

OPENDOOR

SEPTEMBER 2022



HOLY TRINITY
LUTHERAN CHURCH

News from Pastor Lee

For churches to move forward successfully, it is important to have short- and long-term plans that help us to focus our ministry, our time, and our resources to grow in faith and discipleship. Over the past six months, I have interacted and observed our congregation and have come up with a one-, three-, and five-year plan. For this month's article I am going to focus on the first year but will be addressing years three and five at the annual meeting on October 23rd and in future newsletters.

For this first year I would like to focus on building relationships. It has been a very long season of Covid, and it has caused us to be more disconnected from others. We also have multiple new households that we look forward to getting to know. While meeting for church in-person is a good start, I believe that specific worship opportunities and activities will allow for spiritual growth, ministry opportunities, and meaning for people. To do this I would like to add these additional opportunities.

Family Faith Formation

Raising a family is hard work! Add to it trying to raise vibrant disciples of Christ, and all too often it feels like there isn't time or energy for our own faith formation. We recognize the hard work parents are putting in to fulfill the baptismal promises we all made by leading our children and youth faith formation opportunities. We are now offering an opportunity for busy parents to take a breath and have an opportunity to focus on their faith. On the **first Sunday of the month**, we will be offering a time of faith formation and fellowship for adults, with childcare provided. The adults will gather for faith formation that will include a meal and fellowship while the children are fed

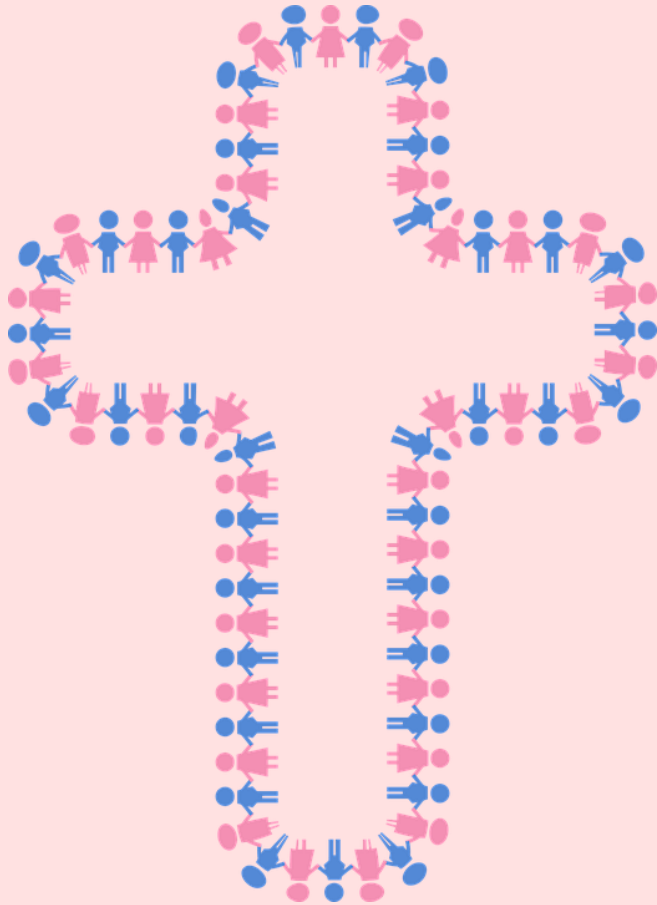
and cared for. **Our first gathering will be Sunday, October 2nd following worship until 1:00pm.**

Third Thursday Worship and Fellowship

On the third Thursday of each month, we will gather at 11:30am for food and fellowship. As we continue to navigate Covid safety, everyone is asked to bring their lunch with them. (A microwave is available.) We will eat together in the lounge. Following our meal, we will gather for worship in the Sanctuary from 12:45-1:15pm. All are welcome to the meal and/or worship. **The first gathering will be Thursday, September 15th.**

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Spiritual Practices: Lectio Divina and Centering Prayer

Are you looking for ways to make the words of the Bible come alive and relevant to what is going on in your day? Are you looking for ways to respond instead of react, ways to ground yourself more deeply into the love of God? Deb Blum, new member to HTLC but not to Lutheranism or being a disciple, is going to be leading a course on Lectio Divina (sacred reading) and centering prayer as ways that can help us become more grounded in the love of God. **The first meeting to discuss future meetings will be in the chapel on September 18th following worship.** This will be a very brief meeting to discuss future meetings, so you will still be able to attend the Jubilee Tea and have your picture taken with the queen.

