



# THE KING'S BANNER



Christ the King Lutheran Church, Houston, Texas  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
God's work. Our hands.

2353 Rice Blvd,  
Houston TX 77005  
ctkelc.org

Volume 74, Number 9  
September 2022

## RALLY DAY

### RALLY DAY SUNDAY

### OPEN HOUSE

**Sunday, September 11 at 9:30 a.m.**

Join us for the start of our new Sunday School year! Sunday School classes are offered for children aged 2 through confirmation class (high school classes will be meeting after 11:00 a.m. service). All children and parents are invited to come and experience a Godly Play class and learn more about our upcoming year. *See page 8.*

### Blessing of the Animals at Christ the King Church

Join us at either Christ the King Church campus for the annual blessing of our pets.

Rice Campus Courtyard  
Blessing of the Animals  
Saturday, October 1, 11:00 a.m.



West Campus  
Blessing of the Animals and Vendor Market  
Saturday, October 8, 9:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.  
*See page 10.*

## FALL SCHEDULE

### Worship

Saturdays	6:00 p.m.	Contemplative Holy Communion
Sundays	8:30 a.m.	Brief Order of Holy Communion
	10:30 a.m.	Holy Communion at West Campus
	11:00 a.m.	Holy Communion

### Faith Formation

Mondays	12:00 p.m.	Lectio Divina on Zoom
Wednesdays	10:30 a.m.	Adult Education in-person West Campus beginning September 21
Thursdays	3:00 a.m.	Bible Study with Pastor Derr on Zoom beginning September 22
Fridays	10:00 a.m.	Friday Morning Bible Study in-person and online beginning September 23
Sundays	9:30 a.m.	Sunday Forum beginning September 11
	9:30 a.m.	Godly Play and Confirmation Class beginning September 18

### An Anniversary Celebration

**Ordination Reception** (delayed due to Covid)  
**It's never too late to celebrate!**

**September 18, 12:15 p.m.**

Join us for a toast and cake in the courtyard to celebrate Pr. Sergio Rodriguez' ordination (one year ago).



### Oktoberfest

**Sunday, October 2**

On Sunday, October 2 at 5:00 p.m., Bach Society Houston will present Oktoberfest Vespers, featuring Cantata Bringet dem Herrn Ehre seines Namens, BWV 148. Afterwards, enjoy an Oktoberfest celebration in the courtyard with food provided by Luther League and music performed by the Christ the King Brass Choir and more.



houston **Saturday**  
**food** **September 10**  
**bank** **8:00 a.m. - noon**  
For information, contact [ctkhfb@gmail.com](mailto:ctkhfb@gmail.com)

*See page 10.*



### Sunday Justice Advocacy Event

**Sunday, September 11**

**before & after each worship service**

The Justice Advocacy Ministry invites you to use your hands to advocate. Find a variety of justice issues on which you can "speak up". Raise your voice for justice, and use your hands to do God's work of justice! *See page 16.*

## "God's Work.

## Our Hands."





## Dear faithful people of Christ the King Church:

You may find this article tedious and long because it is about matters we take for granted: Constitutions. But before you move on to some-

thing more interesting, remember: The U.S. Constitution and its interpretation is a “hot button” national conversation right now. More surprising (at least to me), the ELCA Constitution, By-laws and Continuing Resolutions and an idea for “Re-constituting” was a major theme addressed by voting members attending the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly in Columbus, Ohio last month (August 8-12). Related to these but different from each is our own congregational work to update our congregation’s constitution, by-laws, and continuing resolutions in light of our recent merger forming one congregation with two physical campuses (and a “virtual campus” too); and in preparation for the calling of a new senior pastor. So, tedious or not, constitutions are very much a matter of discussion among us now. In this article I want to comment on both the ELCA’s “Re-Constituting” and our own congregation’s constitutional updating.

First, however, a suggestion regarding the Constitution of the United States of America. September 17 is Constitution Day, celebrating the 235th anniversary of the ratification of the U.S. Constitution in 1787. My suggestion is simple: This month, let’s read it! I, for one, haven’t read the whole document since high school civics! How about you?

Now let’s deal with the possibility that the ELCA will hold a Constitutional Convention sometime after the 2025 ELCA Churchwide Assembly scheduled for Phoenix, Arizona. Voting members of the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly voted overwhelmingly to form a “Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church to “reconsider the statement of purpose..., the principles of organization, and all matters pertaining thereunto, being particularly attentive to our shared commitment to dismantle racism (emphasis mine); and to present its findings and recommendations to the 2025 ELCA Churchwide Assembly in preparation for a possible reconstituting convention...”

While this movement has been brewing for several years, enthusiasm for “reconstituting” was fueled last winter and spring by a significant misuse of the ELCA’s disciplinary procedures on a Latine pastor by the bishop of the Sierra Pacifica Synod just before he and the congregation he served, Santa Maria Peregrina, was preparing to celebrate the misa for Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe. Several additional missteps made it imperative for Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton to publicly apologize to this congregation at the Churchwide Assembly. This situation highlighted serious, some think

structural, flaws in the structure of the ELCA which still remains the whitest church body in America. Can this be remedied by drafting a new constitution?

With the members of this commission, yet to be formed, we all must ponder whether anything in our current ELCA governing documents for our Churchwide, synodical, or congregational expressions of the Church allows for, rather than dismantles, racism. Over the next several years, this will be an important and worthwhile conversation for all of us.

Each of the above constitutional issues are controversial and difficult; the work we need to do on our congregation’s constitution, bylaws and continuing resolutions is not. Here’s why.

Most of our congregation’s constitution can only be changed by the ELCA Churchwide Assembly. These are marked with an asterisk in our constitution and are unchangeable and are found in the ELCA’s Model Constitution for Congregations. Even if we wanted to, and we don’t, these articles cannot be changed.

So what are we working on? Who are “we”? Appointed by the congregation council who expect a report at the September congregation council meeting (September 13), “we” are Alicia Goodrow and George Brookover, assisted by me. When the council is satisfied with our proposals, they will be placed before the whole congregation for ratification sometime this autumn. An example of the kind of changes we’re looking at is in Chapter 1: Name and Incorporation where we simply must add a descriptive phrase stating that Christ the King Evangelical Lutheran Church is one congregation with two campuses. Other recommendations will focus on our committee structure. Others will be the simple act of adopting the changes the ELCA Churchwide Assembly has made over the years since our current constitution was adopted. While none of these are in any way controversial, they are important to complete in the wake of our merger and in preparation for the calling of new senior pastor. And all of these changes will be presented at Sunday forums and in other venues so everyone can weigh in on the changes we hope to make.

I started by saying this article would be tedious. I wrote this anyway because I believe that we all need to be informed about what’s happening in the ELCA and in this congregation as we seek to more effectively be “signs of God’s gracious love” in our constantly changing society and world. Questions? Comments? Please ask!

Peace and Joy – and Courage,

Amandus J. Derr  
Interim Senior Pastor



# MIKE SHELTON, 28 YEARS OF MINISTRY: FOR ALL YOU HAVE BEEN, THANKS!



After twenty-eight years of faithful service as a member of our Christ the King Church staff, Michael Shelton retired from his position on August 31, 2022.

Mike's "official" job title was Receptionist/Secretary. Anyone who has ever worked with Mike or asked him for any assistance knows that that job title, like most church-related job titles, never fully described his work

and his loving and supportive care for everything and everyone who entered our campus. Mike's deep commitment to warm hospitality was a hallmark of his ministry among us and his welcome always set at ease his colleagues, congregation members, friends, and visitors. Mike's willingness to assist members with their specific needs is legendary and will be sorely missed by us all. Mike was the longest serving member of Christ the King Church's staff and as such was also one of the few remaining "keepers of our institutional memory."

This volume of The King's Banner is Mike's last edition. As most of you know, Mike has been responsible for the professional look and excellence of this newsletter, as well as being the designer of most of our graphics, brochures, cards, posters, and signage about particular events or concerns. His creativity and commitment to clarity and excellence is evident in all of these published materials and in so many other ways.

Mike's job, his hours, and even his location in our building changed over the years. He collaborated with numerous staff members and pastors, three senior and two interim senior pastors, and a considerable number of members who serve as officers, congregation council members, committee members, and volunteers. When I responded to Mike's resignation letter, I wrote "your labor has not been in vain." All of us can attest to that. Michael Shelton's presence and work will be sorely missed and his legacy will be lasting. Thank you, Mike!

