁵The LORD has taken away the judgments against you, he has turned away your enemies. The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst; you shall fear disaster no more. ¹⁶On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak. ¹⁷The LORD, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory; he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you in his love; he will exult over you with loud singing ¹⁸as on a day of festival. I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it. ¹⁹I will deal with all your oppressors at that time. And I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth. ²⁰At that time I will bring you home, at the time when I gather you; for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the LORD.

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

SECOND READING: **Philippians 4:4-7**

Despite being in prison, Paul is remarkably upbeat as he writes this letter. Here, he urges his friends in Philippi to trust God with all their worries and concerns with the hope that they will experience God's joy and peace.

⁴Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. ⁶Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Congregation shall stand or sit, as able.

CELTIC ALLELUIA



P: The Holy Gospel according to Saint Luke, the 3rd chapter.

C: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

GOSPEL: **Luke 3:7-18**

John the Baptist heralds the mighty one who is coming. John teaches that preparation for God's reign is not a matter of identity but of bearing fruits of merciful justice, radical generosity, and vocational integrity.

⁷John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" ⁸Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our ancestor"; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ⁹Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

¹⁰And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" ¹¹In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise." ¹²Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" ¹³He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you." ¹⁴Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages."

¹⁵As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals.

He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

¹⁸So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

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

Congregation shall sit.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE – Saint Lucia Celebration

See Bulletin Page 12

SERMON

242 HYMN OF THE DAY *"Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn"*

Congregation shall stand or sit, as able.

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,

**who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.**

On the third day he rose again;

**he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church,

**the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A: In this season of watching and waiting, let us pray for all people and places that yearn for God's presence.

A brief silence.

A: Holy God, renew your church and raise up leaders who announce your good news. Grant peace to congregations and seminarians in the midst of transition. Guide the work of candidacy and call committees. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: Creating God, your Spirit brought forth the earth and all that is in it. Breathe life into us, that we are inspired to live in harmony with one another and the planet. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: Shepherding God, you lead your people in paths of righteousness. Raise up prophets in our own day who warn against captivity to greed and point us to the freedom found in generosity. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: Nurturing God, you come near in times of worry and need. Cradle us in your arms, that we trust you and are not afraid. Attend to any who are hungry, imprisoned, or ill this day especially Joyce, Carolyn, Diane, Michelle, David, Kevin, Laura, Lois and Phil, as well as our homebound members, all unable to worship this weekend, and all family, friends and even enemies we name now, either out loud or in the silence of our hearts (pause). Surround them with your unwavering presence. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: Rejoicing God, you exult over us in singing. Enliven the song of this assembly and bless the ministry of church musicians. With instruments and dance, join our voices to the song of all creation. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

A: We give you thanks for your servants who showed us your goodness and grace. By the power of your Spirit, keep us steadfast in faith until we make our home with you. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

P: God of new life, you come among us in the places we least expect. Receive these prayers and those of our hearts, in the name of Jesus.

C: Amen.

PEACE P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

The ministers and congregation may greet one another in the name of the Lord.

Peace be with you.

R: Peace be with you.

Brief word about peace: *As we practice Social Distancing, the sharing of the peace will take place as we remain in our pews: waving, bowing, blessing, or sharing the peace sign with our fellow worshippers.*

Congregation shall sit.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

CHOIR ANTHEM *"E'en So, Lord Jesus, Quickly Come"*

(P. Manz)

Paul and Ruth Manz wrote "E'en So, Lord Jesus, Quickly Come" in 1953 during a time when their three-year-old son was critically ill. Reflecting on the time, Ruth Manz reported, "I think we'd reached the point where we felt that time was certainly running out so we committed him to the Lord and said, 'Lord Jesus quickly come'". During this time, she had prepared some text for Paul for a composition based on the Book of Revelation. While at his son's bedside, Paul Manz began drafting the composition, which later became the current piece. Their son did recover, which the couple attributed to the power of prayer.

Brief word about offering: *Offering plates are available at the back of the worship space, on the bulletin table. To give online, please go to FirstLutheranTopeka.org and click on 'contribute'.*

Please place attendance form in the offering plate.

Congregation shall stand or sit, as able.

OFFERING PRAYER

A: God of our waiting and watching,

C: we offer the gifts of our hearts and our lives to the service of all your people. Prepare the way before us as we meet you in this simple meal, through Christ Jesus, our pathway and our peace. Amen.

