



# the Vine

Fall Edition | 2025

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# the Vine

The quarterly journal of RED HILL LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL

*I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. -John 15:5*

**Dear** Red Hill Family and Friends,

Well, we have come to the end of another summer season, and soon, we will welcome the arrival of autumn. I hope you have had time to rest, renew, and reconnect with family and friends. As we enter the autumn season, we return to the regular routines of life: school schedules, work schedules, and sports schedules. And, before we know it—Christmas!

It is also during the autumn season that we begin a new ministry and fiscal year (September 2025 to August 2026). In this edition of *The Vine*, you will read about the many ways that you can be involved in the life and ministries of Red Hill, growing in your faith, deepening personal relationships, and serving our community in the name of Jesus. Autumn is a perfect time to “reset,” to get back into (or continue) the rhythms of the spiritual life. Our hope and prayer is that you find a true spiritual home at Red Hill Lutheran Church and School, joining us in fulfilling Jesus’ Great Commission and Great Commandment...

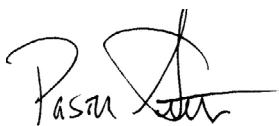
*... “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28.18-20)*

*“And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked him, “Which commandment is the most important of all?” 29 Jesus answered, “The most important is, ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. 30 And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ 31 The second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.” (Mark 12.28-31)*

Enjoy this edition of *The Vine*. I look forward to seeing you in church! God’s blessings to you!

In Christ,

Pastor Seth





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# The New Church Year

By Pastor Seth Britton

As a church, Red Hill Lutheran is committed to serving Jesus by proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus, and making disciples of Jesus who are being equipped to love and serve Jesus through their daily lives. This is *the mission of Red Hill Lutheran Church and School*. As we begin a new ministry year (September 2025-August 2026), it is vital that we understand the foundations upon which we build our ministry and facilitate our mission as a church. Red Hill's *Purpose, Vision, Mission, Core Values, and Ministry "Targets,"* serve as the "guard rails" for our ministry plans, programs, and processes.

## Purpose, Vision, Mission, Values, and Ministry Targets of Red Hill Lutheran Church

Both Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions affirm that in His love and mercy, God desires to redeem and reconcile the world through Jesus Christ. In order to carry out this salvific mission, Jesus has commanded His church to *make and send* disciples into the world. A disciple is one called through the Gospel to be a *student, an apprentice of Jesus*. In the Gospel of Matthew, we are told that as Jesus prepared to ascend back to Heaven, Jesus *commissioned* the church to make disciples, even describing the *means* of this disciple-making mission: teaching and baptizing in the name of the Triune God...:

*Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup>Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup>and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."* (Matthew 28.18-20)

This "Great Commission" given by Jesus directs and defines the work of the church. In the New Testament, the word, "Church," comes from the Greek word, ἐκκλησία (*ekklēsia*). A compound word consisting of ἐκ (*ek*), meaning "out" or "from" and καλέω (*kaleō*), meaning, "to call." Consequently, ἐκκλησία (church) describes a community "called out" for *assembling together*. The church is the people of God called out from the world and assembled together for the purpose of making disciples through God's Word (teaching) and Sacraments (baptizing, Eucharist). All for the divine purpose of being sent back into the world to love and serve God and others.

As a church commissioned by Jesus, Red Hill Lutheran Church and School (RHLC&S) seeks to fulfill Jesus' commands to make disciples through baptizing and

teaching in the name of the Triune God for the purpose of faithful living. As a distinctively Lutheran Church, our very identity is defined by these divine commands...

...(the)...one holy Christian church will be and remain forever. This is the assembly of all believers, among whom the Gospel is preached in its purity and the holy sacraments are administered according to the Gospel...It is as Paul says in Eph. 4:4-5 "There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism." (*The Augsburg Confession*, Article VII).

In his explanation of the Third Article





of the Apostles' Creed, Martin Luther describes how God calls people to follow Jesus, feeding and leading His church in the world...

I believe that by my own reason or strength I cannot believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to him. But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with his gifts, and sanctified and preserved me in true faith, just as he calls, gathers, enlightens and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth and preserves it in union with Jesus Christ in the one true faith. In this Christian church he daily and abundantly forgives all my sins, and the sins of all believers, and on the last day he will raise me and all the dead and will grant eternal life to me and to all who believe in Christ. This is most certainly true. (*Luther's Small Catechism*)

At Red Hill, our *purpose, vision, mission, core values, and ministry targets, describe the culture and climate we seek to create for the purpose of making disciples of Jesus.*

### **Purpose, Vision, Mission, Values, and Ministry Targets of Red Hill Lutheran Church**

Our commitment to making disciples is reflected in...

**Our Purpose** (Why We Exist): "Know Christ. Make Christ known."

**Vision Statement** (What We Aim to Achieve): "Making Christ Centered, Emotionally Healthy Disciples of Jesus, One life at a time."

