

February/
March 2024



E-News

Volume 5
Issue 1

CHAPEL OF THE CROSS

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD



"God is extravagantly rich in his grace." These words, written by Martin Luther in 1537 and published the following year as a part of the Smalcald Articles, are a powerful reminder of God's character. Our God is "merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness..." (Exodus 34:5). Our gracious God extravagantly shares this love with us in various ways, through what we call the "means of grace." Luther's quote continues, identifying five ways that God, as a loving father, pours out his grace and favor upon His children. First, through the Gospel message (the forgiveness of sins). Second, through holy baptism. Third, through the Sacrament of the Altar. Fourth, through the confession of sins and the absolution which follows. Finally, through the fellowship of brothers and sisters in Christ, who console one another with the good news of Christ.

God is extravagantly rich in grace, but God is also a God of means. As such, his mercy and steadfast love often come to us by means of tangible, earthly things. God pours out His love for us in Christ, who

took on flesh and became a human being. This Jesus used water and mud to heal the lame and blind. He used his voice and his hands to accomplish the miraculous. His blood, sweat, and tears made the forgiveness of our sins possible when He gave up His perfect life as a sacrifice for ours. His bodily resurrection and ascent into heaven are a promise of His return to earth and His recreation of the entire universe. In that new creation, you and I will live (in our body) with Jesus and all believers in a tangible, physical reality.

The season of Christmas and Epiphany is a celebration of Christ's embodied existence and a prelude to his bodily suffering, death, and resurrection that we reflect on during Lent, Holy Week, and Easter celebration. During this season of lent, I invite you to reflect on the extravagant grace of God and the tangible means through which he pours out His grace for you. Each week, during our midweek Lenten worship, we will encounter our extravagant God accomplishing His mission of grace through ordinary means: dust, coins, and ointment...

a towel, water basin, and thorns. By means of bread, wine, wood, and nails, our God has been extravagantly rich in his grace. And through water and His Word, through the congregation of the faithful gathered under our roof each week, He continues to pour out this grace, without measure, for you. Lest we think His grace might not be enough, we listen to Christ. "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." This is precisely what the grace of God is for you: that when you are weak, then—in Christ—you are strong.

Pastor Nelson

Pastor Nelson



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Our Contact Information

Chapel of the Cross Lutheran Church
907 Jungermann Rd
St Peters, MO 63376
chapelofthecrosslutheran.org

Office: 636.928.5885
office@chapelofthecrosslutheran.org
 Office Hours: Monday—Friday
 9:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.

Pastors:

Rev. Dr. Mark Hoehner 636.577.4144
mark.hoehner@chapelofthecrosslutheran.org

Rev. James Uglum 636.577.7539
james.uglum@chapelofthecrosslutheran.org

Rev. Andrew Nelson 636.577.9888
andrew.nelson@chapelofthecrosslutheran.org

Youth and Family Life Director:

Josh Eckstein DCE 636.928.5885
joshua.eckstein@chapelofthecrosslutheran.org

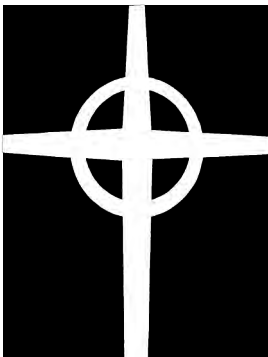
Office Manager:

Beverly Piehl 636.387.3757
bev.piehl@chapelofthecrosslutheran.org

Preschool Director:

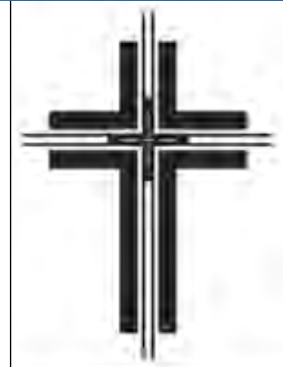
Erin Hoehner 636.541.0777
erin.hoehner@chapelofthecrosslutheran.org

Worship Times: Sundays at 8:00am & 10:15am
 Sunday School & Adult Bible Classes at 9:15am
 Mondays at 7:00pm
 Wednesdays at 11:00am



CHAPEL OF THE CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH

As the family at Chapel of the Cross,
 our mission is to
SHARE the Gospel,
SEEK the Lost,
STUDY God's Word, and
STRENGTHEN One Another.



ADULT BIBLE STUDIES

Sunday Morning Bible Classes
9:15 - 10:00am
See Details Below

Men's Tuesday Bible Study
"A Better King, Servant, Conqueror:
The Book of Isaiah"
9:30-11:00am in the Sanctuary

Men's Ministry Bible Class
Second & fourth Saturdays
7:30-9:00am in room 224

Women's Ministry Bible Study
"A Better King, Servant, Conqueror:
The Book of Isaiah"
Tuesdays in room 224 from 9:30-11:00am or
from 7:00-8:30pm.

Sunday Morning Bible Study 9:15 - 10:00am

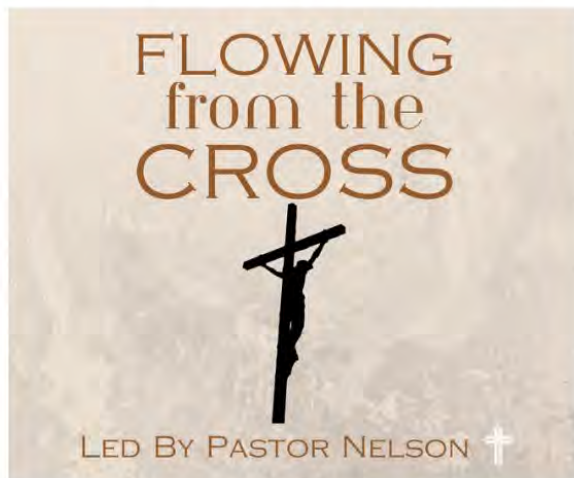


Guest Speaker on February 18th

Dr. Kloha

On Feb. 18th, former Concordia Seminary St. Louis professor Dr. Kloha will be leading us in a Bible study. Dr. Kloha currently works at the Museum of the Bible in Washington D.C.

