



The Evangel

Vol. 40, Edition 5

May 2023

Our Saviour Lutheran Church

*is a congregation of the
Indiana-Kentucky Synod of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church
in America.*

*We welcome all
to share in life with Christ
as a community
of faith in mission.*

OSLC's Vision & Mission

*God calls us to be a community of
discipleship for all, making Christ's
love real in our daily lives.*

*Grow in faith and Christian calling
Love and serve God and neighbor
Proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ*

Worship on Sundays

9:00 A.M. (Online and in-person)

11:30 A.M. (in-person) May 7 & 14

Join the Zoom Meeting or watch
live on OSLC's facebook page.

Email OSLC (info@osluth.org) and you will
receive a bulletin and a Zoom invite.



***Randy Schroeder, Pastor
Kristin Rice, Campus Pastor***

The birth of Mother's Day

Anna M. Jarvis (1864-1948) loved her mother dearly. It was Miss Jarvis who first suggested a national day to honor all mothers. At a memorial service for her mother on May 10, 1908, Anna gave a carnation, her mother's favorite flower, to each person in attendance. Within a few years, the idea to honor mothers gained popularity, and Mother's Day was soon observed annually in many large cities of the United States.

On May 9, 1914, by an act of congress, President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed the second Sunday of May as Mother's Day. He established the day as a time for "public expression of our love and reverence for the mothers of our country." By then, it had become customary to wear white carnations in honor of departed mothers and red carnations to honor the living. The custom continues to this day.

A Mother's Day hymn

Sing praise to our Creator God!
Earth prospers from the way
God "mothers" each new child into
This world day after day.

God fabricates in motherhood
A channel from above
That longs to share with every child
God's comfort, grace and love!

Sing praise to our Creator God,
Who "mothers" us from birth!
Providing what we truly need
Throughout our lives on earth.
—Peggy Ferrell



**Worship
Schedule
for the
Summer**

**May 21
through
August 13
one service
at 9:00 AM
in-person and
on zoom**

Pastor's Letter

Easter Blessings: Fear and Great Joy

Alleluia!! Christ is risen!! Christ is risen indeed!! Alleluia!!

Grace, mercy and peace to you and your families from God and the risen Christ!! Our Easter journey has begun!! The tomb is empty, and Jesus is on the loose. We have many things for which to be hopeful; first of which is new life in Christ.

With the empty tomb comes the promise of new life. As the earth begins to turn green and immerse from its state of rest, we feel the same nudge from our Creator. We have been dormant for the winter and now we are ready to immerse ourselves in the warming sun and the loving Son. But sometimes that takes courage.

On Easter morning, we heard from the Gospel of Matthew that Mary Magdalene and the other Mary arrived at the tomb and the Angel of the Lord said, "*Do not be afraid.*" A tall order, seeing that they witnessed an earthquake and the angel rolled back the stone then sat on it. This was enough to send others running or cause others to faint like the Roman Guards who were guarding the tomb. (see Matthew 28:1-10) <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+28%3A1-10&version=NRSVUE>

I am sure the women were frightened because of what they witnessed. But the scripture also could also be interpreted in a different way. The women were told to leave the empty tomb to go and tell the disciples that Jesus had been raised, and that Jesus would meet them in Galilee. This is when they quickly left the tomb with fear and great joy. So, their fear could have been compounded by learning that resurrection works; that Jesus conquered death; that everything is now different; and now they had an important job to do. They now must share the good news that Jesus is alive, goodness overpowers evil, and love defeats death.

I am sure the women were fearful that no one would listen to them. But on a deeper level, because of the empty tomb, because of the resurrection of Christ, they know love, forgiveness, mercy, and peace reign here and now. It means that when Jesus said, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.'"³⁸ This is the greatest and first commandment.³⁹ And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself,'"⁴⁰ (Matthew 22:37-39) he means we are called to live in love for the betterment of community. To live this way is scary. But it is with great joy that we should love others as ourselves and do our best not to cause division. God's grace falls on all people the same.

What makes living in love so scary? Because we must rethink how we live. Take, for example, the story we have in Acts 2:44-47 –

⁴⁴All who believed were together and had all things in common; ⁴⁵they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. ⁴⁶Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, ⁴⁷praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved."

