



St. John's

Ev. Lutheran Church

VOL. 128 NO. 04 MONTHLY

APRIL 2019

As we approach Good Friday, I recall how it was a Good Friday service that started the ball rolling for me to become Lutheran. Below is an excerpt from some dissertation work I started:

The Lutherans were right. Jesus said, *"This is My body!"* So, based upon the clear teaching of Scripture, I realized that the symbolic view of the Lord's Supper was not true, nor did it offer any comfort. I could not believe that I had missed out on this my entire Christian life.

For the first time in our church's history, I wanted to provide a Good Friday Service. Imagine that: for thirteen years of our church's existence, we had never had a service which drew our attention to our Lord's suffering and death. Most Evangelical American Christians do not focus on the sufferings of Christ. They prefer instead to focus on the victorious, risen Christ. It seems American Evangelicals essentially hold their nose during Holy Week, anxiously awaiting Easter Sunday so they can be celebratory again. I asked our Elders if we could provide a Good Friday service and they all agreed. The problem was, I had never seen one. Most non-demoninational churches (*i.e.*, Southern Baptist churches) know nothing about a Good Friday service. So, from a Lutheran pastor, I borrowed a liturgical outline from the previous year. I used it to design our worship folder so that the music, Bible references, and congregational responses would be printed. In typical fashion, at the conclusion of the service, the Lord's Supper would be offered.

I cannot express how beautiful this service was. The reverence, the somber tone, the sacred music, the focus upon Christ's suffering and death.... Everything about it was moving and memorable. Since it was the first time our church had offered a service such as this, I thought attendance would be slim. It was not. There were a lot of people who came. After my Law and Gospel sermon, I led everyone in prayer and then spoke the Words of Institution. As planned, an altar was set up at the front of the center aisle. Communicants came to the Associate Pastor first, who, holding a bowl of bread said, "This *represents* Christ's body broken for you." The communicant then stood in front of me. The bread was dipped into the chalice I held as I said, "This *is* Christ's blood, shed for you." They partook and returned to their seat. The words still reverberate in my head, "Represents," "is..." "Represents," "is..." By the end of the service I was terribly disturbed. I could not keep quiet about what I had come to believe.

Easter passed and at our weekly Elders meeting, I admitted, "We have a problem." There was silence. I said, "Actually, we have two problems." I had been with these men since the existence of our church. I said, "We are no longer in agreement as to what the Lord's Supper is." I told them there was now a division between us. Furthermore, this division was an offense to the Gospel. I pointed to 1 Corinthians 1:10 where Paul said, "*I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment.*" I then jumped over to 1 Corinthians 4:1 which says, "*This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.*" They seemed unfazed. So, I asked if we could devote study time to come to an agreement on the subject of the Lord's Supper. They said that was

fine. One of the Elders then asked, “What’s the other problem?” I said, “I think we are at a critical place in the life of our church, and I think we need to join a denomination.” That is when the bomb dropped. Those who were beforehand seemingly unfazed, were now becoming visibly unglued. To them, I had just committed the unpardonable sin.

The Good Friday Service referenced above took place in 2015. Since then, I am grateful to God to be in a Lutheran Church on Good Friday. I trust you will join us this year.



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

WEDNESDAY LENTEN SERIES: IN SUFFERING BE THY LOVE MY PEACE

Our Lenten series this year, “In Suffering Be Thy Love My Peace,” takes its title from a Paul Gerhardt hymn, *LSB* 683. The Lord Jesus Christ said in John 16:33, “In this world you have tribulation.” But in this world, through faith, we also the One who said those words, the One who has overcome the world by His own suffering and death.

There are two remaining Wednesdays in the series in April, the 3rd and the 10th, with a 12:15 Vespers and a 7:00 p.m. Compline. The readings are from the sufferings of Old and New Testament saints, the Psalms of Lament, and New Testament teaching on suffering. Holy Week begins on Palm Sunday, 14 April. The remaining sermons in the series are:

3 April, The Tribulation of St. Job, the Much-Suffering
 10 April, The Death of St. Stephen, Martyr

We hope that you can join us each week.