Beginning February 25th



Flowing From the Cross: Images of God's Forgiveness

We desperately need God's forgiveness, and through Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, we receive it as a gift. Drawing on Biblical imagery, each week we will explore together the many different facets of God's forgiveness and discuss the various ways it comes to us and how we share it with others.



Verse by Verse

We'll look at Paul's letter to the Philippians verse by verse!

The Poland Trip 2024



Preparations are in full swing for us to take a group back to Pszczyna Poland this summer. We've had one initial interest meeting at the end of January, but there is still time if you would like to learn more about the trip and join us. Please contact Pastor James if you would like more information about this trip. The dates for this summer's Day Camp will be approximately July 19th-Jul 30th (approximately because these depend on available flights). This trip is open to anyone older than 18 years of age (16 years of age if a parent is

accompanying them). We have the opportunity to worship with the community on two Sundays, and this is a congregation that we have been working closely with for the past four years now.

In addition to the English language games we helped run the games and some of the crafts and Bible studies. The week is intense and immersive, providing great opportunities to serve others and get to see and experience a different country and culture.

Thrivent Choice Dollars

Just a reminder that Choice Dollars that have not been committed for 2023, you have until March 31, 2024 to apply them to your selected institution.

The institutions you select can really use these dollars. God bless each of you.

thrivent[®]



A BETTER KING, SERVANT, CONQUEROR: THE BOOK OF ISAIAH NEW BIBLE STUDY SEASON 2023-2024 MEN AND WOMEN

Our new season of Women's Bible Study is well underway, but it is never too late to join us! See the registration information below. We are only on Lesson 15 of our 25 week study of the book of **Isaiah: A Better King, Servant, Conqueror.**

Please join us as we study this amazing book. Don't worry if you have to miss occasionally. Feel free to join at any time during the year. Our studies have three facets: Homework to be completed at home as you are able, small group discussion time and a teaching lecture. If you prefer to join us remotely, we have an option to participate via Zoom. For more information, please contact Margaret Hibbeler. st_charles_hibbelers@yahoo.com

CLASS TIMES:

Men and Women: Tuesday mornings 9:30-11:00 a.m. (Can't come in person? Zoom option available)

Women: Tuesday evenings 7:00-8:30 p.m.



Scan here to register

Community Groups



In January 2023, Chapel launched our first round of Community Groups. The purpose of these groups is simply to gather our members together outside of our church services in a way that allows them to grow closer to God and one another. We had 6 different groups that met, pulling together 94 adults and children. Community Groups are continuing with some new additions. We have added Family Game Nights, a Mom's Group that meets during Open Gyms, and a new Retiree Group forming. Be on the lookout for dates and sign ups. If you are interested in more information please contact Pastor James at 636-577-7539.

Family Game Nights



Whether you're a family of four, or single join us in the Gym and have a good time! Game Nights happen on the first Friday of every month from 6:30-8:00pm. Upcoming dates include Feb. 2, March, 1, April 5, and May 3. We will have some light drinks and snacks available. Just bring yourself and your favorite game or games. Families, this is a great opportunity to play some games with your kids and meet some other families as well. We start at 6:30pm, but you can come anytime. There is no substitute for time spent together!

Open Gym



Our Open Gym season has begun! Every second Saturday we open up our Gym (and set up our two bounce houses) for some free play from 9-11am. Some drinks and light snacks are also provided at this time. This is a great opportunity to burn off some of your kids' pent up energy while enjoying some time talking with other parents.

Rachel Hoag will be leading a Mom's Group that will meet on the second Saturday of each month through April of 2024. This group meets in conjunction with the Open Gym from 9:30-10:30am, and is geared specifically toward moms with kids from infancy through early elementary school years. Any kids that are old enough will be able to continue playing in the gym under supervision while the moms meet separately. If you have any questions, please call Rachel at 253-579-7326.

Mom's Group



Retiree Group - OWLS



We have a new retiree group at Chapel called OWLS (Older Wiser Lutherans). They meet the 2nd Friday of each month at 11:30am downstairs in the gym for lunch (its bring your own) and fellowship.

chapel preschool

Chapel of the Cross Preschool is now enrolling students for the 2024-2025 school year. Our preschool is a Christ-centered, whole-child approach preschool that emphasizes play as the best tool to guide young learners. Our 3, 4, and 5-year-old program invites children to discover the world around them through hands-on, multi-sensory projects and lessons. If you are interested in learning more about our program, or to set up a tour, call Erin Hoehner at (636) 541-0777.



The preschoolers loved dressing up and retelling the story of Jesus' birth!





CHAPEL OF THE CROSS
Faith Milestone Ministry

Parent Training and Worship Bag Presentation (For Families with children ages 3-5)

Chapel of the Cross desires to partner with your family as you teach the faith to your curious preschooler through participation in worship. They are always learning, always imagining, and always asking why. Because of this, it is the perfect time to help them learn the rituals of worship and answer their questions about it. To assist with that task, we want to encourage and equip you to teach your child the faith through regular & active participation in worship.

Parents/Guardians of preschool children (ages 3-5) are invited to a Parent Seminar* on **Sunday March 3, at 11:30 a.m.** in Room 224. Here, you will be encouraged and equipped for the task of preparing for church, actively worshipping together, and teaching the faith in age-appropriate ways.

At this event, your family will receive a canvas tote bag—and a few items to go inside—that you can personalize for your child during the week. The following Sunday, **March 10**, we will invite your family forward during worship for a brief presentation, blessing, and prayer. Please bring your canvas tote bag with you that day!

As a parent, you have approximately **780 weeks** between their preschool years and their high school graduation. We can't wait to help you teach the faith and build a life-long habit of worship in your child as they grow their faith in Jesus! We hope you'll join us!

LEARNING THE FAITH

THE IMPORTANCE OF WORSHIPPING TOGETHER
(For Families with Children 3-5 Years Old)

Parent Training
March 3 @ 11:30 a.m.

Milestone Recognition
March 10 @ 8:00/10:15 a.m.

 Families will receive a customizable "Worship Bag" for their children.

Contact Pastor Andrew Nelson
(Andrew.nelson@chapelofthecrosslutheran.org) to sign up by February 29.