**Mission Statement** (How We Will Achieve Our Vision): "*Reach and serve our local community, Equip their hearts, minds, and souls, and Release them into the world to share God's love.*"

### **Core Values (Commitments that Guide Us)**

- **Worship through Word and Sacrament**—We believe the heart of the church's ministry is the corporate Worship of the Triune God through Word and Sacrament. Through the corporate Worship services, God meets us and serves us

through His means of grace. Our commitment is to preach the Gospel in its purity and truth, and administer the Sacraments as prescribed by Scripture. (*Deuteronomy 6.4-5; John 4.23-24*)

- **Biblically Faithful** — We believe the Bible to be the inspired and inerrant Word of God and His Word is the basis for all we do. (*John 8.31-32; 2 Timothy 3.16*)
- **Lutheran Theological Identity** — We believe that the Lutheran Confessions, as explicated in the Book of Concord, are a pure exposition of the Word of God. As such the Confessions ground us in the Gospel: "*Grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, revealed through Scripture alone, for the glory of God alone.*" (*John 10.27-30; Romans 3.21-26*)
- **Christ Centered** — We believe the church is called through the Gospel of God's grace received through faith; we are saved and justified through Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. Everything we do must flow from our relationship with Jesus Christ. (*Mark 1.14-15; Luke 9.23-25*)
- **Emotionally Healthy** — We believe that spiritual maturity and emotional health are inseparable. Emotionally Healthy Discipleship (EHD) is a commitment to the whole person—body, mind, and soul, through every stage of life. Emotional health involves our relationships with God and others, focusing on how our needs, vulnerabilities, patterns of communication, and ways of understanding our emotions impact those relationships. Emotional Health flows from one's identity in Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit transforming the deep places in the soul, where our true self, as created in the image of God, exists. (*Matthew 5.21-48; Ephesians 2.11-22*)



- **Disciples** – We believe a disciple is a “student,” an “apprentice,” of Jesus—we are learning how to live our lives as Jesus would live them. We grow and deepen our discipleship through specific, spiritual disciplines (Worship, Bible Study, Biblical Community, Prayer, and Servanthood). As we grow as disciples of Jesus (Christ-Centered), and experience the Spirit’s transforming power in our emotional lives (emotional health), we will be equipped to love God and others to the glory of God. (*Matthew 28.19-20; Mark 12.28-31*)
- **Christian Maturity** – We believe in fostering spiritual growth through Worship, Bible study, Biblical Community, Prayer, and Servanthood/Evangelism. (*Acts 2.42-43; Philipians 2.12-13*)

- **Mission Driven** – We believe in helping members achieve their highest potential to fulfill God’s calling to reach out boldly to others. (*Matthew 28.18-20; Matthew 25.31-46*)
- **Accountability to God and Others** – We believe that God blesses us with abundant spiritual and material gifts and out of love and gratitude; we use them effectively in service to Him and to each other. (*Romans 12; 2 Corinthians 8-9*)

Again, as we begin this new ministry year, please continue to pray for our church and school! I invite you to join us in our ministry and mission here at Red Hill! God is ready to *teach us to observe all that Jesus commanded, and live lives of ever-deepening faith, hope, and love!*





## 2025 Congregational Meeting

On August 26th, Red Hill Lutheran Church and School held it's annual meeting in the CLC. At this meeting, we unveiled the theme for the 2025-2026 Church and School year which is "Wholehearted" commanding us as Disciples of Jesus to "*Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your mind, and with all your strength.*" **Mark 12:30.**

During the annual meeting, RHL Board of Directors President, Brian Crooker, Pastor Seth and RHL School Principal, Paul Marquardt, laid out the vision and plans for the coming year.

Red Hill Church members also elected new, lay leaders for our various committees and approved both the Church and School budgets.

### 2025-2026 Board of Directors

Brian Crooker – President  
Kimberly Rogers – Vice President  
Mark Clement - Treasurer  
Donna Wiksell – Secretary  
Cathy Anderson – Director at Large  
Shauna Drumm – Director at Large  
Joe Henegan – Director at Large  
Rich Records – Director at Large  
Clint Scott – Director at Large

### 2025-2026 RHL School Board

Claire Markovsky – School Board Chair  
Jenny Morrow – School Board Vice Chair  
Sonja Scott – School Board Secretary  
Mark Colon - Member  
Alexander Kitano – Member  
Jim Weber – Member

### Endowment Committee

Andre de Beer – Endowment Committee Chair  
Sonja Scott – Financial Secretary  
Art Kitano – Publicity  
Kevin Drumm – Education Coordinator  
Martha Toft – Recording Secretary

### Nominating Committee

Ken Hays  
Laurie Oard  
Chuck Rogers  
Renee Mihalovich  
Jennifer Colon





# Biblical Community: The Heart of Who We Are

By Stephanie McArthur, Executive Director of Ministries

One of the greatest gifts God has given us is the gift of community. It's not just a word or a concept—it's a living, breathing expression of God's love. This year, our theme verse challenges us to ask: *How do we love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength—through the lens of community?* And perhaps more fundamentally: *What does "community" really mean?*

When I look ahead at what God is doing in our church and school, I feel a deep sense of excitement. We are stepping into a season of deeper discipleship, and community is one of the paths He's using to take us there.

At Red Hill, we often talk about our church and school feeling like a "small town." It's that dream Hollywood loves to paint—a close-knit place where people truly know each other, where neighbors show up in both crisis and celebration, and where traditions bring us together. While real life may not always match the movies, here at Red Hill, I believe we experience something incredibly close. Our "small town charm" is not just an ideal—it's a reality. And my prayer is that, in the year ahead, we'll continue to share that blessing with those God brings into our lives.

This fall, we're thrilled to launch Moms Book Clubs, designed for moms from both our church and school communities. These weekly gatherings will be a space to dig into God's Word, share stories, encourage

one another, and walk together through the joys and challenges of raising disciples. Whether you're a mom of toddlers or teenagers, or your kids have grown and flown, you are welcome. We need your wisdom, your experience, and your presence. No perfect attendance required—just come as you are, and join us in God's unfolding story.