The Grief Lectionary Study

There are many in our congregation experiencing grief. From the loss of a loved one, to a difficult diagnosis, to loss of jobs, to living through Covid and changed lives and more, there is a lot of grief in our midst. Beginning in November, we will be offering a The Grief Lectionary Study. This is a six-session study using Scripture to access and process grief. Each Scripture story is paired with one or more stages of grief. Participants are invited to access their grief through an opening meditation, then read the Scripture story and reflect on questions. Each session closes with a blessing meant to remind participants that God is present and at work in the grieving process. We will also have a "Blue Christmas" worship service in December. More details on time and location will be available in October.

Visits with the Pastor

While continuing visits with our shut-ins, I would like to have the opportunity to get to know others more. I will be setting up visits over the next year with all our members. This doesn't mean I have to come to your home. Maybe I can join you at work for a coffee or lunch. Maybe you want to meet at a coffee shop or at church for a cuppa and conversation. Maybe you want to bring the kids to a playground, and we can talk while they run around and play. I'm very open to options that work for you. I just want to get to know you! You are welcome to call, text, or email if you have a time in mind. Otherwise, be prepared for me to be contacting you to make a getting-to-know you date.

Fifth Sunday Missions

Every 5th Sunday during worship a member of the congregation will share about a ministry that they participate in outside of the congregation. Following worship there will be information about how you can support or be involved in this ministry. We have many disciples doing amazing things in the community and want to make sure that we are aware of the needs in our communities and how we can respond. If you are willing to share your ministry, please contact me to set up a date

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and discuss details.

Looking Ahead

For Advent we will have a weekly traditional worship service in the afternoon and an Advent Bed-time Story in the evening. During Lent we will have a weekly traditional worship in the afternoon and Intergenerational Activities in the evening. This spring we will look at starting a women's book group. In June we will be joining with Our Saviour's Lutheran Church for a Mission Trip to Guatemala lead by Pastor Will Peugeot. More details about each of these worship opportunities and activities will be coming as they get closer.

While there are multiple new opportunities for faith formation, ministry, and fellowship, we also have amazing ongoing ministries that need our participation, leadership, and support. This includes:

Adult and Children's Sunday School

Beginning on September 19th both children and adults will have Sunday School beginning at 9:00am. This is a great time for learning and fellowship. While we have a great group of parents leading our children's Sunday School, we really need more teachers, including substitute teachers. The curriculum is provided and is easy to follow and use. You don't have to be a parent or have teaching experience to make a difference in a child's faith. Sunday School is one of the major ways that we, as a congregation, fulfill the promises we make to everyone who is baptized to help them to learn and grow in their faith. While parents are a necessary part of this, it is important that children experience other faithful adults teaching them. Please consider signing up to help. If you would like additional information you can talk with me or Diane Longdo.

Confirmation

Confirmation classes will be held at HTLC this year, in conjunction with Our Saviour Lutheran Church.

We will begin with a youth and their trusted adult orientation on Monday, October 3 at 6:00pm. Snacks will be provided as we do some introductions and go through the Confirmation Handbook and schedule. Confirmation classes will be on Mondays. Confirmation is geared for 6th – 8th grade students to help them explore their faith and be prepared to affirm their baptism and take on these responsibilities. Information will be sent out to families in September.



We will kick things off on **Rally Day on Sunday, September 11th**. You will hear more about these opportunities and sign up to participate and lead. While not everything will work for everyone, I hope that there are enough opportunities that everyone can find a place to be involved. While worship is the center of living out our faith, we all need additional opportunities to learn, grow, and nourish our faith! Also, if there is a ministry or opportunity you would like to see happening at HTLC, please do not hesitate to reach out. I truly appreciate when you share this with me so we can come up with ways to address our needs.

I look forward to continuing to minister with you!

Shalom,

Pastor Elizabeth

Beautification Call Out

Ideas for fall and winter projects around the church will be topic of discussion October 4th at 7:00p.m. in the conference room. This evening session will give folks with daytime work schedules an opportunity to participate.

It can be satisfying to join with others from your church family to help with the beautification of our House of God.





About a decade ago, on my way to a national gathering of pastors, my connecting flight took me through Raleigh, North Carolina.

I had about 90 minutes before the next leg of my journey, so I walked down to the departure gate just to make sure things were in order.