Once again, as with other retirements, one of our favorite prayers seems most appropriate.

"For all that has been, thanks! For all that will be, Yes!"



**Houston  
We Stand Together**

**Lutherans  
Are Here**



**A Stirring and Stimulating Sociable of  
Sipping and Singing**  
A Pairing of Wine and Hymns



**Wednesday  
Night Alive!**  
at Christ the King Lu



A small sampling of **Mike's Marvelous Masterpieces!**

# Mission Offering



## Peru

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH  
IN TRUJILLO, PERU



***The ELCA uses an accompaniment model for connecting the global church. Christ the King Church has been a companion congregation with the Lutheran Churches in Trujillo, Peru since 2010.***

La Iglesia Luterana de Peru, IL-P, [The Lutheran Church of Peru], a member of the Lutheran World Federation, is comprised of 16 congregations and faith communities. IL-P congregations are mostly found in and around Lima, Peru's political and economic capital, although IL-P has a presence around Trujillo's Northern coast, Iquitos in the Amazon Basin, and Huancayo and Cusco in the Central Andes. Christ the King Church has a companion relationship with four congregations/faith communities in and around Trujillo.

### **Why did we enter into a companion relationship?**

Companion relationships help us to:

- Nurture and strengthen one another for life and mission within the body of Christ
- Participate in one another's lives and ministries
- Have a better perception of challenges in the global context, and call us to deepen our commitment to be true disciples of Christ
- Help us to fully understand the one holy and catholic church

### **How can we do this?**

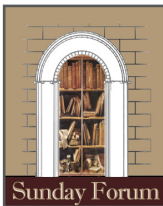
- Accompaniment literally means walking together side by side
- Is a mutual relationship between companion churches who walk together in God's mission
- Receiving is as important as sending
- Recognizing and embracing one another's gifts
- Interact with one another as colleagues, as fellow workers in the vineyard of Christ

Times have been challenging for the church in Peru, particularly in the Trujillo area. In March of 2017, more than 450,000 people had to grapple with severe flooding in northern Peru. As Hurricane Harvey hit Houston later in the year, we found ourselves praying for one another through the aftermath of disasters in both of our communities. Clean-up and recovery continued for the churches in the Trujillo area; and just about the time things seemed to be getting back to "normal," the Covid-19 pandemic hit. Peru was one of the most affected countries in South America due to many social and economic factors. Again, we found our communities praying for one another as our companion congregations in Trujillo continued their role in supporting community public health education, children's education, and justice advocacy. Over the years, our financial support has helped with such things as indoor plumbing at Cristo Vive, new front doors for the church in San Andres, a roof for the Lutheran preschool in Chocofan, educational supplies for the Lutheran School in Magdalena de Cao, and much more. Thank you for your support of these small companion congregations as they continue to make a big impact through serving their neighbors in Trujillo.



After many construction delays due to flooding and pandemic, construction has resumed on a new Lutheran school on property behind the Lutheran Church in the San Andres neighborhood of Trujillo.





## Sunday Forum

**Sundays at 9:45 a.m.**  
in the parish hall

In-person in the basement classroom or online.  
Look for the Zoom link in the Sunday e-blast  
or contact [ctk@ctkelc.org](mailto:ctk@ctkelc.org)

### September 4: Labor Day Weekend, no Sunday Forum

### September 11: A Conversation on Adult Education and Faith Formation

As we gear up for our Sunday School year on Rally Day, you are invited to join the pastors for conversation on adult education and spiritual formation here at Christ the King Church. What are you needing to nourish your mind and spirit? To help you grow in Christ? To deal with daily life? To challenge you to serve in the world? Come and let us hear from you.

### September 18: Call Committee

Join us on the third Sunday of each month to hear updates on the call process and to share your input with the Call Committee as we await our next Senior Pastor.

### September 26: Charleston Trip Recap

Hear reflections from our youth about their summer mission trip in Charleston, West Virginia. Come hear about the flat tire, their service projects, and stories of the people our youth served alongside this summer.

## Summer Book Reviews YouTube Playlist

## Biblical Roots of Jewish and Muslim Holy Days

*Zoom Bible Study with Pastor Derr*

**Thursdays, September 22 – October 27 at 3:00 p.m.**

This ZOOM conversation will survey

1. the seven /major Jewish holidays beginning with Rosh Hashanah [Trumpets], celebrated September 25, 2022) and working through Yom Kippur (October 4, 2022); Sukkot [Booths] (October 9-16); Purim (March 6, 2023); Passover (April 5, 2023); Shavuot [Pentecost/First Fruits] (May 25, 2023). We'll also consider the Jewish holy days of Simchat Torah (October 17-18); Chanukah (December 18-26); as well as Tish B'Av (July 26, 2023).
2. We'll also consider the major Muslim feast, Eid al-Fitr (April 21, 2023).

Check our website, Facebook page and Thursday, September 22 mailchimp for the outline.

ZOOM LINK: Join Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86901270775?pwd=bW02cVlBeTkzM3AvOGk3SzMzE0b0ZVUT09>

## Friday Morning Bible Study *with Pastor Mandy Derr*

**Fridays beginning September 23 at 10:00 a.m.**

**In-person and online**

We will resume beginning Friday, September 23, at 10:00 a.m. The group that meets on-site may begin gathering for fellowship at 10:00 a.m. with the online participants joining at 10:15 a.m. The group reads and responds to the upcoming Sunday's texts. If you would like to receive weekly emails with the readings and the Zoom link, please email Cheryl Gaspard at [cherylgaspard@ctkelc.org](mailto:cherylgaspard@ctkelc.org).

## Houston Science and Religion Discussion Group

**Can Brain Explain Mind?**

Video and discussion, *presented by Wilson Windle*

**Monday, September 19 at 7:00 p.m.**

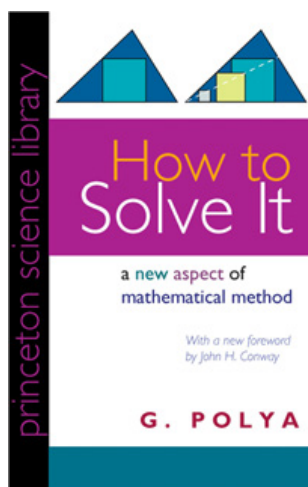
The Houston Science and Religion Discussion Group (HSRDG) will conduct its regular monthly meeting on Monday, September 19 at 7:00 p.m.

The public is welcome to participate in the HSRDG meetings, which are scheduled for the third Monday of every month. To join, email Marian Hillar at [hillar@sbcglobal.net](mailto:hillar@sbcglobal.net)

## CREDIMUS UT INTELLIGAMUS

*we believe so to understand*

Elmer Ledesma suggests a book each month that may interest "lay readers" in learning more about science and its importance for us people of faith. No Ph.D. necessary; just your desire to learn and to be well-informed. The above title, which translates "we believe so to understand," is based on a classic theological phrase from early Christianity. It underscores that people of faith are encouraged to understand the world God has given us, so better to care for the creation.



## *This month:*

Polya, G. "How to Solve It: A New Aspect of Mathematical Method", Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 2014.

A perennial bestseller by eminent mathematician G. Polya, *How to Solve It* will show anyone in any field how to think straight. In lucid and appealing prose, Polya reveals how the mathematical method of demonstrating a proof or finding an unknown can be of help in attacking any problem that can be "reasoned" out—from building a bridge to winning a game of anagrams. Generations of readers have relished Polya's deft—indeed, brilliant—instructions on stripping away irrelevancies and going straight to the heart of the problem.



## Joen Marie Larson

Memorial Service  
Christ the King Lutheran Church  
**Saturday, September 17**  
11:30 a.m.

## Christ the King Festival 2022 WE'RE BACK!!!!

Remember what it was like in the Before Times? When friends, and soon-to-be-friends gathered for fun, conversation, and new experiences? Festival Sociables are back!

Hosting a Sociable is a gift to yourself and to others. Sociables are whatever you can dream – casual to formal, small to large, indoor or outdoor. In your home, at church, at a park, or on the road. Winter, spring, summer or fall. Sociables can be sporty, entertaining, educational, artsy, musical, intergenerational. They can be built around breakfast, brunch, lunch,

snacks, cocktails, dinner, or dessert. Hosts (or co-hosts) have as much fun planning and hosting as the guests have attending!

