Louisburg United Methodist Church

July 2024

Connecting People, Cultivating Faith, Celebrating Community

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Greetings friends!

Happy Independence Day! I hope that you're able to enjoy some time with family and friends.

Each July 1, the Great Plains Conference itinerancy system causes pastors across Kansas and Nebraska to move homes and churches. It happened to my family last year when I began my appointment here at LUMC. At Annual Conference last month it was officially confirmed that I am continuing as your pastor.

One thing that was a bit different this year is that the results of a year long study of district lines went into effect. While it may not mean much to the majority of the congregation it does impact Sally and me!

We have gone from being in the Five Rivers District with boundary lines from Lawrence, south to and including Fort Scott, to now being part of the Northeast Kansas District where we are at the southern boundary of the district. We have a new District Superintendent, Hyunjin Cho (pictured top right). He is a brand new DS and most recently served Pittsburgh First. Jin and I have known each other for several years and I am excited that he is now my boss!

This also means that we have a new district administrative assistant to get to know (we all know that it is our AA that runs the place!). Her name is Tamara Shoop-McGinnis and the district office is located in the Conference office in Topeka.

I will be continuing my role as District Registrar on the District Committee on Ministry (DCOM) working with another pastor. The district registrar is the keeper of the files of those pastors who are still on the path to ordination, continuing Licensed Local Pastors and those pastors who are just beginning the candidacy process. It is required that we meet with each of those pastors on an annual basis. It falls on the registrar to gather their paperwork, make sure it is all in order and arrange the meetings of the DCOM.

It looks to be an interesting year!

Blessings, *Pastor Kathy*

The picture to the right is me with my brand new puppy, Mavis. She will be joining our family in mid-August.

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Volume 2, Issue 7

Family Spotlight: The Coffey Family

John and Carol grew up in Louisburg, graduated in 1975. In the fall of the same year, John joined the Marine Corps. The couple were married in New Lancaster Kansas on November 1, 1975.

They lived in Guam USA for 2 years. It was a period of growth for them, as the Vietnam War was ending and they were halfway around the world at the age of 18.

After the Marines they had three children, Benjamin, Susan and Mallory. With that came 8 grandchildren, who are the light of their lives.

After 32 years at Wal-Mart, and 25 years as a Miami County appraiser, they retired. They thought 'lets buy the family farm and become hobby farmers'. 'It will be fun!', someone said. We have longhorn crosses, a Herford bull, ducks, chickens, a vegetable garden and a floppy eared dog named Copper.

The love and experience we receive from our church family is off the chart. We want to be the hands and feet of Jesus and it will be our honor to do so.

Congratulations Rachel Porter and Luke Smith!

Rachel and Lyle were married in Castries, St. Lucia on 4/20/24. For all you number types you would have noticed that the date of their wedding was a palindrome. It was the perfect date for them to marry as they are both into numbers.

Rachel is Jennifer & Bill Porter's daughter.

Congratulations all!

An Honest Apostle's Creed for Doubters and Skeptics

I believe in God—usually.

I mean much of the time I'm absolutely sure that God exists, though sometimes dying children and serial killers and Cancer and Tsunamis do make me wonder about God's power or goodness, and definitely the combination of the two. And on a few really bad days I've even been terrified that God may not be there at all or trying to squash me. But yes, I do believe in God... sometimes.

I believe in Jesus yet sometimes struggle with the Christ.

The idea that God hated the flawed children He* created so much that he had to send His only son (who is also God) to earth and then brutally murder Him to satisfy—Himself, seems rather wasteful and petty and mean. Many days I hesitate to go all-in with that part of the story. I also sometimes wonder about the science of the whole Virgin Birth thing and the miracle stories too, if I'm being honest.

Yet Jesus is the closet thing to spiritual bedrock I've ever found; my peace and rest and many times the only thing that keeps me from totally losing my religion. I always find his words and his ways beautiful and life-giving, yet even then I wonder just how this whole salvation thing really works and what I'm missing that others seem to get without trying.

I believe in the Holy Spirit but confess I often can't tell what is God speaking to me, and what is just me talking to myself.

God as Spirit gets a little nebulous and weird and loosey-goosey for me sometimes too, especially when trying to trying to find something supernatural and sacred in the mundane, ordinary, fluorescent-lit, traffic-jammed, mosquito-occupied days I stumble through.

I believe in the Church, though if I'm honest it seems to do as much harm as good in the world, and I'm not sure what to do with that tragic reality.

I've been both gripped by Christianity's beauty yet repelled by the horrors it has manufactured. I can (many times in the very same days) find it both fully lovely and entirely gruesome and this unsettles me greatly. I daily fight for the Church and fight with The Church with equal vigor and often wonder which is the better path.

I believe in Prayer yet I don't really know what it does or whether or not it works, or if it does work just how and when.

Some days I pray earnestly, some days I live life as a continual silent prayer of gratitude, and some days I say empty, showy words to the sky and hope that God doesn't catch it (or forgives me if He does).

I believe the Bible is a beautiful mess.

The Scriptures, while providing thousands of generations of people a way to hear from, experience, and know God (myself included), has ironically also been the single most damaging weapon to ever exist in the hands of Christians; used to justify hatred, war, bigotry, greed, and every kind of ugliness we wish to wallow in and inflict upon each other. Despite the good it sometimes does, the Bible is often the greatest barrier to faith that people ever encounter—and this is the stuff that keeps me up at night.

I believe that I am tired, worn out, and exhausted from forever feeling I'm chasing after the wind that is God, when I'd just rather stop running and stop believing altogether.

I believe that I sometimes passionately, vigorously defend God while simultaneously being unsure God is even there.