That's when I saw the sign. At the check-in counter there was a prominent notice that said, "Ask about our upgrades to first class." I thought, Wow. That sure would be nice. I grabbed a bite to eat, read a few pages from a book, then came back about 45 minutes later. There sat my friend Steve, a fellow pastor who had reservations on the very same flight. He said, "Hey, guess what? I'm flying first class the rest of the way... for free."

"You're kidding!" I said. "How did you pull that off?" "Well," said Steve. "Do you see that sign over there – the one that says, 'Ask about our upgrades to first class'? I asked. I just got the last seat available."

Now I want you to know that I was truly happy for my 6'4" friend. But as I shoehorned myself into my spacious and elegant coach seat, and looked around and noticed that every single seat in our section of the plane was occupied, I had to wonder: Why didn't any of these people ask about the upgrade to first class?

For that matter, why didn't I ask?

To tell you the truth, I think I assumed that the sign just had to be for somebody else. How nice it was to be flying with an airline that upgrades people as an act of grace. But I chose not to ask. Such grace couldn't be for me. How tragic it would be to go through life knowing that a God of

From "Morning Reflections"
written by Glenn McDonald

grace rules the cosmos – but to convince ourselves that feasting on such grace is only for others.

Today we arrive at verse six of the first chapter of Ephesians, where Paul makes it clear that God's grace is the centerpiece of his actions on our behalf: ***"to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves."***

Grace is the Bible's one-word description of something that takes many words to explain. Grace means that God's presence, God's love, and God's forgiveness cannot be earned. They cannot be deserved. They can only be received.

In the words of Bible commentator Klyne Snodgrass, "Grace is the Judge of the universe asking criminals to sit down to a meal in his home."

This idea, however, goes so strongly against the grain of human instinct that virtually every religion on earth turns out to be a set of spiritual self-improvement strategies. God will favor us if we are good, or if we perform, or if we love God first.

But the New Testament turns all that on its head. According to Jesus, God loves us. Period. And right now he's making the offer of a lifetime. *Deal or No Deal*: You can be in a transforming relationship with God in which he provides all the power, all the meaning, and all the resources – if you will abandon all your efforts to win God over according to some kind of performance plan.

That's grace.

Notice God's delivery system for this extraordinary gift: "...which he has freely given us *in the One he loves.*"

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Bible students have long noticed Paul's affection for the phrase "in Christ" (or equivalents like "in him," "in the Lord," or here, "in the One"). It appears a remarkable 83 times in his letters, including 27 times in Ephesians alone.

What does it mean?

If you have thrown in your lot with Christ, then you have a dual citizenship. You live in a particular community, state, and nation. But you also live *in him*. Knowing Jesus is like living in another country even while you live in your same old house on your same old street.

Every time you are *in Starbucks* you are also "in Christ" – and that should make a difference regarding how you place your order, how you relate to the barista, and how you demonstrate God's reality to the next person in line.

But the meaning of Paul's phrase plunges even deeper than that. Living "in Christ" can be described as a state of being. Think of the ways that our thoughts, actions, and emotions are often dominated by other states of perception.

Imagine what it's like, for instance, to be "in debt." Your financial condition feels like a burden you lug around wherever you go. Every purchase, every decision, every choice of this dinner entrée over that one is shaded by the realization that it will be hard to open your next VISA bill. Your debt has become a part of your

life, and it goes to bed with you every night when you try to fall asleep.

Then there's being "in pain." It's easy to take mobility for granted – right up to the moment we suffer a back injury. That's when we realize that our back is indispensable for getting dressed, reaching for a box of cereal, getting into the car, and picking up a child. Everything hurts. All the time. Or how about a toothache? A painful tooth goes with us to work, to the movies, and to a summer cookout. Being in pain means our attention is continually diverted to that source of agony.

How about being "in love"? Life is beautiful. Every problem feels solvable. Hope abounds. Tomorrow will be better than today, and the next day will be better still. Being in love is the fountain of youth and the elixir of happiness.

But of course it doesn't last.

Being "in Christ," however, does.

When we embrace Jesus, every conversation becomes a conversation in which the Messiah takes part. Every day becomes a Messiah-day. Every problem becomes an issue that the Messiah challenges us to address in his way, with his resources.

Just as our thoughts and feelings can be overwhelmed by the experience of being in pain, in debt, in distress, or in love, our eyes can be opened to the fact that being in Christ means he is the always-present Lord over our health, our possessions, our emotions, and our relationships.

Being in Christ means we live every day in the Messiah's domain – Jesus' geography of grace.

That doesn't mean we always get to fly first class.