ADVENT DIALOGUE AND PREFACE

Spoken Responsively

P: God is with us.

C: **In this place and in our lives.**

P: Let us give thanks to God.

C: **In memory and in hope.**

P: Blessings be to you, Creator God. Your ancient promise is our song of hope.

C: **Sometimes we close our ears to the song of hope, but you never stop singing.**

P: And then came the promise of a child.

C: **In this child, the world would be changed, the world has been changed, we have been changed.**

P: Now as we prepare for that child to be born, we echo the ancient cry:

C: **O come, O come, Emmanuel.**

P: In hopeful anticipation, we give thanks to you, God of Creation, God of Abraham and Sarah, God of hope and deliverance, and God of us all. We join in praise and come together to sing the unending hymn of the saints of glory.

SANCTUS

Sung by Congregation

Lo, the Heav'nly host re-joices: "Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Ho - ly Lord!"

Lo, God's people join their voices: "God of hosts, by all a - dored,

Heav'n and earth pro-claim Your glory, Sing Your praise with one a - ccord!"

Blest is He who now draws near us in the name of God the King!

Blest is He who comes to cheer us - Let our welcome joyful ring:

"Hail! Hosanna! Hallelujah!" Highest praises echoing.

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

C: **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: Come to Christ's banquet. Feast on God's gift of grace.

Congregation shall sit.

AGNUS DEI

(tune: "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel")

Sung by Congregation

**O Lamb of God, You take away
The sin of all. Have mercy, Lord, we pray!
O Lamb of God, You take away
The sin of all. Have mercy, Lord, we pray!
O Lamb of God, our faith increase,
And grant us now Your gift of peace!**

Brief word about communion: *The process for receiving communion will be explained by the Pastor. For these services, wine or grape juice will not be distributed. Pastor will bring you communion in your pew. Hand sanitizer is available in the pews to use before receiving communion.*

COMMUNION VOLUNTARY *Improvisation on "Savior of the Nations, Come"*

(Manz)

Congregation shall stand or sit, as able.

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

C: Amen.

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

A: Most High God, you have come among us at this table. By the Spirit's power, form us to be bearers of your word, sharing gifts of mercy and grace with all, through Christ Jesus, our host and our guest.

C: Amen.

SENDING

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

BLESSING

P: May the God of mercy keep you, the Holy Spirit cheer you, and Christ † in glory greet you, now and at the day of his coming.

C: **Amen.**

267 SENDING SONG “Joy to the World”

Brief word about dismissal: *Since our fellowship space is small and we are practicing social distancing, we encourage you to enjoy conversation in the parking lot. May God go with you, sustain you, and renew your spirit.*

DISMISSAL

A: Go in peace. Christ is JOY.

C: **Thanks be to God!**

POSTLUDE “The King Shall Come”

(arr. M Burkhardt)

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ALTAR FLOWERS *are given by Bud Metzenthin in memory of his wife, Lois and by Ralph & Maureen Krumins in honor of their granddaughter, Katie’s 16th birthday.*

ETERNAL CANDLE FOR DECEMBER *is given by JoAnn Stanley in memory of her parents, Amy & Wilbur Carlson and her brother, Gary.*



ADVENT

LIGHT THE CANDLE



Light the can-dle of LOVE to-day, the Giv-er of love is
 Light the can-dle of PEACE to-day, the Giv-er of peace is
 Light the can-dle of JOY to-day, the Giv-er of joy is
 Light the can-dle of HOPE to-day, the Giv-er of hope will



here! Wel-come the love we live and die for, but
 here! Wel-come the peace we fight and cry for, but
 here! Wel-come the joy we crave and pray for, but
 come! Wel-come the hope we long and wait for, but



on - ly Christ can give. Flick-er and flame and
 on - ly Christ can give. Flick-er and flame and
 on - ly Christ can give. Flick-er and flame and
 on - ly Christ can give. Flick-er and flame and



glow with love, light up the world a -
 glow with peace, light up the world a -
 glow with joy, light up the world a -
 glow with hope, light up the world a -



round you. Flick-er and flame and glow with love,
 round you. Flick-er and flame and glow with peace,
 round you. Flick-er and flame and glow with joy,
 round you. Flick-er and flame and glow with hope,



light up the world a - round you.
 light up the world a - round you.
 light up the world a - round you.
 light up the world a - round you.