Past Sociables have included Wine and Hymn Pairing, Gourmet Italian Dinner, Literary Café, Beer and Boardgames, Memorial Park Trail Bike Ride, Jazzercise Boogie and Bites, and many others. Get your creative juices flowing! If you have an idea for a Sociable or would like more information on how they work, contact Terri Koehler at 713-582-4321 or [theresa.m.koehler@uth.tmc.edu](mailto:theresa.m.koehler@uth.tmc.edu)

## SAVE THE DATE Christ the King Festival Party

Friday, November 18,  
7:00 p.m.

Parish Hall and Courtyard

- Piecemakers' quilt drawing
- Live auction
- Food and fun
- Sociable party sign-ups
- Wishing Wall



## Donna Dieter

Memorial Service  
Christ the King Lutheran Church  
**Saturday, September 24**  
11:00 a.m.

## 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly Summary of Actions

The 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly convened in Columbus, Ohio, August 8-12. Gathering under the theme "Embody the Word," voting members acted on key legislative business on behalf of the church. Imran Siddiqui was elected to a six-year term as vice president. The assembly received a presentation on "A Declaration of the ELCA to American Indian and Alaska Native People." Voting members acted on memorials related to the restructuring of church governance, called for reconsideration of the 2009 social statement Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust, and encouraged deeper engagement with Indigenous partners through the Land Back movement. [You can find all the actions of the 2022 Churchwide Assembly in the legislative update.](#)



Rev. Dr. Tracey Breashears Schulz and Rev. Amandus Derr commissioning and blessing candidate Aimee Elles on August 31 as she begins her Diaconal ministry internship with the Gulf Coast Synod. Aimee is a member of Christ the King Church.

## Lectio Divina

**Mondays, 12:00 p.m. on Zoom**

Lectio Divina (Sacred Reading) is an ancient Christian practice in which one reads a small passage of scripture, trusting in God's presence and relevance in daily experience. Lectio Divina is not about acquiring head knowledge of Scripture, but is about a personal encounter with the heart of God, inspiring one's attention and already praying through the listener. Through this mingling of reading and prayer, the stories and texts of the bible meet us in our own life story. You attend whenever you can, but registration is needed so we can maintain a safe space. Register with Beverly at [beverlydavis@ctkelc.org](mailto:beverlydavis@ctkelc.org).





For information, contact Ben Remmert, Deacon  
Director of Youth and Family Ministry,  
benremmert@ctkelc.org or 281-468-4686.

## September Dates:

- 11: Rally Day Sunday  
Confirmation Orientation, 9:30 a.m.  
Welcome to Luther League Lunch, 12:30 p.m.
- 16-17: Fall Luther League Lock-In at West Campus
- 18: Confirmation Class, 9:30 a.m.
- 25: Charleston Trip Sunday Forum, 9:30 a.m.
- 30: Fall Luther League Retreat  
at Lutherhill Galveston

## Confirmation Class Fall 2022 - Spring 2023

Confirmation Class for 7th and 8th grade students begins with a Milestone Celebration for youth and parents on Sunday, September 11. Weekly classes for students are Sundays at 9:30 a.m.-10:30 a.m. beginning September 18 with hybrid in-person and online. Deacon Remmert, Lucky Sahulla, and Bill Burgess will lead the class studying The New and Old Testament. Confirmation class is generally for students in grades 7 and 8, though special circumstances may be accommodated as to when a student joins the class. One teaching year focuses on Bible study and the other is organized around Martin Luther's Small Catechism. First year and second year students are taught together. New students are welcome anytime.



Luther League youth floated the Comal River.  
See last page for more photos.

## YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRY

### Sr. High Gathering Meeting

**Second and Fourth Sundays of the Month at 12:30 p.m.**

Sr. High Gatherings is open to all youth in 9th - 12th grade. Our First meeting is on Sunday, September 11 at 12:15 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. for a time to gather, fellowship through games, service projects, and our Faith5 candle time. Friends and visitors are always welcome! Please contact Deacon Ben Remmert for more information.

### Fall Luther League Lock-In on West Campus September 16-17

On Friday, September 16 beginning at 6 p.m., all middle school and high school youth are invited to join for an evening of fellowship, fun, getting to know each other, and a time of devotion and service work on our West Campus in Bunkerhill. This is our first official Luther League event of the year so you do not want to miss out! RSVP by September 15 to Deacon Ben Remmert as spots are limited. \$20 includes our evening activities, snacks, and beverages.

### Charleston Trip Sunday Forum Sunday, September 25 at 9:30 a.m.

Join us during the Sunday Forum time on Sunday, September 25 to hear reflections from the Charleston Mission Trip participants about their work in Charleston, West Virginia this summer. Come hear stories about the flat tire, the service projects, and the stories of the people we served alongside this summer.

### Fall Luther League Retreat at Lutherhill Galveston September 30-October 1

Middle and high school youth are invited for an overnight at Lutherhill Galveston (formally Zion Retreat Center) for our fall retreat at the beach. Our students will have a great opportunity for fellowship, swimming, fun, and growing in their faith with caring conversations on prayer life. This is a wonderful opportunity to start the year off well. Cost is only \$50 for housing, food, and activities. Please RSVP no later than Wednesday, September 28.

### 2023 Summer Germany Trip June 2-11, 2023

7th-12th grade youth are invited for a great opportunity to travel to Germany this summer. Our group will travel to Leipzig to visit with our sister congregation St. Thomas. Throughout the week we will have day trips to famous Luther sites such as Wittenberg, Eisenach, Eisleben, Wittenberg, and Erfurt. The cost is \$600 plus airfare (\$1,200 average) which includes lodging, two meals each day, museum admissions, the day trip activities, tour guides and program leaders, and train tickets. If you are interested in attending, RSVP to Ben Remmert no later than December 1 with a \$600 deposit. Scholarships are available.

# CHILDREN AND FAMILY MINISTRY

## Pray the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

**Tuesdays at 8:15 a.m. on Facebook**

The World Council of Churches Ecumenical Prayer Cycle takes us through every region of the world over the course of a year. Pray with us every Tuesday at 8:15 a.m. online through our Christ the King Facebook group. This month we will be praying for:

- September 6: Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Togo
- September 13: Ghana, Nigeria
- September 20: Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay
- September 27: Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Peru

More details can be found here:

<https://www.oikoumene.org/resources/prayer-cycle>.

## Children's Bibles in the Pews Summer Project Thank you!

Thank you, Christ the King Church, for all your bible donations, we were able to purchase 100 children's bibles to have in the pews. We will officially have them in the pews on Rally Day Sunday on September 11th. We look forward to seeing you all check them out.

## Milestone Celebration

**Bible Presentation to Third Grade Students**

**Sunday, September 11**

All new third grade students will be presented with Bibles to celebrate their milestones. We rejoice with the children who have reached the stage when reading has become a tool for learning. This milestone celebration will take place during worship at the 11:00 a.m. service. If you have a 3rd grader in your family, please let Deacon Ben Remmert at [benremmert@ctkelc.org](mailto:benremmert@ctkelc.org) by Wednesday, September 7.



Students, parents, and teachers gathered around the altar for a Back to School Blessing on August 21.

## Rally Day Sunday Open House

**Sunday, September 11 at 9:30 a.m.**

Join us for the start of our new Sunday School year! Sunday School classes are offered for children aged 2 through confirmation class (high school classes will be meeting after 11:00 a.m. service). All children and parents are invited to come and experience a Godly Play class and learn more about our upcoming year. Our classes are as follows:

- Toddlers (2-3 year olds):  
Sara Harlan and Bette Bowers (Room 109)
- Younger Children (Prek-2nd Grade):  
Leslie Winesett and Liz Lloyd (Room 107)
- Older Children (3rd-6th Grade):  
Marie Monroe and Diane Schoppe (Room 204)
- Confirmation Class:  
Deacon Ben Remmert, Lucky Sahulla, and Bill Burgess (2nd Floor Council Room)

Regular Godly Play classes will be offered every Sunday at 9:30 a.m. beginning on Sunday, September 18. You may contact Marie Monroe or Deacon Ben Remmert with any questions regarding Sunday School ([marie4118@gmail.com](mailto:marie4118@gmail.com), [benremmert@ctkelc.org](mailto:benremmert@ctkelc.org)). We can always use volunteers to help out as door-persons!