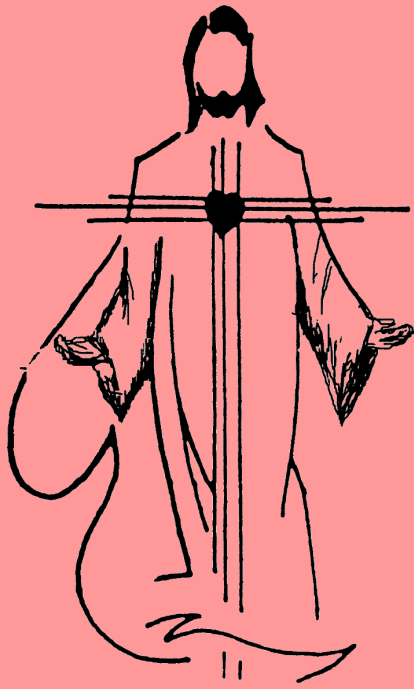
But it does mean we will never be flying alone.



From "Morning Reflections" written by Glenn McDonald.



Glenn is an ordained Presbyterian minister, has 33 years of congregational leadership experience, and is the author of ten books on discipleship and spiritual formation.



PRAYER FOR OUR CHURCH

Teach us, good Lord,
 To serve you as you deserve,
 To give, and not to count the cost;
 To fight, and not to heed the wounds;
 To toil, and not to ask for any
 reward,
 except that of knowing that we do
 your holy will; through Jesus Christ
 our Lord. Amen

-Ignatius Loyola



LET'S CELEBRATE

September Birthdays

- 2 Will Peugeot
- 3 Doug Gustafson, Dorothy Schurr
- 7 Delores Linden, Wayne Russell,
John Kretzschmar
- 10 Tom Cavanaugh
- 11 Anita Slavens, Barby Wood
- 12 Debra Blum
- 13 Michele Russell,
Cecily Cavanaugh
- 23 Anne Hawk
- 24 Bill Hillery
- 25 Aaron Hoskins
- 27 Joe Wenthold
- 28 Jim Wagner
- 29 Joseph Hawk
- 30 Sandra Donahue, Kevin Hintzman,
Connie Getchel

September Anniversaries

- 6 Jeff Greeley & Gretchen Freese
- 7 Wayne & Michele Russell
- 17 Todd & Stephanie Crowe



Thrivent Financial for Lutheran is hosting a knitting project again this year.

They are asking for hand-knitted scarves, hats, mittens and/or ear warmers, that will be distributed to those in need this winter.

Items will be collected by mid-November.

More details to come as they become available.

Thank you for your work with this ministry.



Lafayette Urban Ministry's **Hunger Hike** is an annual community fundraising event whose mission is to **Raise Awareness & Make a Difference** in the **Fight Against Hunger** — locally, regionally & globally. Hunger Hike (Celebration & 1.5K Walk) event details are as follows:

DATE - Sunday, September 18

TIMES - 1 p.m. – Event begins;
2 p.m. – Hike starts

PLACE - Riehle Plaza,
N 2nd Street, Lafayette, IN

Hunger Hike is the perfect event for a team or group — church group, student organization, civic group or your family. Put together a Hunger Hike team and start raising money using our online fundraising site — or any way you choose. We hope you'll consider joining our ***Fight against Hunger.***





Aviator Game from the Stands



Tea for Jubilee

Did you know...

1. The Queen of England celebrated her Platinum Jubilee with a tea party?
2. Now is the time for us to begin preparing for Jubilee Christmas?
3. That a synonym for Jubilee is “celebration?”

So, EVERYONE is invited for a cuppa tea and a time of fellowship.

Here's the plan for September 18th:

- Fellowship hour after worship will be transformed into a Jubilee Tea Party. We'll bring out our fancy dishes and you might see a fascinator or two. Fancy clothes are optional, but you will not be alone if you choose to dress up or even wear a hat.
- Stop in the lounge for a spot of tea, coffee, fruited beverage and a few other special treats.
- If you would like to have a picture of yourself having tea with the Queen, we'd be glad to snap a picture! Her majesty will have her own table.
- Donation envelopes will be available to collect cash, checks or a “Vanco Pledge” for Jubilee Christmas.
- First 10 donors can grab a gift from the Tea Bag shelf.