I have thought the folks of the early church agreed on everything, always. But what if they didn't? What if their ideologies in life differed as much as ours do today? But, they somehow realized that for the common good they had to drop those personal philosophies because they believed Love wins no matter what, because of the empty tomb. In present day terms: We might hold different views and watch different news medias, but for the benefit of the common good we see God in one another and we choose to be united in Christ. Because God wins!

This is scary because we would have to listen instead of arguing. We would need to be compassionate instead of proving we are 'right.' We would have to love all instead of only loving those we find agreeable to our ideologies and theologies. It's scary because we would need to lose ourselves for the sake of the Gospel. Yet as we do this our fear is met with great joy. The resurrection of Christ changes everything and gives us Easter courage to change through love.

I give thanks for you each and every day! I am thankful for your partnership in ministry as we continue together. ☺
May God's peace and mercy fill you in this season of Easter.

Peace,

Pastor Randy



News You Can Use

Council Highlights

- ⇒ Erin Thompson will be the new OSLC office secretary, beginning in late May.
- ⇒ Missy will be training for grief/end of life counseling.
- ⇒ Result of a discussion of the fall schedule at OSLC: we will continue with two services, with some changes made in the second service.
- ⇒ Our current sound system is starting to short out. There's a plan to replace it.
- ⇒ Voted to accept John Mills as Church Treasurer. We'll continue to seek a new Financial Secretary.
- ⇒ Voted to raise the fee for the sanctuary rental to \$200.

PASTOR'S SCHEDULE

Pastor Randy will be away for the Wabash Pastoral Leadership Program, on vacation, or at Mission Guatemala for the following dates:

May 15-17

June 10-18 (Mission Guatemala)

July 25-August 2 (Vacation)

August 7-9

October 3-10

December 4-6



Stewardship Article

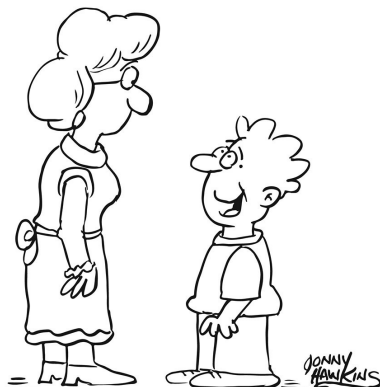
My Take on Stewardship May 2023

We have such a broad range of opportunities to do Stewardship. They can be our own personal choice or jointly with interest groups, or with our church family. As a church we are grateful for God's blessings and want to give back to those in need. It can be overwhelming to do what is needed when our abilities barely make a dent in any project for the needy. But even a small amount from our wallets helped our young people succeed in the Souper Bowl. Keeping the fridge at PLM supplied with snacks keeps our students connected and engaged. We can go beyond our walls to IK Synod, ELCA World Hunger in any gift we can afford. We can build our Foundation and give our earnings to local caring groups or help Mission Guatemala, Ukrainian refugees and Disaster Relief.

Let us pray for guidance as to how we can in our present day apply the biblical stories of cultivating and fertilizing fig trees and grapevines.

Dick Rahdert

**Our
Saviour's
Love we
Celebrate**



"Mom — you deserve a raise for raising me."



Our Saviour
LUTHERAN CHURCH

SAVE THE DATE
CHURCH PICNIC
JUNE 25 2023
COLUMBIAN PARK



MAY UPDATES

Easter Greetings!



As Spring is emerging and we are witnessing new life in the season of resurrection and new life, I am reminded of a female Christian Mystic named Hildegard of Bingen. She lived from 1098-1179. She spoke of a concept she experienced and gave name to. ***Viriditas: the greening power of the Divine (or Divine Healing Power of Green).*** In her words this viriditas or greening power of God is the life force that gives everything, the earth, it's creatures and us, "the creative power of life". Hildegard lived in the Rhine Valley and witness it's lush, green beauty. She noticed the Divine greening power of God in all that she saw, touched and experienced.

For Hildegard, viriditas is that natural driving force, the life force that is always directed toward healing and wholeness.