RETURN TO BULLETIN PAGE 4

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

Joyce Koenig (Stormont Vail Hospital), Carolyn Sandquist (home), Diane Dukat (home), Michelle Black (home), David Schmidt (home), Kevin Eaton (home), Martha Donohoe (home), Laura Martin (home), Lois Lykins (home), Phil Engelhardt (home), Verla Buch (home), Blake Hopper (home), Monica Collins (friend of Barb Collins), Michael Kuner (friend of Mark Fuller), JoAnn Likness (friend of Barb Collins), Heidi Mark (Bill & Joyce's daughter), Richard Holliday (Marian Orton's son), Amanda Gill (friend of Trudi Myers), Drew Hartz (Steve & Kathy Couch's son-in-law), Mackenzie Lamott (CDO Director Julie's daughter), Sheila Mitchell (Shirley Brower's niece), Deloris Patton (Nancy & Charlie Vaughn's sister-in-law), Don Kaphingst (Margaret Stewart's brother), Linda Byrd (friend of Barb Collins), Newt Newstrom (Dawn Graham's father), William Durham (Trudi Myers' son-in-law), Tavia Shaker (friend of Lindsay Blank), Pat Grant (friend of Ron Bessler), Dan Fraleigh (Sherrie Petersen's brother-in-law), Velda Jacobs (Eileen Caspers' aunt), Lewis Sanders (Rachelle Witherspoon's father), Syndee Haake (daughter of friend of Nancy Vaughn), Blanche Stephansen (Ron Bessler's sister), Nicole Klein (Patti's God-daughter), Georgi Peterson (Rhonda Dealey's mother), Linda Boleski (Penny & Marvin Boleski's sister-in-law), Lawrence & Lenette Kottas (Eileen Caspers' parents), John Browne (Penny & Marvin Boleski's brother-in-law), Camille Baehni Engler (former member), Brennan Soukup (Julie Bender's cousin), C.A. & Mary Lou Brunkhorst (Ann Sanders' parents), Heather Roesch (Tracy's sister-in-law), Katelynn Herring (Jeanie Schuler's great niece), Linda Myers (Trudi's daughter-in-law), David Metzenthin (Bud's son).

OUR CONDOLENCES to *Glenn Caspers* on the death of his father, Alvin.

SANTA LUCIA

Santa Lucia,
Thy light is glowing
Through darkest winter night
Comfort bestowing.
Dreams float on wings bedight,
Comes then the morning light,
Santa Lucia, Santa Lucia!

Santa Lucia,
Christmas foretelling,
Fill hearts with hope and cheer,
Dark fears dispelling.
Bring to the world again,
Peace and good will to men,
Santa Lucia, Santa Lucia!

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| LAY MINISTERS 12/12 | 10:00 a.m. |
| Assisting Minister | Robert Hanna |
| Lector | Kathy Koch |
| Acolyte | Matthew Keehn |
| Advent Candlelighters | Cheatham Family |
| Greeters / Ushers | JoAnn Stanley, Nancy Vaughn / Richard Price, Bryan Price |
| Council Member | Kim Rasmussen |
| Bus Driver & Host/Hostess | Alan Hageman & Leslie Malone |
| Saturday Lector | Ron Bessler |
| Altar Guild Setup/Clean up | Nancy Vaughn, Pat Drake, Barb Collins, Nancy Besta, Karon Gambrill |
| Tech Team | |

LOOKING FORWARD TO NEXT WEEK

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| LAY MINISTERS 12/19 | 10:00 a.m. |
| Assisting Minister | John Hanna |
| Lesson 1-3 Readers | 1. Jeff Montague 2. Char Taggart 3. Stephen Couch |
| Lesson 4-6 Readers | 4. Jenn Betz 5. Ann McConkey 6. Max Roark |
| Lesson 7-9 Readers | 7. Dick Schaeffer 8. Pastor Jenny 9. John Hanna |
| Acolyte | Haden Roark |
| Advent Candlelighters | Hageman Family |
| Greeters / Ushers | Karon Gambrill, Anita Nelson / Bill Barker, Bill Buch |
| Council Member | Bill Barker |
| Bus Driver & Host/Hostess | Randy Debenham & Barb Collins |
| Saturday Lector | Tina Lewis |
| Altar Guild Setup/Clean up | Karen Wollin, Nancy Besta, Karon Gambrill |
| Tech Team | |