**Childcare will be available upon request.*

FEB - MAR



YOUTH CALENDAR

SUN 02/04 Middle School Meetup <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11:30a-12:30p • Cecil Whittaker's 	SAT 02/10 Trivia Night Volunteering <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5:30p-9:00p • Gym 	SUN 02/18 Middle School Youth Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6:30p-8:00p • Daniel's Den 	WED 02/21 Lent Dinner Help <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5:30p-7:00p • Gym 	SUN 02/25 High School Youth Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6:30p-8:00p • Daniel's Den
SUN 03/10 Middle School Youth Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6:30p-8:00p • Daniel's Den 	SUN 03/17 High School Youth Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6:30p-8:00p • Daniel's Den 	SUN 03/24 High School Hangout <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11:30a-12:30p • Cecil Whittaker's 	SUN 03/24 Easter Eggsembly Eggstravaganza <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6:00p-8:00p • Daniel's Den 	SAT 03/30 Easter Egg Hunt Volunteering <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9:00a-11:30a • Chapel

● MIDDLE SCHOOL ● HIGH SCHOOL ● BOTH

EVENT INFORMATION

MIDDLE SCHOOL MEETUP

Middle schoolers are welcome to join us at Cecil Whittaker's (620 Jungermann Rd) at 11:30 on 2/4 for a Middle School Meetup. Show up for pizza, stick around for fun and meaningful conversations with other middle schoolers. Friends are welcome!

TRIVIA NIGHT VOLUNTEERING

Our annual Trivia Night fundraiser is coming up on 2/10! Funds raised will go towards our summer youth events (mission trips, youth gatherings, etc.). All those attending this year's mission trip are encouraged to volunteer. All other youth are welcome to volunteer as needed.

O.A.S.I.S. YOUTH FOOD CHALLENGE

We will be participating in the O.A.S.I.S. Food Drive this year. Over the course of four weeks, we will be bringing donated items to O.A.S.I.S. food pantry. Be on the lookout for specific items that will be requested for each week. We are looking for volunteers to pack and deliver the donations to O.A.S.I.S. on 2/18, 2/25, 3/3, & 3/10. Let DCE Josh know if you can help out on any of those dates.

LENT DINNER HELP

Youth families are set to provide the Lent Dinner on Wednesday, February 21. We're looking for people to help with setup/cleanup, serving, and bringing food.

HIGH SCHOOL HANGOUT

High schoolers are welcome to join us at Cecil Whittaker's (620 Jungermann Rd) at 11:30 on 3/24 for a High School Hangout. Show up for pizza, stick around for fun and meaningful conversations with other high schoolers. Friends are welcome!

EASTER EGGSEMBLY EGGSTRAVAGANZA

Help "eggsemble" Easter eggs for the upcoming Easter Egg Hunt and prepare for Easter at our "eggstravagant" event. We'll have food (besides Easter candy) and fun activities as well. Both Junior and Senior High youth are welcome.

EASTER EGG HUNT VOLUNTEERING

Junior and Senior High Youth are invited to volunteer at this year's Easter Egg Hunt. Help set up, run, and tear down the activities at the event.

TEXT UPDATES

- text "@cotcmsuth" to "81010" (Jr. High Youth & Parents)
- text "@cotcuth" to "81010" (Sr. High Youth)
- text "@cotcparent" to "81010" (Sr. High Parents)

@cotcyouth facebook.com/cotcyouthministry
linktr.ee/cotcyouthministry



SUNDAY SCHOOL

Study God's Word with your brothers and sisters in Christ on Sunday mornings at 9:15 AM. We have education opportunities for all ages each Sunday morning. Look and see which classes you and your children can attend.

Nursery

- Room 108

Preschool

- Room 106

Kindergarten & 1st Grade

- Room 112

2nd & 3rd Grades

- Rooms 113 & 114

4th & 5th Grades

- Room 111

Middle School (6th-8th Grades)

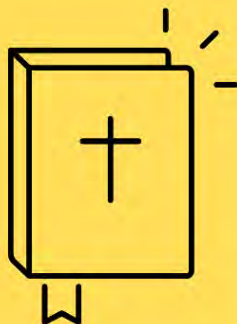
- Room 222

High School (9th-12th Grades)

- Daniel's Den (youth room)

Adult Bible Studies

- Sanctuary & Room 224



ELEMENTARY SCHEDULE

02/04 The Fall of Jericho

02/11 Deborah

02/18 Special Lesson

02/25 Samson

03/03 Ruth

03/10 Saul Becomes King

03/17 David and Goliath

03/24 Easter Story

03/31 NO SUNDAY SCHOOL & BIBLE CLASS



OPEN GYM PLAY DATES

Saturday, February 10th & Saturday, March 9th from 9:00a-11:00a

Join us one Saturday per month (December – March) for Open Gym from 9:00–11:00 AM. This is a great time for kids to play together (and run out lots of energy) while parents have some time to reconnect with one another. We'll have the bounce house set up and some snacks will be provided as well!

- **Dates: 2/10 & 3/9**



EASTER EGG HUNT

Saturday, March 30th from 10:00a-11:30a

Join us on the Saturday before Easter for an Easter Egg Hunt! The Egg Hunts will be divided by ages throughout the morning. Besides the hunts, we will also have special prizes, a petting zoo, sidewalk chalk, and a family take-home activity. No need to sign up, just show up!

EMERGENCY WEATHER RESPONSE HOMELESS SHELTERS

Chapel is joining with other churches in our community to offer a warm and safe place for our homeless neighbors to stay on winter nights when the temperature outside is forecasted to drop below 20 degrees. Chapel is responsible for two weeks this winter. December 3rd-8th and **February 11th-16th**. During these weeks, please be sure to pray for all of those who are involved in this critical and life-saving ministry. Also consider prayerfully joining in the effort. We especially could use people to help on our overnight shifts. These shifts last 4 hours so no one loses an entire night's sleep. In return for a little of your sleep, you can help and make a huge difference in someone's life. If you would like to assist in any way please contact Jennie Bain at 636-288-3373.