Love, too, is the breath of the same vital green power that sustains all life's greenness. She sees the Holy Spirit as that power that gives human being the green and open space where they are capable of responding to the Word and joining in all of creation. (<https://maypoleofwisdom.com/hildegard-of-bingen/>)

As the world greens around us my invitation for all of us is to notice the viriditas that is happening all around us and within us. How are we connecting to Love, the healing greening power of the Divine? May we be open to live lives as simple and as complicated as opening our eyes to the presence of God who is always with us, opening our hearts to receive the wisdom and healing that God has to offer us, and opening our hands to participate in the viriditas and healing of the world. Amen.

Centering Prayer Class To Be Offered Again

Are you interested in different ways of praying? Have you ever thought of trying praying in a meditative and more contemplative way but you are not sure how to start? You are invited to join a class on Centering Prayer on **May 9th at 7:00 pm** via zoom led by Missy Schroeder. Missy is a Spiritual Director, Retreat Leader, Life Coach and Faith Formation Director at OSLC.

What is Centering Prayer?

Centering Prayer is a method of silent prayer that prepares us to receive the gift of contemplative prayer, prayer in which we experience God's presence within us, closer than breathing, closer than thinking, closer than consciousness itself. This method of prayer is both a relationship with God and a discipline to foster that relationship." <http://www.centeringprayer.com/>

During our time together we will discuss

- what Centering Prayer is
- what makes it a Christian practice
- the difference between Centering Prayer and meditation
- guidelines for Centering Prayer
- the benefits of Centering Prayer
- how to begin a Centering Prayer practice
- and offer an experience and discussion after
- discuss if there is interest in beginning a Centering Prayer group

If you are interested in joining the Centering Prayer class, please email Missy at missy@osluth.org.



Facebook-"Like" OSLC's page for Sunday Worship streamed live, updates and upcoming events: <https://www.facebook.com/osluth/>

Sunday School Schedule

May 7th- The Holy Spirit at Pentecost (Acts 2:1-21)

May 14th- The Early Believers (Acts 4:32-35)- **Last day of Sunday School**

PLM Graduate Celebration

May 7th help us celebrate our PLM graduates. PLM will be hosting the fellowship hour and there will be a special blessing and sending of our PLM graduates at our 11:30 service.

Graduate Celebration and Henderson Family Blessing and Godspeed Service

Join us in celebrating Ben Henderson's graduation from Harrison High School and blessing the Henderson family as they begin their new journey in Iowa on May 21st. We will have a special fellowship hour after our 9:00 am service. All are welcome.

More Faith Formation News

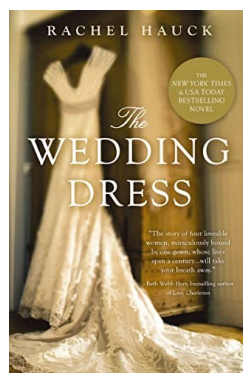
Earth Day Fun!

We had a great time helping clean up around the church, exploring the nature center, having a picnic, doing an Earth Day scavenger hunt at the Celery Bog, then eating ice cream at the Silver Dipper on April 22nd! Thanks to the parents who participated and to the amazing PLM student Zac who is always so much fun!



Dinner Group

Are you looking for an opportunity to get to know the people in our community? We have been apart for so long and we are hopeful that now is the time we can come back together. We have had some interest in starting a dinner group. This group would meet once a month around a meal to create friendships and community, and share life together. If this is something that you would be interested in participating in, please email Missy at missy@osluth.org.



Book Discussion in May

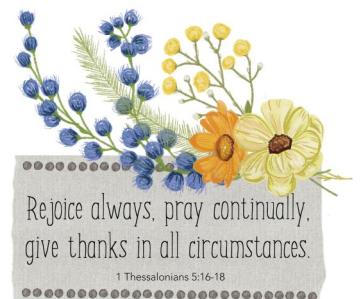
For May we will discuss Rachel Hauck's *The Wedding Dress*, a tale of faith, redemption, and timeless love.

This will be a zoom meeting on Tuesday, May 23 at 5:00 pm. All are welcome. Email info@osluth.org for a zoom invitation.