PARISH NOTICES



SINCE THE DAYS when the Vikings were Christianized, *Saint Lucia* has been a favorite Christmas tradition among the Swedish families. She was a Sicilian saint, but the Swedes eagerly adopted her. According to legend, *Lucia* was a medieval saint who carried food and drink to hungry folk during a period of famine. Early in the morning, the modern Lucia, traditionally the oldest daughter of the family carries a tray of special buns and cookies to each one in the family as she sings the lovely old melody, “*Santa Lucia.*” *Lucia* wears a white robe with a crimson sash. On her head, she wears a crown of lighted candles, which dispels the blackness of the season of long nights. **First Lutheran will be visited by *Saint Lucia* during the worship service TODAY, December 12th.**

**PLEASE BRING NON-PERISHIBLE FOOD ITEMS FOR DOORSTEP DURING DECEMBER.
PLACE THESE DONATIONS ON THE TABLE PROVIDED IN THE NAVE LOUNGE.**

DRIVE-THRU LIVING NATIVITY
DECEMBER 12, 2021
5:00-7:00 p.m.



THIS EVENING is what we've waited for --- sharing the Christmas story with the community. If you aren't performing or helping in any way, please be sure to drive through the south parking lot (Sunday, 5-7 p.m.) from the corner of Huntoon and Fairlawn. It will be worth your wait.



Did you know Tamales are Christmas food?

Come eat to find out why, ride in the bus to see the TARC lights, and gather around a fire to make s'mores!

Save the Date: December 19th at 5:30 p.m.

What: Tacos, Tamales, TARC Lights and S'MORES

Who: Children, Youth and Families

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

It has been the custom at First Lutheran to provide a monetary gift to First's staff at Christmas. If you would like to make a contribution for the **STAFF CHRISTMAS GIFT**, please either mail in or drop off checks payable to "First Lutheran Church" and indicate "staff gift" in the memo line. You can also go to our website www.firstlutherantopeka.org and use the contribute tab. **Please have all contributions in by December 19th.** *Robert Hanna, Council President*

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 24th CHRISTMAS EVE

3:00 p.m. - SPECIAL CHRISTMAS PRELUDE MUSIC

3:30 p.m. - CANDLELIGHT CHRISTMAS COMMUNION

7:00 p.m. - SPECIAL CHRISTMAS PRELUDE MUSIC

7:30 p.m. - CANDLELIGHT CHRISTMAS COMMUNION



SUNDAY, DECEMBER 26th FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

10:00 a.m. - CHRISTMAS CAROL COMMUNION AND HEALING SERVICE

HOLIDAY OFFICE HOURS

Friday, December 24th - OFFICE CLOSSES AT NOON

Monday, December 27th - OFFICE CLOSED

Friday, December 31st - OFFICE CLOSSES AT NOON

Monday, January 4th - OFFICE CLOSED

BUILDING ALARM WILL BE SET WHEN OFFICE IS CLOSED





MONDAY – FRIDAY, 9:00 A.M. – 2:00 P.M.
1119 SW 10th Street, South Door (10th & Buchanan)
785-357-5341

DOORSTEP WILL NOT BE ACCEPTING CLOTHING DONATIONS UNTIL JANUARY.



ANNUAL REPORTS DUE MONDAY, DECEMBER 27th

ALL Committees and Organizations may submit their annual reports to the church office by **Monday, December 27th**, so that the annual booklet of reports can be printed and collated for availability to the congregation by **Sunday, January 23rd**. Please email reports to the Church Secretary, LaDonna at lslutherantopeka@sbcglobal.net or mail a typed copy to the church office.

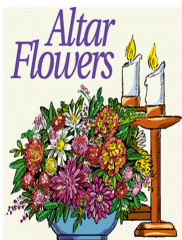
Thank you!

RECENT NEWSLETTERS FROM OUR MISSIONARY IN RUSSIA, REV. BRADN BUERKLE CAN BE FOUND ON THE BULLETIN BOARD OUTSIDE OF THE CHURCH OFFICE.