## Children and Parent Playdate at the Playground

**September 24 at 10:00 a.m.**

Children and parents are invited to come to the church on Saturday, September 24 to come together to play at the playground and the courtyard at church for a time for children and our parents to talk meet and talk together. We will have beverages and snacks outside on the picnic tables. This event is geared for families with young children, but all are invited to come. For more questions, please contact Deacon Ben Remmert.

## SAVE THE DATE

**Trunk or Treat**

**at Christ the King West Campus!**

Our fourth annual Trunk or Treat experience will be on Sunday, October 30, from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. at our West Campus. This safe and fun activity is for kids Pre-K through 6th grade and the whole family. Children may be dressed in their Halloween costumes or not and go from trunk to trunk in the back parking lot to go "trick or treating" safely with all COVID-19 protocols. CTK members will host this event and provide the treats. Babies in strollers and grandparents are also welcome! We will end our Trunk or Treat festivities with a blessing service at 5:45 p.m. to bless the trick or treaters. Pizza will also be provided at that time. Volunteers and/or questions can be directed to Deacon Ben Remmert at [benremmert@ctkelc.org](mailto:benremmert@ctkelc.org). We hope to see you there!



# LUTHERHILL RETREATS AND NEWS

**Lutherhill Ministries Sixteenth Annual S'mores & Champagne Gala**  
**September 10 at 6:00 p.m.**

We can't wait for this amazing night as we toast to the ministry and gather together to make it possible for Lutherhill to continue to provide quality outdoor ministry for all ages and youth camping programs at Lutherhill in La Grange & Galveston, Texas. Your support as an Underwriter or Sponsor is incredibly important to the success of the Gala! Click here for more information about Underwriting & Sponsorships or to register online.

**Stay the night or weekend! Special pricing on hotel rooms:**

A room block is available at The Woodlands Waterway Marriott Hotel for \$179/night. (1601 Lake Robbins Drive The Woodlands, TX 77380)

Please contact the hotel directly to reserve a room at 888-236-2427 or 281-367-9797 or book your online reservations here.

**Can't attend? You can still bid in the Auction!**

Everyone can participate in the silent auction! Simply register or sign in on our GiveSmart event page and you'll find instructions on how to bid on a variety of items! Check back for item previews and get ready to bid starting the week of the Gala!



**LUTHERHILL**  
**MINISTRIES**

## LATINE MINISTRY

Bendiciones en Cristo! We are in a time of discernment. Where, with whom and how shall this ministry develop? Together with ecumenical leadership at St. Thomas University, Pastor Rodriguez will be working on networking and developing additional competencies in developing Latine ministry at Christ the King.

Here's where we need your help! Want to learn more about the richness of Latine culture and traditions? Do you know of someone who would be interested in multi-cultural ministry? Join our steering committee (Mesa Latina) at Christ the King Church and help develop a fast growing ministry in a fast growing population. In October, this group will undergo a specialized congregational competencies program offered via Wartburg Theological Seminary's Centro Teologico Luterano Multicultural. Contact Rev. Rodriguez for more information or to join this exciting new group.



On July 30, Pastor Rodriguez together with Pastor Marcano (Sagrada Familia/Kinsmen Lutheran) and Pastor Johnson-Rivas (Principe de Paz-Sagrado Corazon) co-celebrated the wedding of Geraldo and Jhon at Christ the King West Campus.

**Upcoming Events:**

As we continue to develop Latin ministry and form our steering committee, we will continue to offer opportunities for all to experience a richness of grace and tradition, albeit from the Mexican-American heritage. Spread the word! Be it First Communion (Primera Comunion), Quinceneras/os, Bodas (weddings), or Bendiciones de hogar o negocios (House or business blessings), our ministry provides familias or individuals with God's gifts.

- Blessing of the Animals (Bilingual).  
October 8. Christ the King, West Campus.
- Dia de los Muertos (Bilingual) Service.  
November 5. Christ the King, Rice Village Campus.
- Las Mananitas a La Virgen.  
December 11. 11 a.m. Worship.  
Christ the King Church, Rice Village Campus.
- Las Posadas.  
Three Events: 1) Las Posadas. December 17. 8 p.m. Christ the King, West Campus; 2) Las Posadas. December 18. 9:30 a.m. to 10:15 a.m. Christ the King, Rice Village Campus; 3) Las Posadas. December 22. 7 p.m. Sociable with Pr. Rodriguez. The Woodlands.
- Spiritual Discernment Program.  
Starting Jan 1. Look out for more details.

# WEST CAMPUS

2211 Memorial Drive

## Satterwhite Lectures on Faith and Life featuring:

Christ the King Lutheran Church is honored to host the first of the new Satterwhite Lectures on Faith and Life featuring:



Dr. Elaine Howard Ecklund speaking on  
"Why Faith and Science Need Each Other Today"  
Thursday, November 3, 2022 at 7 pm  
Christ the King Lutheran Church – West Campus  
12211 Memorial Drive, Houston, TX

Dr. Ecklund is the Herbert S. Autrey Chair in Social Sciences, Professor of Sociology, and director of the Boniuk Institute at Rice University. As a sociologist of religion, science, and work, she is particularly interested in social change and how institutions change. Among her many publications and awards, she was invited in 2018 to deliver the prestigious Gifford Lectures at the University of Edinburgh. She is the author (with students and colleagues) of over 100 journal articles and seven books.

Her recent book *Why Science and Faith Need Each Other: Eight Shared Values That Move Us beyond Fear* will be available free, with signing by the author, to the first 50 attendees.

This new lecture series is sponsored by Dr. Terry Satterwhite in honored memory of his wife, Martha, who cherished critical thinking, compassion, responsibility, and joy. Martha was a devoted member of Memorial Drive Lutheran Church and an avid supporter of people dealing with the complexities of Parkinson's Disease.

## West Campus Clean-Up

This summer a long list of people have been actively freshening the west campus: categorizing music, sorting through office supplies and educational materials, cleaning kitchens, and making decisions about furniture and various items. It is amazing how a new look and feel is beginning to develop! Thank you to all who helped.



and

Christ the King  
Lutheran Church -  
West Campus formerly  
Memorial Drive  
Lutheran Church

bring you

*Blessing of the Pets  
and Vendor Market*

12211 Memorial Dr Houston, TX 77024

**October 8th, 2022**

**9:30 AM - 2 PM**

For more info, contact

mzermeno@emmausspiritualitycenter.com



## "God's Work. Our Hands."

Join us in celebrating the ELCA's  
"God's Work. Our Hands"  
weekend  
by volunteering at the  
Houston Food Bank

**September 10**

On July 9, we had a fantastic group of 10 volunteers working up a healthy July sweat in the Houston Food Bank warehouse working on the Senior Boxes project. The CTK volunteers were instrumental in producing 585 boxes of nutritious food and drinks that will be sent to area senior citizens in need of support. Those 585 boxes (a muscle-building 17,550 lbs. for our volunteers) will provide the recipients of those boxes with a total of 14,625 meals! Senior Boxes are always a favorite task for our group, and the HFB staff was happy to have experienced hands on the job.



houston **Saturday**  
**food** **September 10**  
**bank**  **8:00 a.m. - noon**  
For information, contact [ctkhfb@gmail.com](mailto:ctkhfb@gmail.com)

### Useful information

When: 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Where: Houston Food Bank East Branch,  
535 Portwall St., Houston, TX 77029

Attire: Closed-toe shoes, pants, sleeved shirt  
Carpool: If needed, it will leave the church parking lot at 7:30 a.m. Please specify if you wish to carpool so we can be sure to send someone there before heading to the HFB.

### Young Adults Volunteer

Join the Young Adults as we volunteer at Christian Community Service Center's food pantry on **Saturday, October 1**, from 9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon. All are welcome. Contact [nathan@wikernet.com](mailto:nathan@wikernet.com).



## CALL COMMITTEE

*submitted by Nathan Wiker and the  
Members of the Call Committee for  
Senior Pastor*

The Call Committee is back in full swing (after a very short break in July) with great engagement as we prayerfully and enthusiastically work towards calling our next Senior Pastor. We've been meeting at least weekly in August, primarily to thoroughly discern our needs and expectations as a congregation and finish the Ministry Site Profile (MSP)—this is similar to a “job listing”, but specifically includes several sections around who we are, our vision and mission, our needs, and what we'd like to see in our next Senior Pastor. While the Strategic Plan has been a huge help as we build this out, we have also had several additional sessions to hear from the staff and Youth and a few yet to come with the Choir, Young Families, and others. We likewise greatly value the feedback we are receiving through the Call Committee Webpage and direct discussions with members of the congregation—please keep the feedback coming!