Risen Jesus, as spring blossoms around me, may your love blossom in me, that I might share its fragrance and brilliance with others. Amen.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
		6 PM Pax		8 PM AA	OSLC Office is closed.	8:30 AM Men's Breakfast Group at Café Literato
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
9 AM Worship in-person & Zoom 11:30 AM Worship in-person		6 PM Pax 7 PM Centering Prayer Class via zoom	6:30 PM Council Meeting	8 PM AA	OSLC Office is closed.	
14 Mother's Day	15	16	17	18	19	20
9:00 AM Worship in-person & Zoom 11:30 AM Worship in-person		6 PM Pax		8 PM AA		
21 Note! 1 Service!	22	23	24	25	26	27
9 AM Worship in-person & Zoom 1-4 PM Hearts & Crafts		6 PM Pax 7 PM Book Discussion via zoom	11 AM—2 PM Hearts & Crafts	8 PM AA		
28 Pentecost	29	30	31			
9 AM Worship in-person & Zoom 	Memorial Day OSLC Office is closed.	6 PM Pax				



9 AM Worship Assistant Schedule for May

Date	Cantor	Assisting Minister	Lector	Usher	Assistant to Mike Williams
May 7	Russell Hillberry	Robert Hershberger	Dee Hershberger	Marcia Daehler	Jesse Grogan
May 14		Reuben Peterson	Dick Rahdert	Jesse Grogan	Matt Ohland
May 21	Russell Hillberry	Scott Vana	Sandra Vana	Dick Rahdert	Missy Schroeder
May 28	Mark Hermodson	Dick Rahdert	Clara Gearhart	Calvin Gearhart	Jesse Grogan

11:30 AM Worship Assistant Schedule for May

Date	Assisting Minister	Lector	Usher
May 7	Christy O'Brien	Christy O'Brien	Missy Schroeder
May 14	Missy Schroeder	Sandra Vana	Scott Vana

Times and Locations of Ministry Meetings

Property normally meets on the first Sunday of the month, shortly after the 9:00 service ends. The meeting is moved to other Sundays as needed to accommodate the schedules of its members. If you are interested in attending the meetings or joining the property ministry team, please contact Matt Ohland at ohland@purdue.edu to be notified of changes in the regular meeting time. **Congregational Life** meets in the Fellowship Hall on Servant Sundays. All are welcome! **Faith Formation** meets via zoom to accommodate the schedules of its members. New members are welcome! Contact Missy Schroeder (missy@osluth.org) for more info. **Operations** meets only when there is a need or crisis. If you would like to attend one of the meetings, please email Dick Rahdert and he will notify you of the time and place. **Finance** normally meets on Servant Sunday afternoon via zoom. Meetings are usually suspended during the months of June, July, and August. **Social Justice** meets in the Fellowship Hall on Servant Sunday. All are welcome! **Evangelism** meets on Servant Sundays, usually via zoom. Scott Vana would be happy to send you a zoom invite.

Social Justice Opportunities

Indiana's Own Philip Gulley Speaking at Federated Church May 6, 2023 7 PM

Join Federated Church in West Lafayette on Saturday, May 6 at 7 PM for a very special evening of laughter, hope, and inspiration with Indiana's own pastor/author/humorist Philip Gulley. Admission for the first 300 attendees is free, but you must have a ticket to be admitted. Free tickets are available at [Brown Paper Tickets](#) or at the church's office. Seating is not reserved; doors open at 6:15 p.m. Gulley will be available after his talk to sign your books, but please note that there will be no books available for purchase. If you wish to support Federated Church and Philip Gulley's outreach to the Greater Lafayette Area community, donations may be made [here](#). All proceeds will go to Habitat for Humanity of Lafayette.



**LAFAYETTE
URBAN
MINISTRY**

LUM offers volunteer opportunities to fit every schedule, from regular long-term commitments such as being an advocate once a week with the Immigration Clinic, Financial Assistance Program or ID Clinic — or doing data entry at the LUM Food Pantries or intake for shelter guests each weekday — to annual events such as Hunger Hike, LUM Camp, Community Thanksgiving Feast, Turkey Trot 5K Run, Gala of Hope fundraising event or Jubilee Christmas.



OSLC and UU are partnering to provide support in 2023.

We are scheduled to provide meals for these dates:

June 5, 7, 9

August 21, 23, 25

September 18, 20, 22

Contact Julie Huettelman, juliehuettelman@gmail.com

if you have questions.