THE VIGIL OF EASTER

Three-thousand four-hundred and sixty-five years ago God’s people, the children of Israel, underwent a night of watching—that’s what a vigil is. Back then, it was a night of watching for their rescue from the slavery of Egypt. Actually, while they kept vigil, the LORD did, too. Ex 12:42, “It was a night of *watching by the LORD*, to bring them out of the land of Egypt.” And Moses goes on to say, under the LORD’s inspiration, “Therefore this same night is a night of watching kept *to* the LORD by all the people of Israel throughout all their generations.” Today, however, Christ, *our* Exodus, has come. Christ, *our* Passover, has been sacrificed. “Old Israel”—the Israel by faith in the Christ who was to come—has given way to “New Israel”—the Israel by faith in the Christ who has come. And so Christians continue to observe the Passover and Eve of Easter as a Vigil, now commemorating the rescue that the original Passover only pointed to—the rescue from the last enemy, death itself, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, God’s Son, from the dead. We invite you to make the celebration of the Vigil of Easter a standard part of your annual celebration of the Lord’s great redemption in Christ. **This year’s Vigil will be held on Saturday, 20 April, at 8:00 p.m.** After meeting in the courtyard for instructions, we’ll gather around the Paschal fire outside, process into church in a darkness that evokes our captivity to sin and death, only to see that darkness put to flight by the proclamation of the glorious resurrection of Jesus Christ. We hope to see you there.

2019 HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

Sound Words Academy	Wednesday, 10 April	5:00 – 9:00 p.m.
Midweek Lenten Service	Wednesday, 10 April	12:15 & 7:00 p.m.
Palm Sunday	Sunday, 14 April	8:15 & 11:00 a.m.
Holy Thursday	Thursday, 18 April	12:15 & 7:00 p.m.
Good Friday	Friday, 19 April	12:15 & 7:00 p.m.
Holy Saturday, Vigil of Easter	Saturday, 20 April	8:00 p.m.
Easter Sunday	Sunday, 21 April	8:15 & 11:00 p.m.
Sound Words Academy	Wednesday, 24 April	5:00 – 9:00 p.m.

SOUND WORDS ACADEMY

Children

Rhythm of Faith Choir (now – 8 May, 5:00-5:40 p.m.; Johnson) Rhythm of Faith uses God’s gift of music to confess the truth of His Word in song. Develop life-long skills in singing, ringing, and reading music. Participate as a choir in Wednesday Evening Offices and Sunday services. Learn the rich heritage of Lutheran hymnody and liturgy. Enroll after Sunday services now through 9 September or contact Bethany Johnson.

Jr. Lutherans (now – 8 May, 5:55-6:50 p.m.; Sweet) This fast-paced Bible, Catechism, and Lutheran history quiz game places Lutherans aged 4 – 12 yrs. in competition with one another and teams from other congregations—with “trivia” that is hardly *trivial*. Enroll after Sunday services now through 9 September or contact Daniel Sweet.

Adults

The LCMS and the Other Denominations (20 March – 8 May, 5:55-6:50 p.m.; Bruss): Why doesn’t our church have pulpit and altar fellowship with our neighbors’ churches? What are the differences? Are they that big of a deal?

College Students and Young Adults

Paul Althaus, *The Theology of Martin Luther* (now – 8 May, 7:45-8:40 p.m.; Kerns) Martin Luther is the writer and Paul Althaus is the compiler. Join Pr. Kerns at Sound Words Academy as we go through one of his favorite Lutheran books. It is so good that once we come to the end of it, we will want to circle back around it again. Come drink from the fire-hydrant of good, confessional Lutheran thought.

Adult Catechesis

Adult Catechesis (now – 8 May 7:45-8:40 p.m.; Bruss now through May) The central teachings of the Christian faith. What does God say *about* me in His Law? What does God say *to* me in His Gospel? How am I to relate to God? And where can I find Christ and what He wants to give to me? This September through May course, with breaks scattered throughout those 8 months, weaves together the teachings of Scripture and *The Small Catechism* and shows how God encounters you in the Divine Service. For those interested in becoming members of St. John’s or those seeking a refresher in the guts of Lutheran theology.