Alongside our book clubs, we'll also be offering DiscipleU classes, which provide a chance to go deeper into God's Word and reflect more fully on the messages we hear on Sunday mornings. If you've ever walked out of a service with questions or a desire to dig deeper—DiscipleU is for you. Held between our two Sunday morning services, from 9:15 am to 10:00 am, these classes are designed to strengthen our faith and deepen our understanding, together.

And of course, this fall will be full of joyful moments and shared laughter as well. From our Ministry Expo, to Oktoberfest & Trunk or Treat, Women's Retreat, Game Night, and more—there will be many opportunities to celebrate, connect, and grow. If you've been watching from the sidelines, unsure of

when or how to jump in, consider this your invitation. Come take that first step.

You are welcome here. You belong here. Because at Red Hill, community isn't just what we do—it's who we are.





With each new season come both beginnings and endings. We step away from the warmth and unhurried rhythm of summer into the beauty of fall—marked by cozy clothes, vibrant colors, and the return of fuller schedules. For me personally, the change often stirs a bit of anxiety as I adjust to what’s new, but it also brings fresh anticipation.

In the life of our church, fall ushers in change as well. Summer at Red Hill is a quieter season—students and teachers enjoy a much-needed rest, and many of our programs pause for renewal. But when fall arrives, new life begins to stir. From early mornings to late evenings, there is a buzz across our campus as every generation gathers in one way or another.

God never intended for us to walk this journey alone. Biblical Community is His gift to us—strengthening our faith, deepening our love, and uniting us in His mission. When we lean into this gift, we step into the kind of life God intends for His people: a life marked by joy, belonging, and purpose in a Christ-centered family.

And the impact doesn’t stop with us. A church alive with Biblical Community becomes a living testimony to the world. As Jesus said in John 13:35: *“By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”* Our love, lived out in community, shines as a light that points others to the transforming power of the Gospel.

As we begin this new Ministry Year, my prayer is that the opportunities listed below will not just be seen as events or programs, but as invitations—ways for you to step into community, to deepen connections, and maybe even to finally learn the name of someone you’ve passed by countless times.

Below you’ll find opportunities to grow, serve, and connect in the year ahead. I look forward to walking this journey together with you. Adult Bible Studies:

### **“Wednesdays in the Word.”**

Wednesday Morning Bible Study

Anchored: The Book of 1 Peter

Teacher: Pastor Seth

Wednesdays 7:00am to 7:45am in the Sanctuary (In person, Livestreamed and Recorded).

### **Deeper Dive “I Believe” The Nicene Creed.**

DiscipleU Adult Bible Study

Teacher: Pastor Seth

Sunday mornings 9:15am to 10:00am in the Christian Life Center (CLC).

### **“Study & Sing the Great Hymns of the Faith”**

DiscipleU Adult Bible Study

Teacher: Jason Harney

9:15am - 10:00am in the Music Library

Women’s Gatherings:

### **RHL Women’s Circles Bible Study**

The Women’s Circles are starting their new year in September.

Grace Circle met Sept 2nd and are working on the Concordia study of Galatians.

Rebekah and Deborah Circles are continuing their Epic of Eden study.

Rebekah Circle: 1st Mondays at 6:30pm – In Peter’s Parish.

Contact Martha Toft: [martha.toft@gmail.com](mailto:martha.toft@gmail.com)

Deborah Circle: 1st Tuesdays at 9:30am

Contact Carmen Gogosha: [4gogosfam@gmail.com](mailto:4gogosfam@gmail.com)

Grace Circle: 1st Tuesdays at 10:00am – In The Groves.

Contact Marlene Thorson: [emthor@cox.net](mailto:emthor@cox.net)

### **RHLC Women Book Club**

Book Club meets each month to discuss a selected book for the month. Please check our website to see which book will be discussed each month.

Next meeting September 16th at 12:45pm in Peter’s Parish. Our book choice is “An Ocean Apart” by Robin Pilcher. It is a warm, welcome tale of believable people and places told by a born story teller and full of beautifully painted characters. Read the book and join us to discuss it. Questions: Marlene Thorson, 949/632-7416

### **Moms Book Clubs**

“Raising Grateful Kids in an Entitled World” by Kristen Welch

Book clubs are open to all Moms, in all seasons. The heart behind these book clubs is to build community, encourage each other, and grow together in this season of life. Book clubs are super relaxed with no added pressure to your day.



**Monday Moms** - Beginning September 22nd  
6:30pm - 8:00pm  
No Childcare Provided  
Room 23 (2nd floor of the CLC)

**Friday Morning Mom's** - Beginning September 26th  
9:00am - 10:30am  
CLC Multi Purpose Room  
Childcare available upon request  
Contact Stephanie McArthur for more information at  
smcarthur@redhillchurch.org

**Fall Women's Retreat - Rest, Renew & Recharge**  
Dates: November 7-9, 2025  
Location: Hyatt Mission Bay Resort, San Diego  
Check-In: Friday at 5:00pm  
Program starts at 6:30pm  
Check-Out: Sunday at 11:00am  
Cost: \$550 (Double Occupancy) or \$650 (Single Room)  
Includes: 2 nights at the resort (Friday & Saturday)  
Refreshments Friday night Breakfast & Dinner on Saturday Breakfast on Sunday

This retreat is open to all women, so don't come alone—invite your friends, sisters, neighbors, and co-workers.  
Have questions? Contact Stephanie McArthur at  
smcarthur@redhillchurch.org

Mens Gatherings:  
**Mensday Bible Study**  
All men are invited to our weekly informal gathering on Monday evenings at Peter's Parish for a 6:30pm dinner, followed by a 7:00-8:30pm Bible Study.  
For details, contact Tom Waldron at (714)697-5349 or  
tjwaldron3@aol.com.