Family Promise - <http://www.fpglinc.org>

Volunteers Needed

Family Promise needs help with:

Supply Drives

Fundraising

Office Help (filing, spreadsheets, database entry, etc.)

Volunteer Shelter Advocates

Hosting Meals in the shelter

Family Activities

Organizing Donations

Life Skills Workshops

Transportation

Donations Needed

Cleaning Items

Laundry Baskets
Toilet Paper
Paper Towel
Dishwasher Pods
Pine-Sol
Disinfectant Surface Cleaner (such as Microban, Lysol, or Clorox)
Lysol Aerosol Spray
Windex
Toilet Bowl Cleaner
Toilet Bowl Brush
Magic Eraser
Laundry Detergent
Dryer Sheets
Oxy Clean

Personal Hygiene Items

Hair Brushes
Combs
Toothbrushes
Toothpaste
Mouthwash
Shampoo/Conditioner
Body Lotion
Deodorant
Razors
Shaving Cream
Feminine Products
Diaper Wipes
Baby Shampoo, Wash, Lotion
Diaper Rash Cream

Linens & Things

Pillows
Large Bath Towels (prefer white)
Wash Cloths (prefer white)
Hand Towels (prefer white)
Full & Twin Sized Sheet Sets (prefer white)
Full Sized Comforters (any color)
Kitchen Towels (any color)
Cleaning Rags (any color)

Gently Used Items

Pots & Pans
Plates & Bowls
Cups
Silverware
Serving Dishes
Curtains

Dear Friends,

For Mulu and her daughter, Salam, life changed in an instant.

“We heard the sound of guns,” Mulu explains. **“They came into our home and took our things.”**

They are lucky to be alive. But now, in a refugee camp in Sudan, every day is a new fight to survive.

Flooding is a constant problem at the camp, resulting in knee-deep sewage from temporary latrines.

Mulu knows it's making Salam sick. But dirty water is all there is to drink.

Your gift of \$50, \$100 or \$250 — or any amount you're able to send — will provide immediate, lifesaving assistance to children suffering right now.

Your generous gift of any amount today provides clean water, functional latrines, safe, dry shelter, lifesaving food, critically needed medical care and more for families living in dire situations in Sudan and around the world.

Thank you for giving a hurting child hope for better days to come.

In Christ,



Ambassador Daniel Speckhard
President and CEO

P.S. They ran from violence. Now, they are living in horrific conditions.



Dirty water is
making them sick.
**But there's
nothing else
to drink.**

YOU CAN HELP



You're Always Welcome!

Men's Breakfast Group

Many years ago a younger group of OSLC men started to meet for breakfast once a month and had a topic for discussion or a book review. Everything changed so that now we are much older and we have no topic or book review. We just enjoy whatever comes up. Attendance ranges from five to nine and we meet at Literato at 8:30 am for an hour or so on the first Saturday of the month. We welcome newcomers and guests. There is plenty of space. Each orders their own food and drink and heads for our table.

Pease consider joining us.
Dick Rahdert

HEARTS & CRAFTS

You are invited to a time of fellowship, spiritual growth and crafting the third Sunday and (the following) Wednesday of every month. (Sunday 1-4 PM & Wednesday 11-2 PM). If you are an experienced crafter or a beginner, you are welcome! Bring your crafting supplies and your curiosity and let's make something good for those in need.



Service Opportunities



eSwatini Mission Trip 2023

GHFP invites you to join our team on a journey to the Kingdom of eSwatini, Africa to learn and dedicate your time, skills, and labor to a community of orphaned children struggling with poverty, HIV/AIDS, and illiteracy. These trips will be tailored to meet the needs of the local Swazi children while remaining cognizant of your skills and expertise including but not limited to: education, engineering, healthcare, nutrition, counseling, and art & design. If you are a student, we will work with your college or university to facilitate you earning independent study college credit for your experience! We at GHFP thank you for your commitment to make a stand, participate on a trip, and actively take part in the global effort to eradicate poverty in Swaziland, curb HIV/AIDS, and empower orphaned children!

We have multiple opportunities summer 2023 and would love to have you join us.