I believe that as I walk further down this road of faith, I find surety in only my questions and the forever not-knowing of it all.

I believe that God is far bigger than my words or thoughts or feelings, and since those are all I have to go on, I'll always have a bit less than I'd like to of God.

I believe in Heaven and Hell—and sometimes I just don't.

I believe I regularly conclude that I need to be saved from the wretched mire of my sin, yet just as often wonder if sin isn't something we've conjured up; a convenient way of excusing ourselves for being simply terrible to each other.

I believe that I want desperately to know things that I may not be able to know—and this stinks royally.

I believe that some days I have the faith of a mustard seed and some days far, far less.

I believe that my spiritual life is often equal parts deep conviction and fake it 'till you make it.

Most of all, I believe that God (if God is truly God) knows all of this in ways no one else ever could: all my trying and failing, and following and falling, and grasping and losing—and God relentlessly and unwaveringly loves me through it all.

God knows the meandering, perpetually broken road I have traveled to reach God, and knows too just how much my heart breaks when blessed assurance that has been captured after a long and brutal fight, invariably eludes me almost instantly.

God knows that I am a seeker, a pilgrim, an open-hearted lover, a learner, a rabid chaser of the Divine, but I am a fraud and a failure and a traitor and a rebel all the while.

Thank God that God is God... I think.

This is the honest creed of an exhausted apostle who struggles and stumbles toward Love.

(This is written by John Pavlovitz)

5 Highlights from the Board

1. **Policy Work**: The incident /accident (minor issues) and the insurance accident (major issues) reports were approved. Next we will work on the Funeral Policy, Membership Withdrawal and Sexual Ethics policies.
2. **Finance**: Shelley Whiting and Sally Greene are working together to check on budgeting issues. Our giving is down, as is usual for the summer months, so we discussed different ways to let the congregation know all the ways we can give— through Venmo, giving during worship, online through our website, bank draft or through the mail.
3. **Staff, Pastor Relations Committee** David Sands reported that we are still looking for a music coordinator.
4. **Mission & Hospitality**: Reports were received from Nadine Horst and Ali Hamman about the success of Mission Sunday. Nadine reported on the different ways that our church supports the Tusonge families. A sponsorship for one of the Tusonge children was provided. And the Uganda food that Hospitality provided was quite a hit as well. We all thanked both of them for their hard work in making it a success.
5. **Building Committee**: Pastor Kathy gave a report from the Building Committee complete with updated drawings for the possible building project. A long discussion followed concerning the price tag ($1.45 million for a complete build or $901,000 for just a water tight building option). We acknowledged that in order to be a true community outreach center and to keep up with the needs of our growing congregation this build makes sense; however, financially it does not look like a viable option at this time. Talks will continue

Taken from the June 11th Board mtg

(Once approved, the full minutes are available in the narthex (lobby) on the Connection Table)

Welcome Baby Micah!

Daniel, son of Steve and Heather , and his wife Lindsey, welcomed their beautiful boy Micah to the world on Father's Day! Shortly before his birth the LUMC prayer team began praying hard, and never ceased during his first week in NICU. He was a warrior, as were Mom and Dad.

He is home now and completely healthy, happy, and strong! The family wants to thank the LUMC church family for all the prayers and support.

Camp Firelight VBS begins Monday July 15-18!

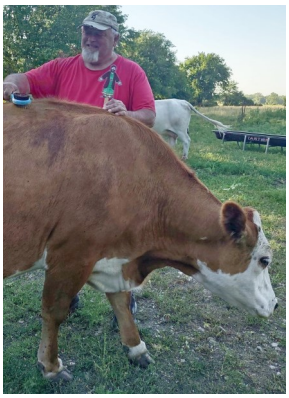
Ages 3-5: 6 pm to 7:30 pm. Kdg to 5th grade: 6—8:30 pm

Waterslide will be back on Wednesday night!

Registration link is available on our Facebook page and Website

Where in the World is Flat Jesus?

Louisburg Kansas!



John brushing one of his cows.

Patrolling with Dave.

Annapolis Maryland!

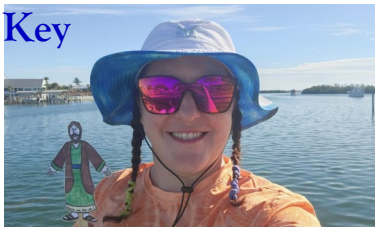
Ron & Katie attending their grandson Will's initiation into the US Naval academy!

Hutchinson Kansas!

Dave attending SRO training

Manasota Key Florida!

Drew, Ellie, Lynzee & Andrew Symes



Kearney Nebraska!

With Linda, Carolyn, Carol & Kathy at Annual Conference

Greece!

With Beth, Roxanne's Cousin

Schuyler Nebraska!

With Pastor Kathy at Licensing School

LOUISBURG
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CHURCH

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Office hours:
M, T, W, T: 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Don't just attend church.
Love the church.
Serve the church.
Give through the church.
Invite people to church.
Worship Jesus with the church.
Encourage the church.
Participate in the church.
Pray for the church.
Be the church

4: Independence Day (office closed)
7: Donut Sunday
9: LUMC Board mtg, 6:30
10-17: Pastor Kathy on vacation
13: Men's Breakfast, 8 a.m. Miss B's
15-18: Vacation Bible School
28-31: Pastor Kathy in Great Bend for Session 2 of Licensing School
11: Board Mtg, 6:30 pm

Weekly:

Sunday: Journey Sunday School 8:15 a.m.
Mon—Thurs: Good Morning God! 9:30 am
Tuesdays: Care Team 10 a.m.
Wednesdays: Dominoes 1 p.m.