Serve Opportunities:  
**RHL Quilters**  
Our team of quilters work together to create over 300 quilts supporting Lutheran Social Services. We would love for you to join our team, and no quilting or sewing experience is necessary.  
When: Every Monday, 9:00am - 12:00pm  
Where: Peter's Parish  
Have questions? Contact Nancy Pace at n15pace@yahoo.com

### First Responder Lunch

We need your help on Tuesday, November 4th as we gather together our local first responders to celebrate the amazing work they do in our community.  
When: Tuesday, November 4th, 11:00am - 2:00pm  
Where: Church Parking Lot


**WHAT IS**

# DISCIPLEU?

**RED HILL LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL**


This ministry provides deeper teaching that focuses on the biblical truths presented during the Sunday worship service.

**WHERE?**




DiscipleU is held in the Christian Life Center (CLC) next to the Sanctuary

**WHAT TIME?**




Each Sunday morning from 9:15am - 10:00am

**WHAT TO EXPECT?**




We gather in God's Word to dig deeper into the Sunday morning sermon. This study will focus on the historical background, biblical truths, and practical application of what we learn each week.

**SNACKS?**



Donuts and Coffee are served each week during our time of study.

**WATCH ONLINE**



Missed a week or on vacation? Scan this QR code to watch online!

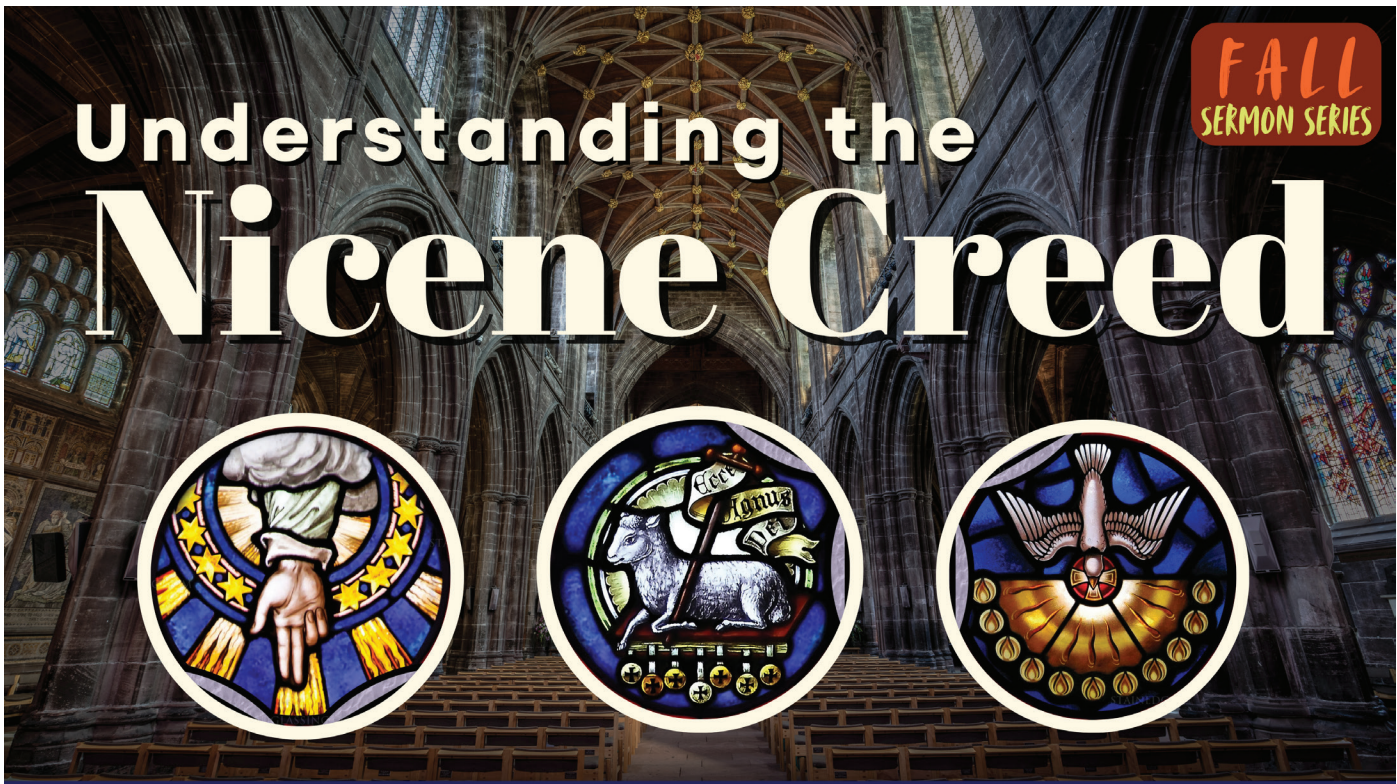
**QUESTIONS?**

Still wondering if DiscipleU is for you? We promise it is! Please contact our church office to learn more about this ministry.