We are working hard to finalize this MSP so we can present to the Congregational Council in September and then get this posted with the Synod so they can start the process of vetting and identifying potential candidates, while the Call Committee starts preparing for the interviews. We will be holding monthly update and feedback sessions at both campuses during Sunday Forum on the third Sunday of each month (starting 9/18) and will also continue to provide updates via the webpage. While we are distilling and crystallizing what the congregation is looking for, we remain confident that this will be a highly sought-after Call and look forward to what God has in store for us as we continue this process! For more on the Call Committee process, go to our website at [ctkelc.org](http://ctkelc.org) and type Call Committee in the Search function.

## Welcome New Members



Ernie and Martha  
McWilliams

## CAMPUS MINISTRY

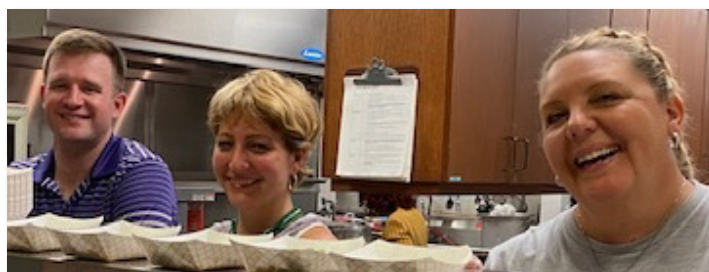
### MOVE-IN TACO CELEBRATION



# TACOS

Lutheran Campus Ministry,  
Rice University

hosted a fundraiser at the  
Christ the King on August 21.



# CAMPUS MINISTRY

## LUTHERAN CAMPUS MINISTRY, RICE UNIVERSITY (LCM, RU)



### GOD WANTS YOU TO ASK QUESTIONS!

What a great start to our 2022/2023 academic year at Rice University! Our first Fall campus ministry fundraiser was a success! We made our target of 105 plates sold and with our matching gift donor, we are meeting our program goals for this year. We are grateful for all who volunteered in this event and you all for your generosity through many and various gifts. We are also grateful for all who generously contributed towards LCM, RU in the August Mission Offering. Your gifts

will go towards our speaker series and our service projects for the year. Heads up! Next semester, LCM, RU will be selling tamales for their Spring fundraising event. We will start accepting orders in December. We hope you have room for more!

If you know of any incoming undergraduate or graduate student, faculty, alumnus, invite them to the activities of this ministry and to join with us in asking questions, serving our local community, and growing in greater awareness of God's presence in our lives. Check out our Instagram (@lcm\_at\_rice) or our Discord (The Digital Porch) to get involved in the life of this ministry.

### September Events

#### Fall Activities Fair

September 1. Noon to 3 p.m. LCM, RU will be engaging with students and letting students know about the ministry of LCM, RU. If you know of any incoming undergraduate student interested in a socially-conscious and affirming campus ministry, invite them to the Fall Activities Fair at the RMC.

#### St. James Family Life Center

##### Food Distribution

September 3. St. James Family Life Center. 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Starting at 10 a.m., LCM, RU will be distributing the food and goods collected by Christ the King Church. LCM, RU will be learning about the work of the St. James Family Life Center in impacting local immigrant communities.

**GOD WANTS  
YOU TO ASK  
QUESTIONS!**



**ASK ANNIE  
ANYTHING!**

**WEDNESDAYS  
3 P.M TO 5 P.M.  
BROCHSTEIN PAVILION**

### Leadership

We would like to introduce our student leadership for this upcoming Fall 2022 semester:

Mark Lichtenberger. Sophomore. McMurry College. Architecture Major. President.

Benjamin Kerswell. PhD candidate. Organ performance. Vice-President.

### Weekly Events

#### Ask Annie Anything!

##### Wednesdays. Brochstein Pavilion.

**3 p.m to 5 p.m.**

Pastor Sergio Rodriguez and his furry friend, Annie, will be lounging at Brochstein Pavilion for conversation and engagement. Annie enjoys being around students and is looking forward to meeting new friends. Check our Instagram (@lcm\_at\_rice) for any last minute changes due to weather conditions.

#### Cultivating Care

##### Thursdays. Starting September 8.

**Noon to 1 p.m. TBD.**

LCM, RU will begin gathering for a time of care and conversation over a meal on campus. Ask Mark Lichtenberger or Pastor Rodriguez on joining our Discord for updates and to keep the conversation going.

### Upcoming Events:

#### Big Questions Speaker Series,

##### Part 1: Fall 2022

##### Rice University.

**7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.**

LCM, RU will be hosting our Fall speaker series event at Rice University. Our speaker series addresses big question matters in society and faith-filled responses. Look on our Instagram page (@lcm\_at\_rice) and Christ the King website for exact time and date. Meal provided. Link will be sent a week prior to the event to confirm attendance.



# AN INTERVIEW WITH BEN KERSWELL, CANTOR-DESIGNATE

*submitted by Gretchen Miertschen*

It's not surprising that one of the appealing qualities striking Ben Kerswell when he first visited Christ the King Church was the abundance and strength of hymn singing. Ben says he can hardly remember a time in his life when he wasn't singing in church. He became part of the children's choir of West Side Presbyterian Church in Ridgewood, New Jersey, when he was 5 years and continued in age appropriate choirs there until he left for college. This childhood experience was a springboard for his interest in instrumental music as well, and the line from there to his assuming the role of Music Associate for both Christ the King Church and the Bach Society in August 2021 is not difficult to trace.



Ben was homeschooled as he was growing up in Fair Lawn, New Jersey. Music was ever present in his home. His dad, currently Operations Director at the Metropolitan Opera, had studied music composition in college. His grandmother is still organist at her church in upstate New York. The family visited several churches when he was younger, feeling most at home in those that included dynamic music programs. West Side Presbyterian provided just such a program. Among the playmates he found at the church were the children of a violin teacher, and Ben's parents signed up Ben for lessons. He continued to study violin through his high school years and found a great outlet for his talents as he played with the Youth Orchestra for the New Jersey Symphony. During that time he was concert master for the strings and first violin of the symphonic group.

As much as he enjoyed the choirs and violin, it was the piano that held the most fascination for Ben. He had a keyboard at home on which he taught himself to play when he was very young. He remembers well when, at age 8 or 9, he finally "mastered" Bach's Invention in F Major. One day at the church when he thought no one was watching, he slipped up to the piano to play it. Joanne Rodland, the church music director and organist heard him. She recognized his talent at once and helped arrange for him to begin piano lessons with Elizabeth Martyn, a highly respected local teacher and often time soloist with major orchestras. And when Ben was 12 Joanne Rodland began to instruct him herself on the organ. Along with the violin, Ben continued his lessons on the piano and organ throughout his high school years.

For Ben, having Joanne Rodland as an organ teacher was a particularly significant turn of events. Joanne's daughter, Dr. Catherine Rodland, was and still is a teacher at the ELCA St. Olaf College in Minnesota. Mother and daughter shared a teaching methodology and philosophy that thoroughly prepared Ben for advanced academic studies, which, by his late teens, was a path Ben knew he wanted to pursue. As he neared completion of high school he applied for early admission to only one college: St. Olaf. Beginning studies under Catherine Rodland meant the transition was somewhat eased as Ben moved from home schooling in Fair Lawn, New Jersey, less than an hour from the New York Met, 1,200 miles away to St. Olaf College in a small town in Minnesota.

While an undergraduate Ben developed experience as a church organist. He held organist positions in New Jersey at Pompton Valley Presbyterian Church and Holy Spirit Roman Catholic Church in Pequannock. In Minnesota he held a position at All Saints Episcopal Church in Northfield and as the organ scholar at The Church of St. Louis, King of France in St. Paul. Ben also garnered recognition both as a scholar and a musician. In 2016 he was awarded the John R. Rodland Memorial Scholarship and in 2017 he was winner of American Guild of Organists Regional Competition. He also continued his singing as a member and later section leader with the St. Olaf Choir. He even came to Houston on tour once in 2016, but he was not among those who had performed at CTK.