Youth Catechesis

YCat I (Wednesdays – 8 May, 5:55-6:50 p.m.; Kinnett) Typically for 6th graders. 1 year long.

YCat II (Wednesdays – 8 May, 5:55-6:50 p.m.; Bruss & Kerns) Typically for 7th and 8th graders. 2 years long.

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 February, 2019 \$113,706.00
Actual Receipts through February, 2019 \$ 96,465.55
 Over (Under) Budget Year to Date \$(17,240.45)

SPECIAL INVITATIONS

A **bridal shower** will be held on Saturday, April 6 at 10:00 a.m. in the courtyard for Elizabeth Lange. All women of the congregation are invited. Please bring a copy of a favorite recipe to share with her. Elizabeth and David Woelmer are registered at Bed Bath & Beyond and Amazon.com. An RSVP to Cheri Berggren at 785-246-2208 or enclberg@gmail.com by Friday, March 29 is encouraged.

A **baby shower** will be held on Saturday, April 13 at 3:00 p.m. in the courtyard for Rachel and Justin Kathman. All women of the congregation are invited. In lieu of a card, please bring a signed children's book. Their registry is found on <https://www.babylist.com/baby-rachel-kathman>. Please RSVP by April 6 to Edith Kerns at 910-540-8523 or edith.kerns@gmail.com.

CHORAL EVENING PRAYER SERVICE

featuring the Rhythm of Faith choirs

Wednesday, May 8 at 7:00 p.m.

We hope you can attend this beautiful service
with special music provided by the children!

RHYTHM OF FAITH MUSIC CAMP

June 17-21, 9:00 - 11:30 a.m.

St. John's Ev. Lutheran Church

Ages: K-8th grade

More details to come in the May newsletter.

Questions: contact Bethany Johnson (bjohnson@stjlcms.org)

HYMN OF THE MONTH FOR MARCH

LSB 438 "A Lamb Goes Uncomplaining Forth"

Introduction

Philip Melancthon once said, "To know Christ is to know His benefits." In the meaning of the second article of the Apostles' Creed, Luther explains both the person and work of Jesus Christ. First, he describes Him as both true God and true man, "born of the Virgin Mary." Then, he goes on to describe Jesus' work, that He has "redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sins, from death and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy precious blood, and with His innocent suffering and death." Jesus is the true "Suffering Servant" as Isaiah 53 so beautifully puts it. He "bore our griefs and carried our sorrows" and was "pierced for our transgressions" and "crushed for our iniquities." The peace we have is a result of the healing in Christ's wounds, because He suffered and died in our place "in order that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness."

Background & Explanation

“A Lamb Goes Uncomplaining Forth” was written by Paul Gerhardt (1607-76), one of the greatest Lutheran hymnwriters. Gerhardt suffered greatly throughout his life, having lived through the Thirty Year’s War, the death of his father when he was a boy, the governing authorities’ assault of his faithfulness to the Gospel, and the death of his wife and all but one of his children during his lifetime. Thus, he is known as a “suffering servant” of the Lord, not just because he suffered these many things, but, more importantly, that in faith he looked to Christ in the midst of his sufferings for true comfort.

“A Lamb Goes Uncomplaining Forth” is the hymn of the day for Palm Sunday (April 14) when Christ goes forth to the cross, to His sacrificial death. Stanza 1 describes the innocence of Christ and the silence He has as He endures the “stripes, the wounds, the lies, and the mockery.” Just as a sacrificial lamb without blemish was given for the Passover, Jesus is our true Lamb of God (John 1:29) that is led to the slaughter on the cross “without complaint.” He gladly suffers because it is for our good, for our righteousness and eternal life.

Stanzas 2 & 3 include a dialog between the Father and the Son. Christ died on the cross because it was God’s will that all men be saved from sin. God wanted us to share in the “fruit of [Christ’s] salvation,” that is, forgiveness of sins, life and salvation. Gerhardt beautifully captures our response: “O Wondrous Love, what have you done?” We are baffled by the fact that God, who “built the earth’s foundation” sent His Son to die for sinners. And, even so, God *still* offers up His Son—to us—through the Lord’s Supper, a true miracle indeed.