Thank You Note from the Emergency Weather Response Team

THANK YOU!!! THANK YOU!! THANK YOU!! On behalf of the Emergency Weather Response team, we just wanted to say that we appreciate all of the hard work you and your team have done over these dangerously cold nights. You were the ones to step up and step in to shelter some of our most vulnerable unhoused neighbors during this bitter cold snap. The extreme weather lasted more days and nights than normal this round. Each night, you came prepared and ready to serve with a smile on your face, welcoming our guests with joy and hospitality.

We appreciate the volunteers, EWR workers, CoC members, St. Charles County Emergency Management, Lincoln County Health Department, Warren County Emergency Management, AGAPE in Warrenton, and all of the churches who joined together to open a safe place for our neighbors to stay warm.

Without your dedication, many of our neighbors could have experienced terrible outcomes. Here is what your hard work did:

- Friday: 22 neighbors served with 14 in St. Charles, 3 in Wentzville, and 5 in Lincoln County
- Saturday, 33 neighbors served with 23 in St. Charles, 5 in Wentzville, and 5 in Lincoln County (a record number of guests served in one night!)
- Sunday: 41 neighbors served with 31 in St. Charles, 3 in Warrenton, and 7 in Lincoln County (surpassing the previous night's record!!)
- Monday: 48 neighbors served with 35 in St. Charles (the most guests ever served in one location!) 6 in Warren County, and 7 in Lincoln County (once again becoming the new record number in one night!)
- Tuesday: 36 neighbors served with 26 guests in St. Charles, 4 in Warren County, and 6 in Lincoln County
- Thursday: 22 neighbors served with 14 guests in St. Charles, 2 in Warren County, and 6 in Lincoln County
- Friday: 30 neighbors served with 25 guests in St. Charles and 5 in Lincoln County
- Saturday: 34 neighbors served with 28 in St. Charles, 1 in Warren County, and 5 in Lincoln County

During the day, many of our neighbors used the Salvation Army in St. Charles, libraries and other locations to stay warm. Special thanks to Reverend Lisa and the St. John UCC team for remaining open during the day on Martin Luther King day for those who stayed overnight. Also, we wanted to give a special recognition to Jani Albright, Assistant Director, St. Charles County Regional Emergency Management for spearheading a new emergency daytime program for neighbors to stay warm at the O'Fallon Senior Center during the hours that the EWR program was not activated.

We can do amazing things when we come together on behalf of those who are most vulnerable within our community! Well done everyone!! Serving Together, Danielle Borunda (EWR Chairperson 2023/2024)

Music at Chapel

"Beautiful music is the art of the prophets that can calm the agitations of the soul; it is one of the most magnificent and delightful presents God has given us." - Martin Luther

Yes, music is a delightful gift of God! We have been blessed at Chapel with members who share their gifts with us, glorifying God with music and bringing us closer to each other and to God. Are you willing to share your gift of music?



NEW Music Opportunity

- **Children's Message Prelude:** Play or sing a short song such as Jesus Loves Me or I Am Jesus Little Lamb to give children time to walk forward for the children's message. Anyone (including beginners!) can provide this music, from a child singing or playing an instrument, to a group of friends or a family singing together.

Music Opportunities for All Ages:

- **Adult Choir:** Singers rehearse Tuesday evenings and participate in services and programs throughout the year.
- **Bell Choir:** This group rehearses Tuesday evenings and participates in services and programs throughout the year.
- **Vocal Soloists & Instrumentalists:** Soloists rehearse as needed and work with the Music Team to prepare for services, specific dates, and church programs. Singers and musicians (Ex. flute, recorder, violin, trumpet) welcome!
- **Joyful Noise!** Sunday School bell ringers gives our children the occasion to share their music in our services.

We always have room for more musicians in all aspects of our ministry. Please contact me, Nancy Seifert, at music@chapelofthecrosslutheran.org. I'd be happy to answer questions and help you serve.



Collection of Eyeglasses and Soft-sided Cases

Chapel Circle collects used eye glasses. Eye glasses are sent to the LWML Mission "MOST" (Mission Opportunities Short Term). You may drop used eye glasses in the bin marked "glasses" in the coat room.

In December 2023, our box to M.O.S.T. contained 10 sunglasses and 20 eyeglasses, plus one bottle of eye care and 20 eyeglass cleaners

The total for 2023, including the eyeglasses sent to the LWML convention in June, is 162 eyeglasses and sunglasses. What a blessing this congregation is helping with this mission.



Lenten Sermon Series

We often find God at work in the ordinary. He works through ordinary people, and ordinary objects. And yet, through these ordinary things God communicates epiphanies, salvation, revelation and reconciliation. Through the mundane we still hear God's quiet voice. With this series we could include an object each week in the series as a visual aide.

Ash Wednesday: Dust

Lent 1: Coins

Lent 2: Water Basin

Lent 3: Ointment

Lent 4: Towels

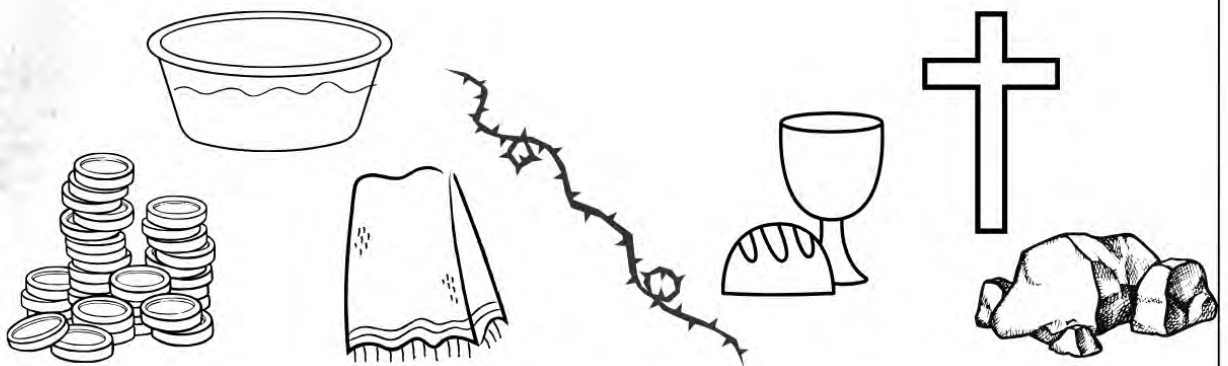
Lent 5: Thorns

Maundy Thursday: Bread and Wine

Good Friday: Cross

Easter Sunday: Stones

Join us for worship on Wednesdays at 11am or 7pm (with a Lenten Supper at 6pm in the gym).