Ben did not doubt that he wanted to continue his academic career beyond a bachelor's degree. He researched various programs and was intrigued by the Shepherd School at Rice, though he says that he was not totally confident about acceptance. In 2018 he came to Houston for an audition and a private lesson by Ken Cowan, head of the organ program at the Shepherd School. Ben said that as a 13 year-old he'd actually once met Ken Cowan who gave a master class in organ at Ben's church in Ridgewood. He recalls that he was particularly interested in Ken Cowan's "performance-based approach" to the pieces he played, an approach to performing centuries old pieces in a manner that incorporates the more modern instrument on which it is performed and the evolved understanding and appreciation of the audience. Even as a young teen he appreciated the idea that classical music remained alive and living.

When he got his acceptance notice from Ken Cowan it included the offer of a position at St. Paul United Methodist Church, a position that Ben understood would give him further experience with Anglican church music. He knew it was a good fit. He accepted and began classes and the job at St. Paul Church in 2018. He also met our own Rick Erickson, with whom he had classes.

Ben's first introduction to the Lutheran church occurred when as a teen he attended a summer music program at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa. Of course his years at St. Olaf served to immerse him more completely in Lutheran tradition. His first visit to CTK, however, was to hear a musical

performance rather than attend a service. In September 2018, shortly after Ben began his studies at Rice, Martin Schmeding, acclaimed German organist, came to Houston, offering a master class at Rice and performing with the Bach Society at CTK. Ben came to the Bach Society performance and was in line to pay for admission when Rick Erickson told him there was no charge for students and ushered him into the nave. It was a gracious gesture that made him feel welcome. A warm reception and an outstanding musical evening—two important components of his first experience at our church.

Ben received his Masters of Music in 2020 and began work toward his Doctorate of Musical Arts, a program that includes three years of academic study both in music and in pedagogy then an indeterminate time to complete individual work and a dissertation. He's now completed two years of his academic study. During this third year he will be working on a project that examines the tonal differences between different organs built from different historical traditions. Using specialized software, he will extract harmonic information from different organs in the Houston area to quantify a high-resolution description of their timbres in the form of mathematical ratios. Often in the music world, people use words to describe differences in timbre that, while useful to communicate, are entirely based on perception. He believes it would be useful to obtain objective, measurable descriptions to facilitate discussions on how these organ building traditions differ auditorily.

In December 2019 Ben proposed to Amy Erlandson, a vocalist from St. Olaf whom he had accompanied for her senior recital, though that event was comparatively incidental and does not mark the beginning of their relationship. He has a more storybook tale to describe that. In 2017 the St. Olaf Choir toured Japan. One evening as choir members were finding spots to eat at a Tokyo restaurant Ben says he heard a little inner voice leading him away from his initial direction and to "a random spot on his left where no one was sitting." Just as randomly Amy joined him. They begin to talk and their world changed. For two years they had a long distance relationship as Amy remained in Minnesota in a teaching position. In 2020 as the country began to shut down for Covid, Amy, who was by then teaching her elementary school music classes online, moved to Houston and they rode out the pandemic together. They were married July 2 this year at Lutheran Church of the Redeemer in St. Paul, with 250 guests and her father officiating as senior pastor. Amy begins this school year teaching elementary school music at St. Thomas Episcopal School.

If Ben has free time, he enjoys following baseball, particularly the technical parts of the game. Growing up he spent summers with his family in the Finger Lakes area of upstate New York. He has many fond memories of star gazing in the wilderness sky and he's been an enthusiastic audience for the images captured by the James Webb Telescope.

In January 2022, our congregation council unanimously approved a cantor transition plan proposed by Rick, Ben and Pastor Derr. Ben will continue to work with Cantor Rick Erickson as Music Associate until Rick retires as our Cantor during Advent. **Beginning January 1, 2023, Ben**

# Music

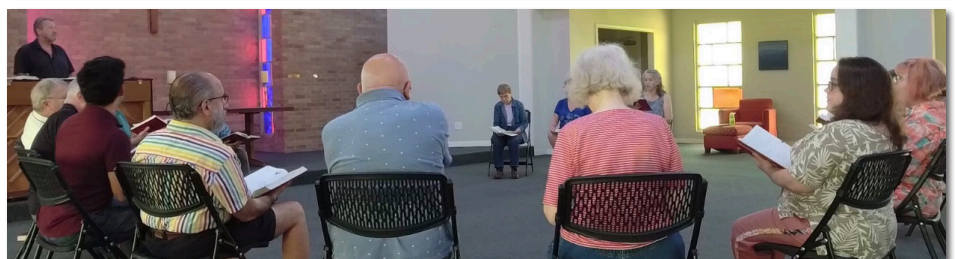


On Sunday, October 2 at 5:00 PM, Bach Society Houston will present Oktoberfest Vespers, featuring Cantata Bringet dem Herrn Ehre seines Namens, BWV 148.

Afterwards, enjoy an Oktoberfest celebration in the courtyard with food provided by Luther League and music performed by the Christ the King Brass Choir and more.

**will begin a three-year term as Cantor at Christ the King Church and, as he continues his doctoral course work, Ben can count on Rick's continued assistance through Pentecost 2023.**

This transition plan enables our congregation to continue our tradition of musical excellence while allowing Ben and our new senior pastor future flexibility for all. This also neatly dovetails with Ben's own future hopes to lead a church music program, have time for occasional solo performances in other locations, and at some point, be part of academia.



Choir members rehearsing at the annual Fall Choir Retreat in Galveston on August 27. New choir members are always welcome! Rehearsals resume on Wednesday evenings. If interested, please contact Rick at [rick@bachsocietyhouston.org](mailto:rick@bachsocietyhouston.org) or Ben at [bkerswell@bachsocietyhouston.org](mailto:bkerswell@bachsocietyhouston.org).





## Churchwide Assembly Justice Look-Back Greenhouse Gas Reduction

At churchwide assembly in August, a memorial was passed calling for reductions in greenhouse gases. The memorial called for the ELCA to reaffirm its commitment to creation care and advocacy, and specifically to advocacy & action in support of greenhouse gas emissions reductions of 50% by 2030 and net zero by 2050. The memorial also calls for the ELCA churchwide organization to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 50% by 2030 and achieve net zero emissions by 2050. The memorial further asks the ELCA to (a) continue ministry through the Creation Care Network, (b) encourage congregants, rostered ministers, and bishops to commit themselves to education about the urgency of the climate emergency, and (c) to affirm the Mission Investment Fund's Green Building Fund initiative and resources. Lastly, a report is to be delivered at the 2025 churchwide assembly documenting progress on greenhouse gas emissions reductions throughout the ELCA.

To learn more about this resolution, or other justice-related actions taken at the 2022 churchwide assembly, see this link: <https://www.elca.org/Resources/Churchwide-Assembly>.

## The Work of the ELCA Justice Portal

The ELCA has launched a new justice portal, a one-stop shop for resources on a wide variety of justice issues. Because God redeems us through Christ, we are made new to love and serve all neighbors. Loving neighbors includes working for justice in our personal and public lives. As a church we affirm God's call: "Along with all citizens, Christians have the responsibility to defend human rights and to work for freedom, justice, peace, environmental well-being and good order in public life". On this justice portal, you will find information and links to participate with others across the ELCA in living out God's baptismal call to act for justice. Check it out: <https://www.elca.org/Our-Work/Publicly-Engaged-Church/Justice-Portal>!

## Justice Advocacy Opportunity *Smorgasbord*

There are a number of active justice advocacy requests from a variety of organizations. Speak up for justice today!

### Creation Care – Zero Carbon Pledge

Now that the ELCA has committed to significant reductions in carbon footprint, ELCA members can join in by committing to cut their greenhouse gas emissions by 50% by 2030, and to achieve net zero by 2050, just as the ELCA has committed. To take the pledge for your household, see this site: <https://www.interfaithpowerandlight.org/take-the-100-pledge/>.