The believer’s joy in sharing the fruit of salvation is evident in stanza 4 as it describes the “crown of righteousness,” “royal robe,” and “garments of salvation” we are given in Christ. We “taste [God’s] kingdom’s pleasure,” even through suffering, because that’s how God works. He suffered and died for His Bride, the Church, giving us eternal life with Him. What joy to know that we have a Savior who is our “Suffering Servant,” serving Himself to us with His gifts of salvation. This is certainly our true “joy beyond all measure”!

Bethany M Johnson

MONTHLY BREAKFAST IN APRIL

There will be no monthly breakfast on the 2nd Sunday of the month.
Rather, come and enjoy a fancy donut on Easter Sunday, April 21.

ANNUAL CHURCH CLEANING SATURDAY, APRIL 13

The Annual Church Cleaning in preparation for Holy Week and Easter has been set for Saturday, April 13, beginning at 8:00 a.m. or as close to 8:00 as you can make it. Many willing hands are needed to assist with spring cleaning throughout the building (including dusting high and low and washing down walls throughout). This is also the time we work at preserving all the beautiful woodwork in the church and give the pews their annual treatment of a blend of Rub Cut Oil and Naphtha. For over 80 years this task has been lovingly—and annually—accomplished by hundreds of willing hands. Last year we had an excellent turnout, which helped complete our cleaning in record time, and we hope as many will join us again this year.

Help is also needed to dust the nave light fixtures and change batteries in smoke detectors (really tall ladder work). Bring a bucket and some cleaning cloths if you can. Plan to join other members for service and fellowship as we prepare our Lord's house for Holy Week and Easter.

ST. JOHN'S ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

Save the date: Saturday, August 3, 2019: St. John's Annual Golf Tournament this summer will be held at Forbes Field. This is a fundraiser for the youth group and their activities. Plan to participate as a golfer, a sponsor, or as a volunteer! More details will be forthcoming.

PLEDGES IN SUPPORT OF INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS

As a congregation, we have for numerous years supported several missions efforts of our Synod and of pastors associated with our Synod. Some of the names are eminently familiar to us, and we've had the opportunity to host many of them here, as well. Pastor Olav Panchu and his associate in Saratov, Alexander Furs, continue the ministry of St. John's Lutheran Church, Saratov. Our congregation has more than a decade's history of support of their work. Pr. James Krikava, who visited us in 2014, is the LCMS regional director for Eurasia, and works in the Czech Republic. New to us, but working in the same mission field as a former missionary, is Pr. Wilhelm Weber, who is at work in Wittenberg, Germany. In each of these cases, our congregation is a member of an invaluable network that lends material support to each of these missionaries.

As you continue to uphold all of them in your prayers, please also give prayerful consideration to making a pledge to support to their work. Pledge cards will be available in the bulletins and pews during the month of April.

May the Lord's Word have free course and be preached to the joy and edifying of all who hear it!



LCMS STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY

Newsletter Article – April 2019

“Blessed shall you be in the city and blessed shall you be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground and the fruit of your cattle, the increase of your herds and the young of your flock. Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl. Blessed shall you be when you come in and blessed shall you be when you go out” (Deut 28:3-6).

This is God's promise to the Israelites as they stood beyond the Jordan outside of the Promised Land. He promises blessing to His people. He will make them prosper, whether they are in the city or the field. He will make their fruit of their work to prosper, whether from the ground or their wombs, their flocks or their herds. He will make them to prosper in all things, whether upon their coming in or their going out.

But there's a catch. He would do this for Israel only “if you obey the voice of the Lord your God” (Deut 28:2b). If they did that, He would cause that “all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you” (Deut 28:2a).

If they didn't obey the voice of the Lord, if they didn't keep the commandments of the Lord and walk in His ways (Deut 28:9), they would be met with curse and woe. The blessings would be replaced with curses. Everything that the Lord promised to prosper and bless would be cursed and fail.

Thanks be to God that our Lord Jesus Christ has come into our flesh, fulfilled the law for us – in our place and for our benefit; died for us – in our place and for our benefit; and is risen from the dead for us – in our place and for our benefit.