Contact smcarthur@redhillchurch.org



Fall Sermon Series  
“I Believe.” Understanding The Nicene Creed  
(September-November)



In 325 A.D., the Roman emperor Constantine called together church leaders throughout the Roman Empire to gather in the city of Nicaea (Modern day Iznik, Turkey). The purpose of this gathering was to settle theological and political controversies concerning the doctrine of the Trinity and the person and mission of Jesus Christ. This initial, ecumenical council produced a statement of *essential Christian beliefs known as the Nicene Creed. The Nicene Creed (as well as the Apostles' and Athanasian Creeds) articulates and summarizes orthodox, Christian belief.*

*As the Nicene Creed became the essential confession of faith for the church<sup>1</sup>, still, questions about the nature of the Trinity, the relationship of Jesus to the Trinity, the relationship of the Holy Spirit to the Trinity and Jesus, as well as other related theological questions, continued to be debated and refined by church leaders in later, ecumenical councils. As theologian, Kevin DeYoung describes...*

What we know as the Nicene Creed actually comes from the second ecumenical council,

which met at Constantinople in A.D. 381. The Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed (as it is sometimes called) expands on the earlier Creed of Nicaea (325) by including a much longer statement on the Holy Spirit, as well as new wording about the Virgin Mary, the crucifixion, baptism, the church, the resurrection of the dead, and the life everlasting...The Nicene Creed may be the most important Christian text ever written. Since the fourth century, the Nicene Creed has served as the most influential, most ecumenical, and arguable most widely used statement of faith in the history of the church.<sup>2</sup>

Importantly, all of the ancient creeds (Nicene, Apostles', Athanasian) articulate and reflect biblical truth and revelation. The creeds are “theological mirrors of the Bible’s fundamental doctrine”<sup>3</sup> and “are the product of many centuries of Bible study by a great company of believers. They are a kind

<sup>2</sup> Kevin DeYoung, *The Nicene Creed* (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Books, 2025).

<sup>3</sup> Burk Parsons, *Why Do We Have Creeds? Basics of the Faith* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2012).

<sup>1</sup> May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025, marked the seventeen-hundred year anniversary of the Nicene Creed!



of spiritual ‘road map’ of the teaching of the Bible, already worked out and proved by others before us.”<sup>4</sup> As a means of spiritual formation, these creedal confessions of faith...

...provide a concise reading of the Christian story and . . . vision of reality, being instruments that can at once define the community of faith and challenge alternative stories and visions of reality.<sup>5</sup>

Using primarily the *Nicene Creed as the focus, this sermon series will explore the basic beliefs of the Christian faith. We will examine the Biblical basis for our beliefs, how these beliefs shape our thinking (theology) about God, our world, our selves, and how God desires that we live and relate in our world today. In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus affirms the importance of understanding and living His words (teachings/life) in our lives...*

*“Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. <sup>25</sup>And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock.” (Matthew 7.24-25)*

*As Jesus makes very clear, the Biblical and theological truths we believe as Christians are the foundation upon which we build our lives, lives that will stand strong in the midst of the “storms” of this world! As disciples of Jesus in this current, cultural moment, it is essential that we understand the truths we believe, why we believe them, and how these beliefs and truths shape and guide our lives in our world today!*

*Join us in worship, as we examine...*

- “God’s Word.”
- “Christlikeness.”
- “God the Father.”
- “Jesus the Son”
- “Salvation: Jesus and the Cross.”
- “The Resurrection and Ascension.”
- “Waiting.”

<sup>4</sup> G. I. Williamson, quoted in *ibid*, 21.

<sup>5</sup> Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Creed: What Christians Believe and Why It Matters* (New York: Doubleday, 2003).

- “God the Holy Spirit.”
- “The Trinity.”
- “Christian Discipleship.”
- “Humanity and Sin.”
- “Heaven and Hell.”

### **Nicene Creed**

We believe in one God,  
the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father.  
Through him all things were made.  
For us and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven;  
by the power of the Holy Spirit  
he became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and  
was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.  
On the third day he rose again  
in accordance with the scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory to judge the living and  
the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of  
life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.  
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and  
glorified.

He has spoken through the prophets.  
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic  
Church.  
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness  
of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

*(Lutheran Book of Worship, 84)*



# “Wednesdays in the Word.” Wednesday Morning Bible Study

## “Anchored: The Book of 1 Peter”

Teacher: Pastor Seth Britton

Wednesdays 7:00am to 7:45am in the Sanctuary (In person, Livestreamed and Recorded).

Living the Christian life in this world is both an incredible blessing, and at times, not easy. While some periods in Christian history were more volatile than others, the truth is that Biblical, Christian faith, as well as the personal and social values that are informed by the Christian faith, will conflict with the dominant, cultural values of the current age.

In the early decades of the First-Century, the Apostle Peter himself experienced the tensions, conflicts, sufferings, and outright persecutions that came *because* of his relationship with Jesus Christ. Aware that many in the early church were facing similar circumstances, Peter writes to some churches in the provinces of Roman Asia Minor, encouraging them to hold on and stand strong, anchored to Jesus Christ! As one commentator notes:

The readers of the Apostle Peter’s letter were confused and discouraged by the persecution they were encountering because of their faith. Peter exhorted them to stand strong, repeatedly reminding them of Christ’s example, the riches of their inheritance in him, and the hope of his returning again to take them to heaven.<sup>1</sup>

The book of 1 Peter is Peter’s initial letter to these beleaguered churches. Paradoxically, what Peter discovered personally, and then encouraged his community (and us) to discover as well, is that our hope and power to live as Jesus’ disciples are found in the *sufferings*, and ultimate resurrection victory, of Jesus Christ. The Christ who suffered is also the Christ who is now exalted (1 Peter 3:19–22). Through His death and resurrection, Jesus conquered sin, death and the powers of hell, as well as every power that stands behind this “unholy trinity,” seeking to discourage God’s people in this world.