LWML Mission Statement

As Lutheran Women In Mission, we joyfully proclaim Christ, support missions, and equip women to honor God by serving others.

LWML Chapel Circle meet monthly for spiritual growth, fellowship, discuss mission work and special projects. All ladies are invited to join us! If you are not able to attend each month, you are welcome to come when it is convenient. You don't need to be a member to attend... **ALL** are welcome! Don't forget your mites!

Here is a list of what Chapel Circle has going on for the next couple of months.

- Tuesday, January 16, 2024 - Chapel Circle meeting was cancelled due to weather. Chapel Circle is planning on assembling 100 kits on January 23 to be given to the Women's Shelter in St Charles. The Women's Shelter is overjoyed we continue this service. They mentioned additional items in need of for next year along with the toiletries are sweat clothes, pajamas, socks, underwear, sports bra, notebook/journal plus pen and calendar. We will discuss at Chapel Circle meeting.
- February 20th - Visual Faith Cards for Shut-ins Ladies are going to color Visual Faith Cards with markers and colored pencils. Paulette had an assortment of different cards ladies may choose from to color and mail. These are going to be sent to Chapel shut-ins.
- February 23rd - 24th Girlfriend Gathering
- March 16th - Spring Zone Rally - St John's Warrenton WINGS Society, St John's Lutheran Church, 950 South State Hwy 47, Warrenton, MO 63383. More information to follow.
- March 24th - Speaker Robin Tellor with Westfield United Methodist Church Mission They donated towels and washcloths for the women's shelter kits. Sharyl Doctorman was our resource person for telling us about Robin Tellor.

LWML Quarterlies - These may be found in the rack located in narthex of the Church.

If any questions about LWML, please speak with Sue Hoehner 636-362-2284 or
Paulette Allwardt 989-239-6815.



Girlfriend Gathering 2024!

"But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."
1 Peter 2:9

Mark your calendar, invite a friend, and make plans to join us at the 2024 Girlfriend Gathering: Chosen here at Chapel on February 23rd-24th.

We are excited to welcome back Donna Snow, a popular keynote speaker from a past gathering. Donna is a writer, speaker and teacher with Artesian Ministries. She has published seven Bible studies with Concordia Publishing House and several LWML video-based studies, which she is currently translating with the Lutheran Church in Eurasia into Russian, Ukrainian, and German. Donna also leads tours through the Holy Land, Reformation Tours in Germany, and tours in Greece and Turkey following St. Paul's journeys.

At the Girlfriend Gathering, Donna will lead us through a study of Esther and encourage us to recognize God's work in our own lives and what it means to live as His chosen people. Sometimes it can be hard to remember that we are each Chosen by God. This life can leave us feeling alone, defeated, and surrounded by darkness. But God is always present in our lives, calling us into his marvelous light and giving us courage to live fearlessly. God may have seemed absent in Esther's story - in fact, He is never mentioned by name in the whole book. Yet His almighty presence is clearly at work behind the scenes. Examining the book of Esther alongside our theme verse, 1 Peter 2:9 and other scriptures will give us a fresh perspective on our lives and callings.

Our gathering committee has put together a varied lineup of breakout session options for Saturday morning and afternoon. Whether you're looking for practical or spiritual guidance, some crafting time, encouraging stories of Christians in international ministries, a chance to learn (and do) some workout moves, or just a quiet prayer room, there will be a session for you! The registration form includes detailed descriptions of all the available sessions.

Our mission is to stock Kathryn Linnemann Library's hutch with hygiene products for teens and unhoused people and collect donations that will benefit children in foster care with Lutheran Family and Children's Services (LFCS). We will collect these hygiene items: feminine products, body soap, deodorant, tooth brushes, and toothpaste.



We are excited to welcome back Donna Snow, a popular keynote speaker from a past gathering. Registration will be open January 28th-February 18th. You can attend the Girlfriend Gathering Friday night only, Saturday only, or both Friday and Saturday. Cost is as following:

\$35 - Friday & Saturday Sessions

\$10 - Friday ONLY

\$30 - Saturday ONLY

Seminary wives can attend for free, but still need to register. Light dessert refreshments will be offered Friday night, along with some breakfast options on Saturday. When you register, you can select a lunch option from Valenti's Deli for Saturday. We hope you will plan to join us and invite a friend! There will be several ways to register starting January 28th:

- In Chapel's Coffee Shoppe on Sunday Mornings
- Mail registration forms to Chapel of the Cross
- Online at ChapeloftheCrossLutheran.org

Contact girlfriendgathering@gmail.com with questions.

A purple promotional banner for the 2024 Girlfriend Gathering. At the top is the "Chosen" logo with the text "2024 GIRLFRIEND GATHERING" below it. The banner is divided into three sections: "FEBRUARY 23 & 24", "CHAPEL OF THE CROSS ST. PETERS", and "Donna Snow SPEAKER". Below these sections is a QR code with the text "SCAN ME TO REGISTER" underneath it. To the right of the QR code is the text "Faith, Fellowship & Fun" in a script font. Below this is a white box containing the text "\$35 Both Days | \$10 Friday Only | \$30 Saturday Only". At the bottom, it says "Registration Open Sunday, January 28th thru Sunday February 18th", "Register in person at the Coffee Shoppe of Chapel", "Register Online at www.ChapeloftheCrossLutheran.org, click on 'CHOSEN' logo", and "Call 636-928-5885 or Email GirlfriendGathering@gmail.com with questions."

NEWS FROM THE CLAUSING FAMILY

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How to Support Us

To support the LCMS through the work of Rev. Jonathan Clausing, you may send a tax-deductible gift to:

The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod
P.O. Box 66861
St. Louis, MO 63166-6861

-OR-

Mission Central
40718 Highway E-16
Mapleton, IA 51034

Make checks payable to The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod. Include "Clausing-Tanzania" in the memo line. Gifts can also be given securely online through the LCMS website at www.lcms.org/clausing.