By this we have justification before God. We are forgiven, clean, holy, and righteous. The blessing of God is promised to us in Christ Jesus. It depends upon His work and not ours.

All this is ours in Holy Baptism. For in Holy Baptism, God claims us as His own, makes us His children, His heirs, His holy people. And so it is that the work of our hands and its fruit is holy because we are holy in Christ. It is pressed into His service, and thereby it becomes a blessing to us and to our neighbor.

For this great gift, our reception of the blessings of God because of Christ Jesus our Lord, it is our duty to thank and praise, serve and obey Him. This is not in order to receive blessings but because in Christ we already have.

It is with this in mind that we sit down on the first day of the week and set aside as He has prospered us to give to His church for His work of blessing in our midst (1 Cor. 16:2).

ST. JOHN'S WOMEN'S LEAGUE

Topeka Zone LWML Spring Fling – Saturday April 6, 2019, Faith Lutheran Church, 1348 Trailridge Rd, Emporia, KS 66801. Registration, Coffee and Service Project starting at 9 a.m. with \$5 registration Meeting starting at 10 a.m. More information will be available in the April newsletter.

There is still room on the District LWML bus if you are thinking about going to Mobile, Alabama. The bus will leave on Monday, June 17 and return on Tuesday, June 25th. If you are interested you may contact Donna Burton, 316-249-6431 or email pd728@yahoo.com for more details.

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 16, 23, & 30; July 14; August 11; and September 22 & 29.

DOORSTEP NEWS

Doorstep had a successful **Operation Soup Line!** Thank you to everyone who helped out selling tickets, making desserts, donating baskets, volunteering, and attending the event! They had a record number of delivery orders this year with 553. That's 132 more than last year! In total, they served 1,177 for lunch through delivery orders, carry out, and at the event! They had 42 theme baskets making \$2,838 for the event! In total, Doorstep made nearly \$17,727* for their 16th Annual event! (*Estimated – waiting on bills and final deposit).

Doorstep's **Annual Banquet** honoring their volunteers will be at First United Methodist Church this year! Mark your calendar for **Tuesday, April 23rd at 6:30pm.** They will have volunteers share their experiences, entertainment, volunteer awards, quilt drawing, taco bake for dinner, and a Love Offering for Doorstep! Reservations are due by April 22nd. Call the Doorstep office (8am – 3pm) to RSVP, 357-5341. They will have their **Quilt Drawing, at \$1 per chance**, and you do not have to present to win! See your Doorstep representatives for tickets, or buy them at the banquet before dinner!

Doorstep's 2nd Annual Neighbor Helping Neighbor Walk/5K Run is Saturday, October 5th at Lake Shawnee, Reynolds Lodge. You can 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!

TLS: GROWING GOD'S CHILDREN FOR GENERATIONS TO COME

Mark Your Calendars!

The kickoff for the Topeka Lutheran School Capital Campaign will happen on April 12 at 6:30 pm in the TLS gym. It will be a fun-filled evening that includes the TLS choirs, the new TLS video, refreshments and more. Our new shirt is now available!



Are YOU Topeka Lutheran? If you are a TLS graduate, a former student, or the parent of a current or former student, you qualify! If you join in the prayers offered during worship when we ask for blessings for TLS, you qualify! You are Topeka Lutheran! Be a part of our campaign! Buy a shirt that shows your connection to TLS and wear it to the April 12 event. Orders will be taken at each of the churches.

Lutheran education has been a part of the fabric of the Lutheran community in Topeka for 144 years. Join us in celebrating the past and encouraging the future of Topeka Lutheran School.

2019 CONTRIBUTION ENVELOPES

If you have not picked up your contribution envelope—they are now located in the church office. If you have any questions regarding contribution boxes/envelopes, please speak with Yvonne Berry in the church office. Thank you!

TLS COUPLE SHARE THEIR STORY: GRADE SCHOOL SWEETHEARTS



Names: Ron and Judy (Eisler) Moss

Year(s) graduated: TLS Class of 1959

Wedding date: October 3, 1964 **Years married:** 54 years

Favorite teacher (s): Dennis Hofts, 6th Grade); Virgil von Soosten, 7th Grade - although all the teachers were good.