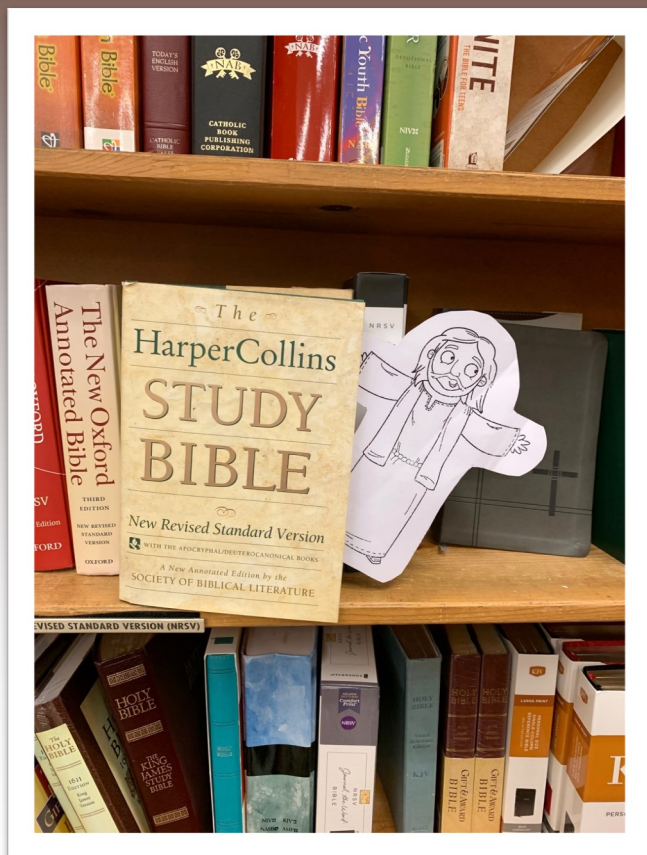
Blimey... Does this all sound too fancy for you? No worries. Here are a couple options:

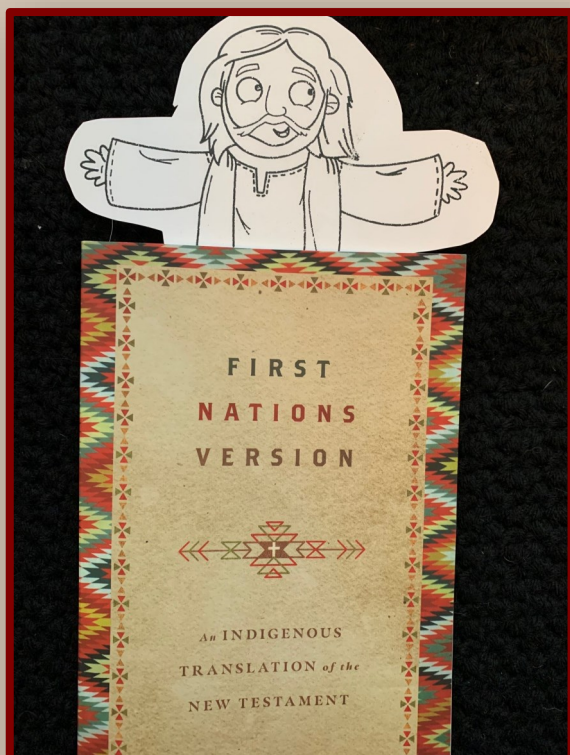
- 1) Stop by the quick serve area just outside the lounge for a snack and a smile.
- 2) Wait for the crazy Mad Hatter party will make you wonder if you followed Alice into Wonderland. More on that next month!

ABOUT JUBILEE CHRISTMAS:

Jubilee Christmas is one of HTLC's long-standing outreach ministries. It is a partnership with the Lafayette Urban Ministry (LUM) and local churches. Guests are low-income parents who have been registered by LUM and assigned to HTLC. Guests are welcomed to our church for an opportunity to prepare for their own family's Christmas. This morning of joy and community good will makes our guests the “hero” of their holiday celebration. Parents shop for toys in addition to receiving clothing, a food certificate, household supplies, and a hand-made quilt by our amazing quilters.

The Continuing Adventures of Flat Jesus





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BIBLE PASSAGE — Luke 17:5-10

The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!" The Lord replied, "If you had faith the size of a mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you."

Agnus Day



Who among you would say to your slave who has just come in from plowing or tending sheep in the field, 'Come here at once and take your place at the table'? Would you not rather say to him, 'Prepare supper for me, put on your apron and serve me while I eat and drink; later you may eat and drink'? Do you thank the slave for doing what was commanded? So you also, when you have done all that you were ordered to do, say, 'We are worthless slaves; we have done only what we ought to have done!'"

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