Contact: Annie Todt
anniefightspoverty@gmail.com

765-532-2586

www.ifightpoverty.org



United Campus Ministries Student Food Pantry serves college students from the four institutions of higher education in the Terre Haute area: Indiana State University, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, St. Mary of the Woods College, and Ivy Tech Community College.

Colleges and universities in the United States report upwards of 35% food insecurity among college students. Six years ago, a United Campus Ministries student participant learned about food insecurity on campus and requested permission to begin a student food pantry at United Campus Ministries. After extensive research, he applied for available grants. The pantry opened with used/donated supplies, a vacant basement room, and a food drive that brought in food.



Within a month of opening, the pantry was granted \$13,000 from the philanthropic group “One Hundred Women Who Care.” That donation allowed the pantry to grow and develop from a two-shelf start-up to a nine-shelf established space. The pantry is now fully supported by local congregations, supporting college students, and other generous givers. Trinity Lutheran Church in Terre Haute, for example, provides all breakfast and fresh items monthly.

Both Indiana State University and Ivy Tech serve first-generation college students and the process of moving from home and learning on one’s own can be a difficult – even shocking – transition for some, especially when you are the first from your family to ever do so. There is often a lack of family support. When students are hungry, it’s hard to focus on education. These young people are doing what they can to make a future for themselves and we know that Jesus is with them and we want to love them with the love of God through the work of this food pantry.

Pastor Dawn Black, Campus Pastor at United Campus Ministries, tells what she sees when a student uses the food pantry, “I so appreciate seeing a nervous student walk in feeling small and walk out tall with a smile on their face. It’s not easy to ask for help and a lot of people have shame around it. I love welcoming them and easing their burden both in body and spirit, watching that transformation happen and the shame melt away so they can focus on the immediate need and then I know they will also be able to focus on the future.”

When asked about her greatest hope for the student food pantry and the role the Indiana-Kentucky Synod plays in it, Pastor Black said, “I pray every day that we will be able to keep the doors open. Some months that hasn’t felt possible but God shows up to create space for us to continue. I hope we would be eligible and celebrated as a ministry of the IN-KY Synod and we could access some funding sources to not only meet our current need but also to establish a plan for the future of this pantry and continue it in perpetuity.”

Thank you for your gifts to the Indiana-Kentucky Synod which enable us to support the food pantry at United Campus Ministries. Several congregations have used Thrivent Action grants to purchase food that was then donated to the pantry. If you are interested in becoming involved, contact

[Pastor Dawn Black](#) at United Campus Ministries or
[Pastor Dan Fugate](#) at the Synod Office.



Indiana-Kentucky Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God’s work. Our hands.

Words of Wisdom

Life immortal

At the end of May, Americans honor those who've died for our country — and remember all deceased loved ones. These times of reflection, often in cemeteries, can make us ponder our own mortality. Even some Christians may fear the unknown of death.

Yet because of our faith, followers of Jesus can aim to make productive use of whatever earthly time we have left. We know the grave isn't the end. Consider this poetic description of life everlasting from Henry Wadsworth Longfellow: "Dust thou art, to dust returnest / was not spoken of the soul."

To our death-defying, death-defeating God we pray: *Eternal God, empower us to take hold of the eternal life to which Christ calls us, and to boldly testify of it to anyone who asks the reason for our hope. To the immortal King of the ages, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, to him be honor, glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.*

"God has not called you to your life mission in spite of who you are; he has called you precisely because of who you are."

—Reggie McNeal, *Practicing Greatness*

* * *

"You shouldn't go through life with a catcher's mitt on both hands; you need to be able to throw something back."

—Maya Angelou

* * *

"Happiness is like jam. You can't spread even a little without getting some on yourself."

—Unknown

Breath of the Spirit

The breathing I did yesterday will not keep me alive today. I must continue to breathe afresh every moment, or my life will cease. In like manner, yesterday's grace and spiritual strength must be renewed, and the Holy Spirit must continue to breathe on my soul from moment to moment in order that I may continue to enjoy him and to work the works he has assigned me.

—Augustus Toplady

Our proper role

"We're called to be witnesses, not lawyers or judges." This quip may bring a chuckle, but it's also a good reminder as we celebrate the Ascension of Our Lord (May 18 this year). Jesus directed his disciples to spread the good news he had taught them: "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses ..." (Acts 1:8, NRSV).