In our study of 1 Peter, we will examine the history and circumstances of the early church and how God called His people then, and continues to call His people now, to be faithful and persevere through times of conflict, challenge, and even persecution. Just as Peter assured the church in their first-century context, Peter assures

the church today that we too can trust that, no matter what the circumstances we face, as Jesus’ disciples, we can live *hopefully* and *confidently* because we know Jesus is on the throne! As New Testament scholar, T.R. Schreiner writes:

When believers live in such a way, they indicate that they are placing their hope in God rather than in the joys and comforts of this world. Another way of describing 1 Peter is to say that those who hope and trust in God and in his future reward will have the strength to endure whatever comes their way in the present. When believers set their hope on the future, they reveal that their salvation comes from the cross of Christ, who bore their sins (2:24; 3:18)... Since the end is coming soon, believers should imitate Jesus Christ and follow his example of suffering, for all those who suffer will also experience a great reward.<sup>2</sup>

The goals of this study will be to gain a deeper understanding of the context, content, and message of 1 Peter, as well as the challenges and threats the church faces in every age. And, through this understanding, to encourage and equip disciples of Jesus today, to persevere through the changes and challenges of this world through living godly lives, being good citizens in the community, and being a faithful worker, spouse, and friend.

We hope you can join us for this verse-by-verse study in the book of 1 Peter. As always, this study is also livestreamed as well as recorded and posted on our website so that you can participate at any time!

The overall purpose of all of our Bible studies is to gain *a deeper understanding of Jesus so that we can be obedient to Him as His disciples in this world. We would love for you to join us in this task.*

*Bring your Bibles, bring your questions and bring your desire to learn more about Jesus and His plan for you. You are always welcome!*

<sup>1</sup> Introduction to 1 Peter, *Harper Collins Bible* (ESV Version, 2002).

<sup>2</sup> T.R. Schreiner. *1 and 2 Peter, Jude*. (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2003).

## Baptism at Red Hill

Martin Luther said this about Baptism:

*Indeed if I had the matter under my control, I would not want God speak to me from heaven or appear to me, but I would want—and my daily prayers are directed to this end—that I might have the proper respect and true appreciation for the gift of Baptism.*

So true! Baptism is the beginning of a life that is dedicated to Jesus and Jesus' teachings and ways. It is through Baptism that God comes to us and washes us, joining us to Jesus Christ and to Jesus' church.

Are you interested in Baptizing your child? Are you interested in being Baptized yourself? Perhaps you just have some questions about Christian Baptism; what it is and what it's about? If you answered yes to any of these questions then you are invited to take the next steps for Baptism at Red Hill. The next steps are: Contact Executive Assistant to the Senior Pastor, Donna Kunz, at the Church Office: 714-544-3131 ext.100 or [dkunz@redhillchurch.org](mailto:dkunz@redhillchurch.org). You will then be sent a Baptism packet which includes:

- \*A letter from Pastor Seth, outlining the Baptism process.

- \*Two booklets: *"Let the Children Come: A Baptism Manual for Parents and Sponsors"* and *"My Privilege as a Sponsor"* (God Parents).

- \*A Baptism registration form.

You are asked to read through these resources and share them with your prospective sponsors. Complete the registration form and bring it with you when you meet with Pastor Seth, which is the next step:

After reading the materials, contact the Donna in the Church Office to make an appointment to meet with Pastor Seth.

During your meeting with Pastor Seth, he will provide an overview of Christian Baptism and the Service of Holy Baptism as administered in the Lutheran Church, as well as an opportunity to ask any questions you may have from the readings. After this meeting, the Baptism can be scheduled during one of the two Sunday morning Worship services. (Sponsors are welcome to attend the meeting with Pastor Seth, but it is not mandatory)

If you have any questions, contact Donna Kunz in the church office. May our Lord guide you in this significant step in your Christian life!

## Red Hill Lutheran Church & School Baptism Class

**Sunday, November 2nd**

**11:30am-1:00pm**

**In the Christian Life Center (CLC)**

We're offering a Baptism Class for anyone seeking more information about Baptism or who is ready to take the next step in being baptized. This class will be led by Pastor Seth, and whole families are warmly invited to attend.

Those who register will receive Baptism materials to read beforehand. Once your registration is received, we'll reach out to arrange how best to get those materials to you.

Registration opens in early October, and more detailed information will be available at that time.