My students and I on the last day of final exams, just before they traveled home for Christmas

Hope

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. -Gal. 4:4-5

At Christmas, God became part of our family so that we would become part of His family. The Son of God became a Son of Man, so that we sons of men would become sons of God. God shared in everything that is ours so that we would share in everything that is His. He shared in our humility so that we would share in His glory. He shared in our suffering so that we would share in His comfort. He was credited with our sin so that we would be credited with His righteousness. He died our death so that we would live in His resurrection. As we marvel at this Christmas mystery, we are filled with hope. In Jesus' birth we get a glimpse of the staggering depth of God's commitment to us.



Our Family

Anita and I were married on August 16, 1997 and have been blessed with nine children.

Back Row, Left to Right:

- Anita (12.9.74)
- Ethan (5.8.08)
- Eileen (8.21.11)
- Emmanuel (3.6.15)
- Elijah (7.3.13)
- Eric (12.16.09)
- Jonathan (8.20.75)

Front Row, Left to Right

- Ernest (7.16.04) studies at Concordia University, Nebraska
- Eunice (6.1.06)
- Emil (10.29.99) lives and works in Chicago
- Eleanor (1.10.02) studies at Concordia University, Nebraska

To see past issues of our newsletter and other opportunities to support us, you can find us at Mission Central:

<https://missioncentral.us/clausing/>

To be added to or removed from this mailing list, send an email message to jonathan.clausing@lcms.org with the word ADD or REMOVE in the subject line. If you have an email address but are receiving a paper copy of this newsletter, please request a digital copy.

www.lcms.org/clausing

There is no length to which He does not go to save His people.

Despite the many cultural differences between Americans and Tanzanians, deep down we are fundamentally the same. We all worry about the future; we are hurt by those we love; we are ashamed for not being on the inside what we pretend to be on the outside; and as we read the news and face the pervasive corruption in our world, we wonder if there is any hope.

Jesus' birth assures us that there is hope. God has not given up on the human race. God keeps His promises. God has now become man, and that means that what lies ahead of us is better than what lies behind us. In that hope we begin the new year. A Savior has been born to us - to Tanzanians and Americans, Jews and gentiles. Jesus was born under the law so that we might receive adoption as sons. Merry Christmas!



Emil, Ellie, and Ernie got together for Christmas in Chicago this year, but they did not visit us in Africa. Instead, during a Zoom meeting our whole family opened the presents we had sent to one other. Our unconventional Christmas get-together was 10:00pm on Christmas eve in the states while simultaneously being 7:00am on Christmas morning in Tanzania.

jonathan.clausing@lcms.org

Dear Friends,

Happy New Year! -- a little belatedly. We pray for a blessed 2024 for all of us.

Work-wise the good news is that we have received the second proof from the typesetter! We are thrilled that our typesetter is working to get proofs back to us in a timely manner. The team spent all last week working their way through half of the proof, and they are working hard again this week to get it completed by the end of the week. Fortunately, there aren't a lot of errors, but there are enough that we will definitely need to have a third proof. There are also some formatting issues which need to be sorted out, so hopefully the third proof will show that those have been taken care of as well. We are still optimistic that we can get the Khwedam panoramic Bible in queue for printing in the next month or two so that the Bible can be dedicated in May, but we really need everything to go smoothly from here on out.

Another reason we want to send the corrected proof back to the typesetter by the end of this week is that next week Tim will be departing for Sierra Leone for two weeks. He is going there with several other people from LBT to help work on some of the back-log of translations that need consultant work. This is Tim's first time in Sierra Leone, so please pray for him as he learns the ways of doing things there.



Otherwise, here at home the big news is that we got new solar batteries to replace the batteries which had lasted longer than they were designed to, and were not keeping their charge well anymore. We upgraded to Lithium batteries, which are more efficient (went from eight batteries to two!) and should increase our watt hours. Unfortunately, because we upgraded to a new kind of battery we also had to upgrade our controller -- and unfortunately we were sent the wrong one, so right now we are limping along with one which does not allow the batteries to charge as quickly as they are capable of. Hopefully, we will get the correct controller within the next few days -- hopefully before Tim leaves for Sierra Leone. Also unfortunately, the battery switch-out happened just as we are heading into about two weeks of overcast, rainy weather. We really need the rain and are appreciating the cooler temperatures, but that, combined with the slow controller, means that we have not been able to get much beyond half charged before night comes and we draw down on the system again. So, no doing the laundry (aww, rats! 🙄) but also no running the water purifier or other pretty necessary things (we ended up buying water). We are praying for the controller to come and for a few really good hours of sun.

Prayers:

- Please continue to pray that typesetting will go smoothly and will get done yet this year.
- Please pray for Tim and the others traveling to Sierra Leone. Please pray for safety and great teamwork among all the participants.
- Please pray for Splash and all who are really suffering from allergies and respiratory problems at this time of year.

Thank you again for all of your prayers on our behalf.

Tim, Lisa, Aaron & Andrew Beckendorf

Dear Chapel of the Cross Family,

Written January 3, 2024

Glad tidings to you on this tenth Day of Christmas. Thanks to many of you who reached out with a Christmas card or greeting. We appreciate your encouragement and it is wonderful to celebrate the Christ with you. Please enjoy this family photo taken on the banks of the Rum River a few mornings ago.

Michelle's BIG NEWS

Michelle has been led to serve on a part-time basis with Lutheran Bible Translators (LBT). This is her first week of work. She is the Program Assistant for Papua New Guinea (PNG). Multiple Bible translation projects are starting in the Lutheran Church and she will walk that important work forward.

She will work from a home office and have occasional travel to PNG and other places. Her first trip to PNG is already next week. She will take five flights and one boat ride to get there! Please pray for good connections with her new co-workers.

As an LBT missionary she is seeking prayer supporters and financial supporters. Like most overseas missionaries she needs to raise many tens of thousands of dollars each year. Are you looking for a mission speaker? Do you or your congregation want to support a missionary? I don't have all the details on how to give at this moment so link with her at michelle.gillard@LBT.org — she should be on the LBT website soon. Michelle will eventually have her own LBT prayer letter and we will send it out via this group. We don't want to overload your inbox so we'll still aim for four to six messages per year. Just reply and let me know if you need to change, add, or drop your email address.