While professional lawyers and judges certainly have their place in society and can serve God by working for genuine justice for all, we are not called in daily life to judge others' morality or relationship with God. "Do not judge," Jesus says, "and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven" (Luke 6:37, NIV). And what is one of the most powerful forms of witness to Christ? Forgiveness.

The power of (God's) light

Do most people truly feel happier in spring? Is the light brighter, the sky bluer? Meteorologists say yes. The shorter, blue wavelengths of sunlight scatter more efficiently than long, red ones; as the sun rises higher in spring, the light passes through less atmosphere, making the sky appear bluer. Outdoor levels of light have proven as effective as Prozac to combat depression — and May is the sunniest month!

The Bible frequently uses light as a metaphor for God: "The Lord is my light and my salvation" (Psalm 27:1); "Let us walk in the light of the Lord" (Isaiah 2:5); "The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world" (John 1:9). Darkness isn't bad; seeds sprout in dark soil, life begins in the dark womb, and darkness protected the Hebrews fleeing Pharaoh and the holy family fleeing Herod.

But light is one apt image for God because most of us know the joy, health and energy light brings. Both in spring and through faith in the God who enlightens all, may we "live as children of light" (Ephesians 5:8).

—Heidi Hyland Mann

Prayer Ventures for May 2023

1 Praise God that we are never alone or forgotten and that God is our comfort, courage and guide in every circumstance of life. “Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me” (Psalm 23:4).

2 *Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month* Give thanks for the rich heritage, gifts, cultures and contributions to our nation and church of our Asian and Pacific Islander neighbors and siblings in Christ. Ask God to bless the work and witness of ELCA Asian and Pacific Islander Ministries and the ELCA’s Association of Asians and Pacific Islanders.

3 Pray for an end to the invasion of Ukraine and for a lasting peace that will lead to rebuilding, renewal and hope-filled visions of the future for the people and communities of Ukraine and its neighboring countries.

4 Ask God to help us face hardships, perplexing problems and worries with faith that produces confidence, courage, wisdom and a resilient spirit.

5 Pray for the leaders, voting members and others gathering for the assemblies of the Pacifica, Southwestern Washington, Metropolitan New York and Southeastern Pennsylvania synods, that the Spirit will strengthen, guide and inspire them as they reflect on the mission of the church, choose leaders and encourage one another to proclaim the gospel and serve our neighbors in need.

6 Pray for the leaders, voting members and others gathering for the assemblies of the Southeastern Minnesota and Arkansas-Oklahoma synods, that the Spirit will strengthen, guide and inspire them as they reflect on the mission of the church, choose leaders and encourage one another to proclaim the gospel and serve our neighbors in need.

7 Pray for the leaders, voting members and others gathering for the assembly of the North/West Lower Michigan Synod, that the Spirit will strengthen, guide and inspire them as they reflect on the mission of the church, choose leaders and encourage one another to proclaim the gospel and serve our neighbors in need.

8 Pray that our baptismal journey and the work we do as children of God will be inspired and informed by the generous and compassionate example of Jesus, who reveals God’s amazing love for humankind.

9 Give thanks for the work we do together through ELCA Mission Support and the funding it provides for the Lutheran Church of Rwanda’s Bible school, which trains lay leaders, and for construction of a seminary in Rwanda to train and equip pastors and evangelists.

10 Lift up prayers of praise and thanksgiving to God for Jesus Christ, our Savior and the enduring cornerstone upon which our faith, life and church are built.

11 Remember in prayer college and university students preparing for finals, discerning their futures and wondering how God will use their particular skills, knowledge and passion for the sake of the world and serving our neighbors in need.

12 Pray for the leaders, voting members and others gathering for the assemblies of the Saint Paul Area and Northeastern Ohio synods, that the Spirit will strengthen, guide and inspire them as they reflect on the mission of the church, choose leaders and encourage one another to proclaim the gospel and serve our neighbors in need.

13 Pray for the leaders, voting members and others gathering for the assembly of the New Jersey Synod, that the Spirit will strengthen, guide and inspire them as they reflect on the mission of the church, choose leaders and encourage one another to proclaim the gospel and serve our neighbors in need.