Favorite subject(s): (Judy's) English, Religion; (Ron's) History, Memory Work

What is your earliest and/or favorite memory together at TLS? Ron picked on me a lot, my mother told me it was because he liked me. I guess she was right. We enjoyed playing dodgeball, riding the bus to basketball games. I enjoyed being a cheerleader and watching him play

basketball and baseball. The girls did not play basketball then. We enjoyed eating lunches together also. Also the meals were cooked at school and were very good.

How did the academic and Lutheran education received at TLS impact your lives, both before and after your marriage? The school not only provided us with good education, but a place where we learned respect and caring for others. Best of all we learned to go to God in times of trouble.

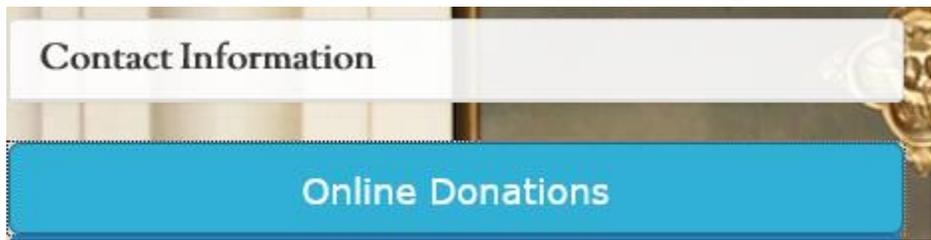
How did your time at TLS influence your decision to send your (grand)children to TLS? We really never thought about sending our children anywhere else. Our experiences at TLS were so rewarding we wanted our children and grandchildren to have the same. The close-knit atmosphere is something we wanted them to have as well as a Christian background. We do not want something to happen to TLS in the future.

Do you have any photos from your time at TLS? Photos are eighth grade basketball team and the cheerleaders and little helper from 8th grade.

SUNDAY SCHOOL CHOIR (GRADES K-5) SCHEDULE
Rehearsals: 9:45 a.m. every Sunday morning before Sunday School
 April 14, Palm Sunday (beginning of both services)
 May 12 (beginning of both services)

DONATIONS: ONLINE OR ENVELOPE

Are you accustomed to paying bills or making donations online? Your donations can be online for St. John’s as well. Go to <https://www.stjohnlcmstopeka.org> and scroll to the bottom of the home page until you see Online Donations.



When you click “Online Donations”, you will be directed to this page.

If you already have a Profile created, you can Log In to set up a recurring donation or enter a one-time donation. If you have not yet created a profile, go to Create Your Online Profile. You will find it is much like other websites in which you may have created a profile for donations or payments. Recurring or one-time donations can be created for the General Fund, Building Fund, International Missions, or Designated Gift/Other in which you will type in the text box where the donation should be applied.

Check it out if you haven’t already. Call the church office with questions. As always, you can use envelopes or simply drop a check in the offering plate with a note in the memo if the donation should be applied to other than the General Fund. Thanks be to God for the ongoing donations received in support of the His ministry at St. John’s.

The Board of Stewardship

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS FOR APRIL 2019

In April as Lent comes to an end the children will spend time each Sunday learning about the historic name for each Sunday. The name of the Sunday comes from the first few words of the Introit for that Sunday. Be sure to ask your child what the Latin name for each Sunday means. There is no Sunday School on Easter. After Easter the pictures will return in the bulletin for that Sunday and as posters in the Sunday School rooms. Adding the picture increases student focus during the Bible reading for each Sunday.

April 7: Judica	Before Abraham was, I AM	John 8:46-59
April 14: Palmarum	Hosanna in the Highest	Matthew 21:1-9
April 21: Easter	No Sunday School	
April 28: Quasimodogeniti	Jesus Breathes on His Disciples	John 20:19-31

Save the Date

Vacation Bible School will be held June 24-28. This year our theme will be Sanctified with a focus on the 10 Commandments. Plans are being made, and the details are being worked out. Look in future newsletter updates for all the information.



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*)