Evangeline returns to Mass. next week and Amelia flies to the UK the following. Like most students they have enjoyed their free time on break.

Please be in touch as you're able, especially as you find yourself traveling through East Central Minnesota.

Blessings to you in this New Year 2024,

Jake, with Michelle, Amelia, and Evangeline

Jake & Michelle

P.S. You read all the way to the end. Wow! Here is a bonus pic. The hoarfrost made for a magical moment.



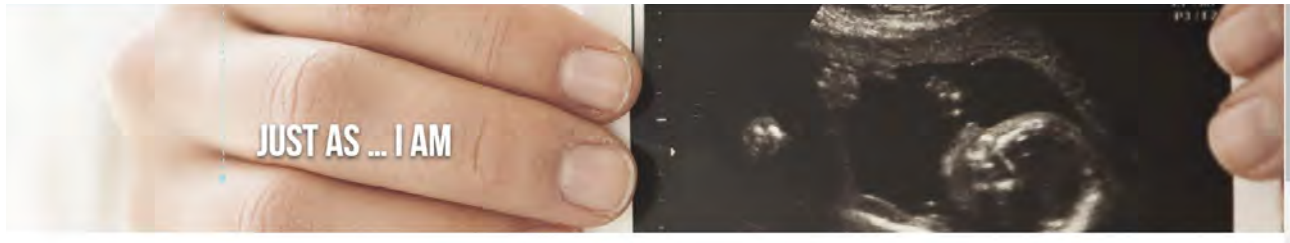


Voters' Meeting on Sunday, February 25th following the 10:15am service.

ELDERS

Name	Email	Phone
Matthew Crutchfield	matthew.crutchfield@gmail.com	636.575.3285
Andrew Dickerson	andrewdickerson@charter.net	314.229.8094
Terry Eaker	teaker1973@gmail.com	636.448.1189
Wyatt Gross	wyattgrossgm@gmail.com	636.459.5496
Dan Heidelmeyer	dheidel@live.com	314.623.0745
Mike Laskowsky	Michael.laskowsky@gmail.com	636.541.9181
Wade McKee	wademckee@yahoo.com	636.352.6259
Jim Rellmann	jas.rellman@sbcglobal.net	636.697.5327
Dave Riedemann	riedemann5@charter.net	636.373.2034
Austin Seifert	Austin.seifert@gmail.com	636.577.5151
Doug Seifert	seifert53@aol.com	314.402.9884
Doug White	dj1white87@gmail.com	314.541.8500
Dan Wiederkehr	jdwiederkehr@gmail.com	815.218.3605





Just as... I AM

by Pastor Michael Salemink

My little brother fell into a cactus as a child.

The neighbors had a couple planted among the decorative stones behind their house. He was toddling on their deck next to the landscaping. Bent over to retrieve a toy and tumbled right off. Came up with two-inch spines sticking out of his arms and trunk. Started walking toward me like nothing happened.

Naturally I freaked. What kind of undead monster had he become?

Screamed and ran back next door to get a parent. Returned to find him crying, not from pain but because I had frightened him. Neither the drama nor the danger deterred Dad. Kid obviously needed a hug. Father scooped him up and held him close—prickles and all. (Then of course whisked him away to the emergency room. They extracted every barb-ended needle one by one and prescribed a precautionary antibiotic. Crisis averted.)



LifeDate Winter 2023 - Just As ... I AM

Sinful selfishness leaves humankind needing a hug. We clearly make quite a mess of ourselves. That includes all of us, no decisive difference from embryo or aged.

Still, it doesn't scare away our sanctity-of-life God. He hasn't forgotten becoming like us Himself. Thorns poked, straps pierced, nails punctured, spear impaled. Embracing such as you and me disfigured Him, but He wouldn't have it any other way. He's made Himself just like us to draw us near. In resurrection He remembers all the more His image imprinted within our kind.

“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them” (Ephesians 2:10).

Forgiving grace takes us as we are and calls us just. Just—righteous, holy, and honorable the way He is. Our Heavenly Father lends His identity and rights to every human being alive at all. Whatever age, appearance, or ability, I am as much as He is. I am because He is, and so are you, and so are they.

Just as ... I AM.



February

Happy Birthday

Mary Beth Granger,	02-01	Amanzhol Kashenov,	02-12	Grant Veit,	02-22
Carson Stroup,	02-01	Sherry Buddemeyer,	02-12	James Hearty,	02-22
Rich Piehl,	02-01	Eliot Hummer,	02-12	Holly Stansberry,	02-23
Jimi Matson,	02-02	Alexis Kagley,	02-12	Madison Bradley,	02-23
Bob Wold,	02-03	Clarice Sage,	02-13	Kristi Pooch,	02-23
Julie Harms,	02-03	Beth Standiford,	02-13	Debbie Haferkamp,	02-24
Brandon Schwarzen,	02-03	Eric Nold,	02-13	Keith Landers,	02-24
Adley Nelson,	02-04	Katey Higgins,	02-14	Barb Spangenberg,	02-25
Suzie Mathis,	02-04	Sara Miller,	02-14	Cynthia Harris,	02-25
Abbey Kister,	02-04	Maryclaire Mason,	02-15	Matthew Middendorf,	02-25
Linda Umbertino,	02-04	Stephanie Seifert,	02-15	Janet Minasian,	02-26
Kevin Sayers,	02-05	Beverly Cossey,	02-16	Mark Linneman,	02-26
Brian Thomas,	02-05	Tracey Sherman,	02-16	Hannah Maier,	02-26
Sharon Hudzinski,	02-05	Wesley Harms,	02-16	Charles Stansberry,	02-27
Emma Bast,	02-06	Greg Walgate,	02-17	Wes Young,	02-27
Christina Hummer,	02-06	Cindy Connoley,	02-18	Pat Middendorf,	02-27
Erin Schlottach,	02-07	David Buenger,	02-18	Marilyn Collins,	02-28
Dale Obermoeller,	02-07	Mel Jones,	02-18	Les Findeiss,	02-28
Nolan Day,	02-08	Cynthia Lawrence,	02-18		
Justin Ohmie,	02-08	Margaret Schulz,	02-18		
Ed Leppert,	02-08	Heather Schoppenhorst,	02-19		
Pat Cranmer,	02-09	Lance Mueller,	02-19		
Beau Herman,	02-09	Maeve Pircher,	02-19		
Nicole Grate,	02-09	Caitlyn Wegener,	02-19		
Tim Scheer,	02-10	Bob Keubler,	02-20		
Debra Rodriguez,	02-11	Diane Broste,	02-20		
Katy Goltz,	02-11	Stephanie Linde,	02-20		
Caileigh Wegener,	02-11	Austin Post,	02-20		
Juanita Jones,	02-11	Jennifer Ratliff,	02-20		
August Lansche,	02-11	Phil Clayton,	02-21		
Eunice Aubuchon,	02-12	Doris Dowdall,	02-22		