If you are interested in attending this class, please contact Beth Stoffregen or one of our YFM Team members:

Beth Stoffregen, Director of Youth and Family Ministry at [beths@redhillchurch.org](mailto:beths@redhillchurch.org)  
Katelyn Der, Nursery and Preschool Ministry Coordinator at [kder@redhillchurch.org](mailto:kder@redhillchurch.org)  
Itzel Mancilla, Children's Ministry Coordinator at [imancilla@redhillchurch.org](mailto:imancilla@redhillchurch.org)  
Tim Rivera, Student Ministry Coordinator at [trivera@redhillchurch.org](mailto:trivera@redhillchurch.org)



## To Will One Thing

By Isaiah Coughran, Contemporary Worship Leader

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength.” (Mark 12:30) Every time I read this verse, I can hear my high school wrestling coach’s voice, yelling, “You need to eat, sleep and breath wrestling.” *This is a call to be All In.*

I also love, that Jesus, in the follow up verse to this states, “... and you shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these” (Mark 12:31). And funny enough, I can still hear my wrestling coach reminding me that my actions impacted not just me, but also the team. He’d say, “there’s no “I” in team.” I think my coach was tapping into what these scriptures ask of us. They are God’s calling and reminder that all of his children need to be loved and loved well, and that’s gonna take everything we got

As I look at this upcoming year, I hope to embody this All-In-Love in the various ministries I am involved in, and overlap with, here at Red Hill Lutheran Church and School. Some upcoming highlights will be: Ministry Expo Day, Middle School Christmas Program, Spring Sing and Open House event, as well as a fun Concert on February 21st where the RHL Praise Band will share music.

The week to week of our ministry is to share the love of God through music at Red Hill School’s weekly Chapel services featuring our Middle School students, as well as Sunday morning Worship with our amazing volunteers who give so much of their time and talents each week. These groups are such a joy to work with as we seek to provide a space to experience the love and wonder of God. God is truly worthy of all we are, so let’s give Him all we got!



# The New Year for Altar Guild

By Patti Sullivan, Altar Guild Coordinator

It seems like we were just celebrating Easter, and then – just like that - school was out. But where did summer go? I know it went by quickly. For the members of the Altar Guild summer was a time to be with family and to take time for a vacation. I took some of my down time to do some checking on supplies, ordering cups and wafers and oversaw “the behind the scenes” needs to make sure the sanctuary was ready for Sunday mornings. The members of the Altar Guild continue to be faithful servants, attend church regularly, pray and have the joy and thanksgiving of being an Altar Guild member of Red Hill Lutheran Church and School. Even with busy lives, remaining faithful, and anxious to help, the altar guild team is flexible and ready to step in when necessary. In the bible, John 12:26 states that anyone who wants to serve Jesus must follow him and be ready to serve at a moment’s notice.

In Mark 10:45, Jesus says, “The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve.

In John 13:15, Jesus sets an example for us to follow. After washing His disciples’ feet-an act of love, humility, and service. He encourages us to follow His lead and serve one another. Jesus says, “I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.”

God wants our service in the everyday to be life-giving. For Jesus has said he came “that they may have life and have it abundantly.” John 10:10 explains that our service should be life-giving because the one that we serve is the Life-giver. So, with that all said, we will go and serve.”

As fall approaches and a new church

year commences at Red Hill Lutheran Church and School, the month of September starts our busyness of the coming church year. The theme for this fall is in Mark 12:30, Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. The Altar Guild members prepare the worship atmosphere from setting up communion, to filling the candles, to oversee the organization of the sanctuary, to cleaning the railing and arranging the altar linens and paraments. Some members, as well as guests, may want to pray in private in the Prayer Chapel so it too is included are cleaning! This plays a quiet role but a powerful one in building community through service, tradition, and a shared purpose. When Red Hill has a baptism, wedding or memorial service, the preparation and clean-up after these services are completed there is a time giving the members time to catch-up on each other’s life’s updates with each other that build lasting bonds. Joining Altar Guild doesn’t require a long resume,’ just a heart for service and a reverent spirit. Reverence, humility reliability, a team spirit and some liturgical knowledge is also helpful. The Altar Guild includes long time members who have served in multiply roles creating mentorship and a deepening relationship with the newer members to Altar Guild.

With the Red Hill Church and School families returning to church and school, the Altar Guild will begin its busiest times. Kicking off the new year is

the Ministry Expo. This event will kick off the fall activities. The Altar Guild will have a table with information on how you may join our ministry. Just to let you in on a little secret, it’s a start of having some real fun with the returning church and school families.





In October, Red Hill celebrates fall with Oktoberfest. Last year, with one worship service at 10:15, the Oktoberfest celebration begins with food and the very fun “Trunk or Treat.” The head of each ministry decorates their car with a Halloween or fall theme. I will be doing my theme, “Patti’s Pumpkin Patch.” Oktoberfest is a big success with the church, school and surrounding community. It is a very special day that brings together church families, school families, and community families to share in the fun!

November starts by reminding us to be thankful and preparing our hearts, mind, and soul for Thanksgiving and the coming of Christmas. The Altar Guild will be placing the cornucopia on the altar for the Wednesday service before Thanksgiving (November 26th at 7:00pm) reminding us to be a thankful congregation for all that we have, and enjoying the fellowship at Red Hill Lutheran Church and School. After Thanksgiving, the Altar Guild members begin preparing the sanctuary for Christmas. Decorating the sanctuary for Christmas is usually an “all hands-on deck” process that includes all the Altar Guild members and volunteers. It is truly a special time at Red Hill as we joyfully decorate the sanctuary with Christmas trees and wreaths. Decorating the altar with red poinsettias and preparing the Advent wreath prepares our hearts, souls, and minds for the coming of Jesus.

As you can tell, Altar Guild is busy year ‘round showing love, service, and faithfulness making certain that the sanctuary here at Red Hill Lutheran Church and School will reflect the love, service, and reverence we have for His church!

Wishing you all a joyful and blessed Fall!



