

WHAT IS LFACT AND WHAT DOES IT DO?

In 1980, when a group of Topeka Lutherans wanted to bring the renowned St. Olaf College Choir to our city, they wondered how they would be able to pay for this choir to come. Selling tickets was one option, but they chose instead to develop a non-profit organization among Lutheran churches that would use donations to finance the cost. This was highly successful because not only did they exceed the cost of the choir, but were also able to rent White Concert Hall for the program. This organization then became the Lutheran Fine Arts Council of Topeka (LFACT), and it is still active today as a non-profit cultural group formed by the Lutheran churches of Shawnee County. The mission of LFACT is to:

- Proclaim the Gospel, giving expression to our faith through the fine arts.
- Promote an awareness of the rich diversity of talent in the fine arts among Lutherans.
- Contribute toward a cohesiveness in the Lutheran community.
- Provide support for aspiring Lutheran artists, performers and musical groups.
- Foster a network of such Lutheran groups in the United States.

In the years since its inception, this organization has sponsored over 100 events and activities to foster inter-Lutheran communication, and use Lutheran talent, voices, and instruments in a continuous line of fine arts events and initiatives. These have included choral and instrumental music provided by Lutheran colleges and universities, music from individual singers, bell choir training and performances, children's art workshops, children's drama workshops, children's writing contests, art shows, hosting Friday night art walks of Lutheran artists, and most recently an annual fiber arts workshop. These events have been free and open to the public because we are still funded by generous donations. LFACT is a 501 (c) (3) organization, and donations are tax-deductible.

We have found that LFACT is a unique organization. We have looked and asked, but have not found another group like this in the United States. As Lutheran churches in Topeka have closed, LFACT has begun reaching out to include nearby Lutheran congregations outside of Shawnee County. LFACT is governed by a board of directors. Currently serving on this board are Ann Mah, Marlene Urban, and Susan Thowe from Faith, JoLana Pinon from Our Savior's, and Linda Anderson from First Lutheran. You can contact any one of these representatives for more information about this organization, the programming, or ways you can become involved. We are seeking representatives from the other Lutheran congregations to serve with us. Please contact us if you are interested.

LFACT was not able to host any events last year due to Covid restrictions, but this year some events will take place. We are currently planning to hold the Fiber Arts Workshop on February 19, and the First Friday Artwalk Event on May 6. Again, these events will be free and open to the public.

LFACT has a Facebook page for you to follow. We also have a website, LutheranFineArtsTopeka.org, which is still a work in progress, but is able to give you up to date information about our events. It also has information about giving donations. Watch for announcements in church publications, their Facebook page or our website.