Happy

Anniversary

Jamie and Sandra Dennis,	02-04
Jim and Rita Hermann,	02-04
Roy and Marlene Singleton,	02-06
Marty and Sherry Wittmus,	02-11
Mel and Steven Jones	02-14
Terry and Connie Johnson,	02-14
Paul and Debbie Stromberg,	02-16
Cornel and Margo Savala,	02-16
Paul and Beth Standiford,	02-17
Sharon and Steve Hudzinski,	02-21
Jason and Heather Schoppenhorst,	02-22
Stephanie and Steve Linde,	02-27

March

Happy Birthday

Roger Dunajcik, 03-01
 Maximos Hasson, 03-01
 Kevin Schleicher, 03-01
 Sandra Sellini, 03-02
 Chris Obermuefemann, 03-02
 Jon Allmon, 03-02
 Jeffrey Roach, 03-02
 Maxine Dierkes, 03-03
 Sharon Thomas, 03-03
 Jason Ratliff, 03-03
 Caitlin Middendorf, 03-03
 Kendra Whittle, 03-03
 Ron Hoormann, 03-04
 Mike Fujinaka, 03-04
 Al Clark, 03-04
 Greg Aubuchon, 03-04
 Bob Cason, 03-05
 Jacquie VanGilder, 03-06
 Emmanuel Clausing, 03-06
 Kyle Krull, 03-07
 Debbie Finder, 03-07
 Gary Mantei, 03-08
 Kim Jones, 03-08
 Abigail Ratliff, 03-08
 Owen Hasson, 03-08
 Melissa Kroehnke, 03-08
 Pam Bradley, 03-08
 Jennifer Logan, 03-08
 Brian Todd, 03-09
 Theodore Boswell, 03-09
 Kevin Tschannen, 03-09
 Lindsay Neu, 03-10
 Daniel Moellering, 03-11
 Lois Deaver, 03-11
 Lydia Harms, 03-11
 Frieda Clark, 03-11
 Emma Schmidt, 03-11
 Anita Frank, 03-12
 DeeDee Brommelhorst, 03-12
 Patty Ostermeyer, 03-12
 Tyler Sage, 03-13

Lindsay Frank, 03-13
 Bradley Harms, 03-14
 Pauline Kibler, 03-14
 Carol Puntigan, 03-14
 Jayson Sayers, 03-14
 Pat Hoormann, 03-15
 Sandi Matson, 03-15
 Lisa Keubler, 03-15
 Heather DuFour, 03-15
 Dan Heidelmeyer, 03-15
 Jeff Cowan, 03-16
 Thomas Clayton, 03-16
 Estella Bennett, 03-16
 Jaiden Umbertino, 03-17
 Analiesa Hollowood, 03-17
 Jim Holm, 03-17
 Jennifer Pelley, 03-17
 Alexis Floyd, 03-18
 Pierce Fox, 03-18
 Mark Kamphoefner, 03-18
 Myles Markus, 03-18
 Greg Stansberry, 03-18
 Carol Sayers, 03-19
 Kristin Mueller, 03-19
 Daniel Schmidt, 03-20
 Amy Spiess, 03-21
 Nora Frank, 03-21
 Art Baranovic, 03-22
 Pearl Vogelsang, 03-22
 Melanie Kozel, 03-22
 Barry Fehl, 03-23
 Kim Woodworth, 03-24
 Leon Heitgerd, 03-24
 Carolyn Miller, 03-24
 Gwen Leadbetter, 03-24
 Warren Evans, 03-25
 Lauren Kemper, 03-25
 William Doctorman, 03-25
 Debbie Stromberg, 03-26

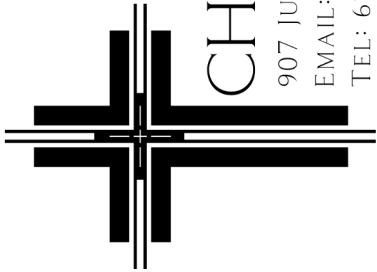
Andrew Riedemann, 03-27
 Evan Brown, 03-27
 Carolyn Fitch, 03-28
 Cris D'Angelo, 03-28
 Emma Day, 03-28
 Donovan Leiker, 03-29
 Michelle Brinkmeier, 03-29
 Colton Schoppenhorst, 03-29
 Shawn Urban, 03-30
 Gary Henricks, 03-30
 Sandy Dunajcik, 03-31
 Bill Rhodes, 03-31

Happy

Anniversary

Kevin and Diane Harms, 03-03
 Brian and Jill Rensing, 03-04
 Jay and Darla Hollowood, 03-06
 Austin and Stephanie Seifert, 03-07
 Jerry and Lori Bravi, 03-08
 Dwight and Carol Puntigan, 03-09
 Brian and Mackenzie Thomas, 03-13
 Amy and John Brake, 03-14
 John and Joyce Hume, 03-14
 Don and Kathy Randolph, 03-17
 Bill and Peggy Clemens, 03-17
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 Mike and Ruth Conant, 03-23
 Wyatt and Kristen Gross, 03-25
 Roy and Carole Schoenholtz, 03-28
 Hunter and Amanda Lansche, 03-28
 Jay and Juanita Jones, 03-29
 Ryan and Megan Kemper, 03-30
 Brian and Karen Stricklett, 03-30
 John and Kim Harnagel, 03-31
 George and Mary Marcher, 03-31



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