### Global Hunger & Malnutrition

After steadily declining for a decade, global hunger is on the rise. Malnutrition is the leading risk factor for death among children globally, accounting for 45 percent of all child deaths. The House passed the Global Malnutrition Prevention and Treatment Act by a strong bipartisan vote and it has moved to the Senate. Urge your senator to co-sponsor the Global Malnutrition Prevention and Treatment Act of 2021 (S. 2956) using this link: <https://go.bread.org/page/37516/action/1>

### Healthcare in Palestine

When President Biden visited Israel & the Palestinian territories in July, he made a \$100 million multiyear commitment to the East Jerusalem Hospital network, which includes Augusta Victoria Hospital. Augusta Victoria Hospital is the only hospital to provide radiation therapy for cancer patients in the Palestinian territories and the only medical facility in the West Bank offering pediatric kidney dialysis. Urge Congress to support President Biden's commitment at: <https://support.elca.org/site/Advocacy?pagename=homepage&page=UserAction&id=1536>

### Immigration – Restore Asylum at U.S.-Mexico Border

Seeking asylum is a right enshrined in U.S. law and protected by international treaty obligations. However, Title 42 supersedes asylum laws and allows summary expulsion of migrants seeking asylum, based upon the public health risk of COVID-19. The Biden administration sought to end Title 42 expulsions in May, but federal courts overturned that decision. The administration is appealing that decision. Urge Congress to support ending Title 42 at the U.S.-Mexico border at: <https://support.elca.org/site/Advocacy?cmd=display&page=UserAction&id=1540>

### Immigration – Afghan Adjustment Act

Since July 2021, more than 70,000 at-risk Afghans have been relocated to the United States and have entered on what is called, "humanitarian parole" - allowing them to temporarily stay and work in the U.S. for up to two years. Despite fleeing from the Taliban, there is currently no direct pathway for lawful permanent residency and stability in the U.S. for most of our new Afghan neighbors. Tens of thousands of newly-arrived Afghans in the U.S. urgently need a pathway to real and lasting safety. Urge Congress to Pass the Afghan Adjustment Act at: <https://www.votervoice.net/LIRS/campaigns/89654/respond>

## Heat in Houston:

### Justice Implications, Solutions, & How People of Faith Can Engage Sunday, September 11, 3:30 p.m.

Heat is the greatest weather-related disaster in the U.S., killing more people than any other kind of natural disaster. And, Texas is one of three states with the highest heat-related deaths. The Houston area averaged 18 dangerously hot summer days per year from 1975 to 2010. Without any action to combat urban heat, Houston's annual number of days hit by dangerous summer heat could rise to 80 by 2046. So, Houston's urban heat issues are already serious and are forecasted to get much worse. Urban heat negatively affects human and biodiversity health throughout the region, exacts a financial toll, leads to higher ozone levels, and reduces quality of life. Heat mapping in Houston has shown that high heat is more concentrated in underinvested communities and/or Communities of Color, thereby widening historic inequalities. Fortunately, there are solutions that can reduce urban heat. Join Jaime Gonzalez of The Nature Conservancy, who led heat mapping efforts in Houston, for a discussion on the findings, their justice implications, solutions, and how houses of worship/people of faith can engage. Register at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/heat-in-houston-justice-implications-solutions-how-to-engage-tickets-386151057207>. Contact Lisa Brenskelle at [brenskelle@aol.com](mailto:brenskelle@aol.com) with any questions.

**'GOD'S WORK.  
OUR HANDS.'**

### Sunday Justice Advocacy Event

**Sunday, September 11, before & after each worship service**

The Justice Advocacy Ministry invites you to use your hands to advocate. Find a variety of justice issues on which you can "speak up", either by signing a pre-printed letter, using your phone to scan a QR code, signing a post card or using the laptop provided to do e-advocacy. Raise your voice for justice, and use your hands to do God's work of justice!

### Voter Registration Event

**Sunday, September 25, 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.**

Live in Harris county and need to register to vote or change the address on your registration? Get registered at CTK in time for the 2022 election in November. Bring your TX driver's license, or state-issued i.d. or using the last 4 digits of your social security number. to register. Get ready to vote! For more information, contact Lisa Brenskelle at [brenskelle@aol.com](mailto:brenskelle@aol.com).



### Advocacy Cafes: Barriers to Voting

**Tuesday, September 27, noon or 7:00 p.m., online**

Join other Lutherans to learn how faith connects to civic engagement. Being alert to barriers to voting and acting to guarantee that all citizens be able to exercise the right to vote can demonstrate our Christian faith as Lutherans and have value for our communities and country. The right to vote on an equal basis is a fundamental requirement for a just society, affirmed in ELCA social teaching. Let's hear from one another about ways we remove barriers as individuals, congregations and in partnerships. Learn more/register at: <https://blogs.elca.org/advocacy/advocacy-cafe/>.

### Volunteers needed!

We have the opportunity to volunteer at a migrant shelter for asylum-seekers opening September 1 at the Doubletree Hotel by IAH. The welcome center has been made possible by a FEMA grant and it will be operated by Catholic Charities and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints; volunteers will focus on helping the arrivals feel safe, welcomed, and cared for. Our group will staff the welcome center one day each month—in September, October, and November—from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; a volunteer could choose the entire day or a 4-hour shift.

#### Specific duties may include:

- meeting buses, greeting arrivals, and processing paperwork
- assisting travelers who need to take the hotel shuttle to the airport or the bus station
- sorting and distributing donations of clothing
- distributing lunches and dinners
- assisting with travel plans
- playing/coloring with families with children

No particular language skills are required; interpretation devices will be provided. Volunteers should have a warm and caring attitude and the flexibility to focus on the most important needs during their shift. Each shift will be different!

If you are interested or have questions, please contact Rebecca Shields at 281-389-3616 so that we can determine availability and coordinate shifts.

Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection,  
Advocacy, Representation and Opportunity

**AMMPARO**

Casa Juan Diego, a shelter for immigrants and refugees in the Heights, is currently receiving large numbers of people, and their beds are overflowing.

#### There is a great need for the following items:

- towels, pillows, and blankets
- sleeping bags and backpacks for both adults and children
- adult diapers, wipes, underpads for the injured and wounded

If you can help (or have any questions), please contact Rebecca Shields 281 389-3616 to arrange a pick-up either at your home or the church.  
**Drop off items at church on Sundays.**



## Living the Change Weekly Discussion Group

Wednesdays,

September 7 – November 30

(except November 23), 6 p.m., online

Scientists tell us that we must reduce our greenhouse gas emissions by 45% by 2030. And, the ELCA has recently committed to reach 50% reduction by 2030. That may seem like a very high hurdle. But, it translates to only a 5%/year reduction, starting now. Participants in this course will leave with a plan for at least their first 5% reduction, and knowledge of how to find the other 40%. Many participants have found easy, cost-effective reductions of more than 20%. The course was developed in response to the Walk on Earth Gently multifaith statement. Inspired by religious teachings to turn away from consumerism & to seek balanced relationships with all people and the planet, Walk on Earth Gently invites you into a journey of Living the Change that the world needs. This program focuses on making personal lifestyle changes in three areas: transportation, energy, and food but will be customized for participants. Anticipated schedule/topics to be covered are given below. Join us in accepting the Walk on Earth Gently invitation and committing to a sustainable lifestyle, via a weekly online discussion group. Can't make it every week? Join us as you are able. Are you ready to commit to a more sustainable lifestyle? Then join us on this journey to Living the Change by registering at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/living-the-change-weekly-discussion-group-tickets-384086201167>. For more information, please contact Lisa Brenskelle at [brenskelle@aol.com](mailto:brenskelle@aol.com).

September 7:

Introduction & Transport, week 1

September 14, 21 & 28:

Transport, weeks 2, 3 & 4

October 5, 12, 19 & 26:

Energy, weeks 1, 2, 3, & 4

November 2, 9 & 16:

Food, weeks 1, 2 & 3

November 30: Food, week 4 & closing

## Immense World Book Discussion Group

for the Season of Creation

Thursdays, September 1 – October 6,

5:00 p.m. online

Celebrate the Season of Creation by learning about the amazing sensory abilities of animals in a weekly book discussion group using the bestseller *Immense World: How Animals Senses Reveal the Hidden Realms Around Us*. In the last decade, research on other animals' ways of perceiving and making sense of the world — also known as "umwelt" — has exploded. With *An Immense World*, Ed Yong, a science journalist at the Atlantic, pulls together these findings to give us a scientifically based glimpse into how animals experience the world. You'll never consider animals quite the same way again! Schedule for the weekly online discussion is given below. Register at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/immense-world-book-discussion-group-for-the-season-of-creation-tickets-384056381977>. Contact Lisa Brenskelle at [brenskelle@aol.com](mailto:brenskelle@aol.com) for more information.