ETERNAL CANDLES can be found in both the main Worship Center and our beautiful Chapel. In **2022** you may **DONATE** both candles in remembrance or in honor of someone for the entire month. Please contact LaDonna, in the church office, (785) 272-5302 or email her at lslutherantopeka@sbcglobal.net to sign-up for a month and give information that will be included in the bulletin. **The cost will be \$20 for the month. Available months are: August, September, October, and November.**

ALTAR FLOWERS FOR 2022



Fresh flowers on our altar are a special way to enrich our worship space and to honor and memorialize special people in our lives. Please join in this beautiful practice by reserving your dates for 2022 now.

There is a chart of reserved dates and forms to complete in the hallway by the offices. You may complete the questionnaire and leave it there. For those who are not coming to the building at this time, please contact either LaDonna at the church office 785-272-5302 or Jeanie Schuler 785-845-7964 and we will gladly take your information over the phone.

For those with annual orders, the chart has been completed and we will call you to confirm your order information. **The altar flowers cost \$25 per vase plus tax.** Reservations may be made for one (\$25) or two vases (\$50). Pulpit flowers are also an option to recognize a special occasion for \$50 plus tax.

OPEN 2022 DATES FOR BOTH VASES (unless indicated otherwise) ARE:

1/2, 1/9, 1/16; 2/13 (one vase); 4/24; 5/1 (one vase), 5/15, 5/29; 6/5; 7/3, 7/10, 7/17, 7/31; 8/7, 8/28; 11/6 (one vase), 11/20 (one vase), 11/27; 12/11 (one vase).

A Fresh Start

In Greece, a John the Baptist celebration is held every year, typically in June. A spectator once observed how thousands of pilgrims paraded down a trail to the floor of a great cavern, where mass baptisms were celebrated. One can imagine that the sense of anticipation among those who arrive at the festival for baptism is similar to what those who came to John in the wilderness experienced: expectation, hope, awe, maybe even fear. However, John made it clear that while he baptized them for repentance, the one who was coming would bring something totally different. Whereas John's baptism of water represented cleansing from their past, the baptism of Jesus is about a new future.

In the order for baptism in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, the baptized are washed with water paired with the promise of God's love. God's love is enduring and eternal. Sealed with the Holy Spirit and marked with the sign of the cross forever, the baptized are invited to remember this promise daily and the good news it brings: every day, we begin anew.

This good news means that we don't have to drag with us the burdens of yesterday. We don't have to live in a hamster wheel of guilt or despair that things will never change. Nor do we have to keep a list on a mental chalkboard of how many times we've messed up. Rather, having been baptized in Christ, we are set free to greet the new dawn with a sense of expectation and wonder, knowing that no matter what the day brings, we are made new, we are forgiven, and God is with us.

✠ IN THE FIRST PLACE THIS WEEK ✠

Children's Day Out Preschool (CDO) schedule: M, T, W & T 9am-3pm Friday 9-11:30 am

Sunday, December 12

THIRD ADVENT

SAINT LUCIA VISITS

9:00-9:45 a.m. – Sunday School

10:00 a.m. – Worship Service

5:00-7:00 p.m.

DRIVE THRU LIVING NATIVITY

Monday, December 13

1:00 p.m. – Staff Meeting

6:30 p.m. – Church Council Meeting (Zoom)

7:00 p.m. – Boy Scouts Troop 175 (PH)

Tuesday, December 14

6:00 p.m. – Den Meetings

6:30 p.m. – Stephen Ministry Christmas Party (202)

Wednesday, December 15

9:00 a.m. – What-Sew-Ever

6:00 p.m. – Den Meeting

Thursday, December 16

5:30 p.m. – Ministry Moving Forward Meeting (Zoom)

5:30 p.m. – Den Meeting

5:30 p.m. – Endowment Committee

7:00 p.m. – Choir Rehearsal

Friday, December 17

Pastor Jenny's Day Off

Saturday, December 18

5:00 p.m. – Worship Service

Sunday, December 19

FOURTH ADVENT

9:00-9:45 a.m. – Sunday School

9:30-11:30 a.m. – High School Coffee Bar Fundraiser

10:00 a.m. – **LESSONS & CAROLS**

5:30 p.m. – Children, Youth & Family Event –

Tacos, Tamales, TARC Lights & S'mores

LESSONS DECEMBER 18 & 19

10:00 a.m. – LESSONS & CAROLS

Genesis 3:8-15

Genesis 22:15-18

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

Micah 5:2-4

St. Luke 1:26-38

St. Matthew 1:18-23

St. Luke 2:8-16

St. Matthew 2:1-11

St. John 1:1-14