14 On Mother’s Day thank God for mothers, stepmothers, foster mothers and expectant mothers, and pray for women struggling with parenting, women trying to conceive and women who cannot bear children of their own but serve as loving, caring and faithful adults in the lives of children and youth.

15 Pray for the leaders, voting members and others gathering for the assemblies of the Southeastern Iowa (online) and Rocky Mountain synods, that the Spirit will strengthen, guide and inspire them as they reflect on the mission of the church, choose leaders and encourage one another to proclaim the gospel and serve our neighbors in need.

16 Ask the Spirit to strengthen our faith that Jesus Christ lives in us and continues to shape us throughout life until the day when he returns for us.

Prayer Ventures for May 2023

17 “Holy Spirit, truth divine, dawn upon this soul of mine; breath of God and inward light, wake my spirit, clear my sight” (*ELW* 398). Praise God for the gift of the Spirit, which awakens us to each day and sheds light on how we can live as children of God and followers of Christ, eager to share the gospel, serve our neighbors and radiate hope in the world.

18 Pray for the leaders, voting members and others gathering for the assemblies of the Northern Great Lakes and Southeast Michigan synods, that the Spirit will strengthen, guide and inspire them as they reflect on the mission of the church, choose leaders and encourage one another to proclaim the gospel and serve our neighbors in need.

19 Pray for the leaders, voting members and others gathering for the assembly of the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod, that the Spirit will strengthen, guide and inspire them as they reflect on the mission of the church, choose leaders and encourage one another to proclaim the gospel and serve our neighbors in need.

20 Pray for the leaders, voting members and others gathering for the assemblies of the Southeastern Iowa (in-person), Oregon, East-Central Wisconsin, South-Central Wisconsin and West Virginia-Western Maryland synods, that the Spirit will strengthen, guide and inspire them as they reflect on the mission of the church, choose leaders and encourage one another to proclaim the gospel and serve our neighbors in need.

21 Our faith is centered in the good news of Jesus Christ and inspires gratitude, joy and a spirit of love and mercy. “Sing to God, O kingdoms of the earth; sing praises to the Lord” (Psalm 68:32).

22 Pray for those recently diagnosed with cancer, who experience fear, hope, disbelief and difficult decisions; give thanks for health care professionals, chaplains, congregational ministries and cancer support groups that surround them and their families with care, encouragement and prayer.

23 What a life we live as disciples of Christ! We encounter temptations, humbling situations and conflict, yet we are emboldened by our faith and prodded forward by the Spirit in our baptismal journey. Give praise and thanks to God!

24 Pray for young people celebrating their graduations from high school and for parents and teachers who have equipped and encouraged them along the way; remember students who struggle with school, that they might have people in their lives who encourage and support them.

25 Remember in prayer candidates who serve in congregations and are involved in the ELCA Theological Education for Emerging Ministries (TEEM) program; give thanks for the scholarship assistance provided by ELCA Fund for Leaders.

26 Give thanks and praise to God for the gift of the Holy Spirit, which enriches our faith and gives us the ability to witness to God’s love and mercy and serve our neighbors everywhere.

27 Give thanks for the work of ELCA World Hunger and Lutheran Disaster Response, ministries of our church that gather our resources and combine them with those of domestic and global partners and companion churches to respond to our neighbors who have been impacted by hunger, poverty, injustice, and natural and human-caused disasters.

28 *Day of Pentecost* Praise God for the variety of gifts we have been given and how they complement the gifts of our siblings in Christ for spreading the gospel, growing the church, serving the needs of our neighbors and bringing hope to our communities and the world.

29 *Memorial Day* Remember, honor and give thanks for those in the armed forces who have given their lives for the sake of peace, justice and freedom. Pray for those who serve in harm’s way today, that they will be safe and that their faith, courage and commitment to the well-being of others will be strengthened and sustained.

30 Pray for people engaged in seasonal work, that they will have adequate housing, fair wages, safe work environments and supportive communities and congregations; promise to express recognition and gratitude for their hospitality, gifts and service.

31 Ask God to help us discern our spiritual gifts — as individuals and as communities of faith — and where they are most needed in the church and the world.

News items for the June *Evangel* are due to the office (info@osluth.org)
by 5/23/2023. Please type “Evangel” in the subject line.

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The Evangel



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