September 1: Intro and Chapter 1

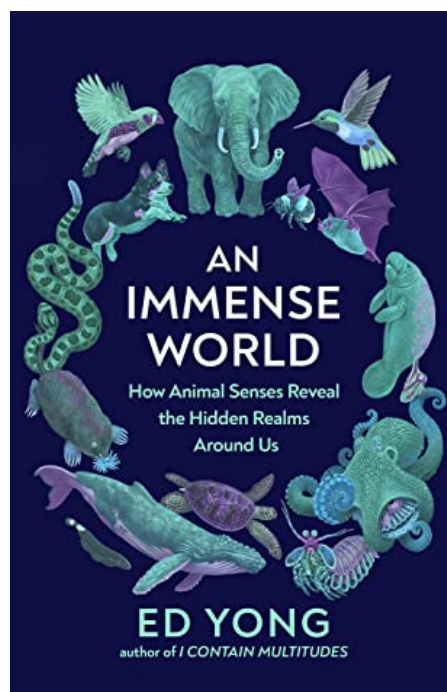
September 8: Chapters 2 & 3

September 15: Chapters 4 & 5

September 22: Chapters 6 & 7

September 29: Chapters 8 & 9

October 6: Chapters 10 - 12



## Creation Care 101

2nd Thursdays, September – April,

6:00 p.m., online



Interested to connect your Christian faith to care for the earth? Want to learn how CTK can live the faith through caring for creation? Or, want to improve your own stewardship? Join a free online course, Creation Care 101, and begin a journey of restoring faith, justice, and creation. Each session will feature talks from leading theologians and scientists, inspiring stories from churches, facilitated heart-led conversation, and tools for practical implementation. Details on content/schedule are given below. All classes will be recorded, so don't worry if you can't make every class. Register at: <https://creation-carecollective.org/event/creation-justice-101-fall-program/>. Lisa Brenskelle will act as facilitator for the CTK group, providing additional resources and insights from her decades of earthkeeping ministry. Contact Lisa at [brenskelle@aol.com](mailto:brenskelle@aol.com) for more information.

September 8:

Intro: Faith, Science & Creation Care

October 13: Eating: Theology of Food

November 10:

Hosting: Honorable Gatherings

December 8:

Purchasing: Living Simply & Justly

January 12: Regenerating: Soil, Compost, Waste

February 9: Reframing: Water & Energy

March 9: Planting: Gardens & Spaces

April 13: Planning: Pulling it Together

## Season of Creation 2022: Listen to the Voice of Creation

September 1 – October 4

The Season of Creation is the annual Christian celebration to listen and respond together to the cry of Creation. Christians around the world unite to pray and protect our common home. Join online ecumenical observances of the Season of Creation on September 1 at 8:00 a.m., for the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, and on October 4, the Commemoration of Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of ecology. This year's theme is "Listen to the Voice of Creation." Get details from this site: <https://seasonofcreation.org/>.

## Sunday Evening Conversations on Creation Continue...

The Creation Care Team at CTK invites you to a monthly environmental education web meeting series whose theme in 2022 is Planet Earth & You.

Professor Hyun-Min Hwang  
Texas Southern University

### How to Reduce Your Carbon Footprint Sunday, September 25, 6:00 p.m. online

It is well known that global warming and associated climate changes are linked to the increase of greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide and methane in the atmosphere. Humans generate anthropogenic carbon dioxide and methane in many different ways. A carbon footprint is the total amount of carbon dioxide and methane that are generated as a result of an individual's actions per year. The average carbon footprint of the U.S. is 16 tons, which is much higher than global average (about 4 tons). To avoid catastrophic climate change, nations across the globe agreed to reduce the global average carbon footprint to 2 tons by 2050. The major contributors to carbon footprint include transportation, consumption of food, other products and household energy use. Join Professor Hwang to learn how we can make significant reductions in our carbon footprints. Time for interactive discussion with the speaker will be provided. Please register for this talk on [www.eventbrite.com](http://www.eventbrite.com) at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/how-to-reduce-your-carbon-footprint-tickets-400699070707>. Contact Lisa Brenskelle at [brenskelle@aol.com](mailto:brenskelle@aol.com) with any questions.

## Forest Bathing & Earth Examen

Saturday, September 17, 9 – 11:30 a.m.

Montgomery County Nature Preserve

1122 Pruitt Road, The Woodlands, TX 77380

Experience forest bathing, led by a certified guide, followed by practice of the Christian spiritual discipline of the Earth Examen. Forest bathing, a practice that originated in Japan, involves taking in, in all of one's senses, the forest atmosphere. Not simply a walk in the woods, it is the conscious and contemplative practice of being immersed in the sights, sounds and smells of the forest. Forest bathing has been shown to reduce stress, improve mood and focus, enhance creativity, and lead to an increased sense of calm and altruistic behavior, in addition to other benefits such as boosting the immune system and lowering blood pressure. As Christians, we understand that God is present in God's creation, and after our guided forest bath, we'll spend some time considering the Earth Examen as we reflect both on our time spent forest bathing and on our relationship with all creation. This activity is for a small group and space is limited. Please register at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/forest-bathing-earth-examen-tickets-389880983517>. Contact Lisa Brenskelle at [brenskelle@aol.com](mailto:brenskelle@aol.com) with any questions.

## Run for the Park

Saturday, September 24, 8:00 a.m.

Hermann Park, 6001 Fannin St.

Meet up with other Lutherans runners/walkers for a fun 5K in Hermann Park in Houston. There is also a kids' 1K at 9 a.m. Hermann Park not convenient? You can also do a virtual run/walk in a location that suits you. The run benefits Hermann Park, one of Houston's great public greenspaces. Learn more/register at: <https://www.hermannpark.org/calendar/19th-annual-run-in-the-park/>. To meet up with other Lutheran runners, contact Lisa Brenskelle at [brenskelle@aol.com](mailto:brenskelle@aol.com).

## Garden Tour & Prayer with Eyes Wide Open

Saturday, October 8, 10:00 a.m.

Houston Botanic Garden

One Botanic Ln., 8210 Park Place Blvd. 77017

Experience a private guided tour of the Houston Botanic Garden, followed by practice of the nature-based Christian spiritual discipline of prayer with eyes wide open. Prayer with eyes wide open is a very meaningful way to deepen spirituality through nature, and nurture a loving relationship with the earth. Through prayer that engages with the world around us, instead of shutting out that world, we begin to see ourselves as loving participants within a rich web of life, and gain the wisdom needed to heal ourselves and renew our broken relationship with the Earth. In this time of extraordinary ecological challenge, spiritual tools to strengthen ties with our planet are precious. Add prayer with eyes wide open to your spiritual toolbox! This activity is for a small group and space is limited. Note that a ticket to this event does not cover the garden admission fee, which must be paid separately by each participant. Register on [www.eventbrite.com](http://www.eventbrite.com) at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/garden-tour-prayer-with-eyes-wide-open-tickets-405628354327?aff=ebdssbdestsearch>. Contact Lisa Brenskelle at [brenskelle@aol.com](mailto:brenskelle@aol.com) with any questions.





“What sunshine is to flowers, smiles are to humanity. These are but **trifles**, to be sure; but, scattered along life’s pathway the good they do is inconceivable.”

Joseph Addison (1672-1719)

***You are invited to engage in “good trifles” this month—and smile!***

Dr. Mark Stibich notes that while smiling is usually thought of as an involuntary response, it can also be a conscious, intentional choice. It seems that whether your smile is genuine or not doesn’t matter. It can affect your body and mind in a variety of positive ways, offering benefits for your health, your mood, and the moods of those around you.

Licensed social worker, Amy Moring (The Verywell Mind), shares some of the benefits of smiling (*right column*).

## SMILING.....

- Helps you live longer
- Relieves stress
- Elevates mood
- Is contagious
- Boosts the immune system
- May lower blood pressure
- Reduces pain
- Makes you attractive
- Suggests confidence
- Helps you stay positive

You are invited to share *nourishing nibbles, food for thought, nutrition for the body, and sustenance for the spirit!* Send your bite-sized quotes, words of wisdom, humor, or inspiration to [beverlydavis@ctkelc.org](mailto:beverlydavis@ctkelc.org) for inclusion in our next newsletter.

# LUTHER LEAGUE YOUTH FLOATED THE COMAL RIVER



Luther League youth floated the Comal River to celebrate the summer and remember their baptism.