# **An Update from the Red Hill Lutheran Church & School Endowment Committee**

By Kevin Drumm, Endowment Committee Member

In the second half of the year, please consider making a tax-deductible donation to the Red Hill Lutheran Church & School Endowment Fund.

For some background, in 2000, visionary members of our church set up an endowment fund as a means for people to continue their Christian stewardship during and beyond their lifetime. This model, widely used by Lutheran Churches across America, is designed so that all the gifts received are left intact and cannot be spent – the fund keeps growing with each gift. Since 2000, there has been over \$1M of gifts received.

One of the best ways to give is through a will or living trust. A person may allocate a gift in the form of a percentage of the estate, a specific asset, or a stated dollar amount.

The committee prudently invests those gifts in cash accounts and marketable stock and bond funds with the intention of receiving annual appreciation. For example, over the last five years, the investment returns are greater than \$250K.

The committee distributes up to 75% of the annual investment income to worthy causes that help fulfill our Red Hill Lutheran Church Vision – Make Christ Centered, emotionally healthy disciples of Jesus – One life at a time. And our Mission – Reach and serve our local community, equip their hearts, minds and souls, and release them into the world to share God's love.

Over the last few years, these proceeds helped fund worthy causes such as: youth mission trips, RHL School needs-based scholarships and youth service awards, Christian character awards, tuition sponsorships for students attending Christian Universities, worship music for Christmas, Easter and special Sundays, musical instruments and smart technology systems for our praise band and many more important needs that aren't covered by the annual church budget.

Please give this worthwhile cause some prayerful thought. We'd be happy to provide you with more information. God bless you and may God continue to bless Red Hill Lutheran Church and School.

If you have any questions, you can reach the Endowment Committee via email at [endowment@redhillchurch.org](mailto:endowment@redhillchurch.org) or please see any of the members of the committee –

André de Beer (Chairman), Sonja Scott (Financial Secretary), Arthur Kitano (Publicity Coordinator), Kevin Drumm (Education Coordinator), and Martha Toft (Recording Secretary)

RED HILL LUTHERAN CHURCH





# Caring for Our Church and School: *Living Out the Greatest Commandment*

By Stephanie McArthur, Executive Director of Ministries

As we step into a new season and reflect on this year's theme verse—"Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength"—we're reminded that the call to love doesn't stop with our relationship with God. Jesus continues in Matthew 22:39, saying, "And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself." This command is more than a suggestion—it's an invitation to a way of life that models the heart of Christ.

This summer, during our DiscipleU class, we explored what it looks like to truly care for others in our church and school community. The class equipped us with practical tools and biblical insight to help us live out this command through meaningful relationships and intentional acts of service.

At the heart of this mission is our Care Team Ministry—a group of committed individuals who serve our community by showing Christ's love in real, tangible ways. Whether it's through preparing a meal, writing a card, visiting someone in their home, or simply offering a prayer, every act of care echoes the love of Jesus.

The beauty of this ministry is that anyone can be involved—no matter your schedule or season of life. Some opportunities might take just five minutes, others may ask for an hour, but all of them center around one purpose: to reflect Christ's love and remind others they are seen, known, and deeply valued.

Here are just a few ways the Care Team is serving our church and school:

- Prayer Partners for staff and ministry leaders
- Meal Ministry for those recovering from illness or surgery
- Card Writing for birthdays, anniversaries, and encouragement
- Home Visits for those who are homebound or in need of fellowship
- New Mom Support following the birth of a child



Each of these roles, big or small, contributes to a powerful expression of Christian community. And behind every effort is a heart committed to proclaiming the peace and hope found in the Gospel.

As we head into the fall season, we invite you to prayerfully consider joining our Care Team. Whether you feel called to serve, or know someone in need of care, this ministry offers a space for God to

work through you in profound and personal ways.

Together, let's continue to be a church that loves deeply, serves faithfully, and lives out the call to "love our neighbor as ourselves."

# Regarding Congregational Care

By Pastor Seth Britton

As Stephanie outlined in her article about Congregational Care, the spiritual, emotional and physical care of our congregation will continue to be one of our highest priorities here at Red Hill Lutheran Church and School.

In times of crisis, grief, transition, and confusion, we believe and trust that God is with us and will never abandon us. I, our staff, and volunteers are available to offer appropriate care, prayer and support for you through the difficult and painful times we all will face.

## What is Pastoral Care?

At the heart of Pastoral Care is Jesus Christ—as the source of comfort, healing, forgiveness, and hope. Pastoral Care is not primarily about solving problems but about proclaiming Christ in the midst of suffering, doubt, or sin. I encourage you to set up an appointment with our church office when:

- You are anticipating or have experienced the death of someone near to you.
- You or someone in your family is sick, hospitalized, and/or will be having surgery (Hospital/home visitations).
- A child is born. We can visit in order to welcome and bless this new life and gift from God!
- You are struggling with a significant decision about health care and faith.
- You lose a job, home, important relationship, and/or are facing a significant transition in your life.
- You are deeply questioning your faith.



In addition, we also have referrals to competent, Christian Counselors and other resources for longer-term counseling or spiritual direction needs.

To set up an appointment, contact Donna Kunz, Executive Assistant to the Senior Pastor at 714-544-3131 x100 or [dkunz@redhillchurch.org](mailto:dkunz@redhillchurch.org)

## What is our Deacon Ministry Team?

At Red Hill, we desire to be a church that expresses mercy and care for others—inside and outside our church. While every Christian is considered a priest (*1 Peter 2.9*) and is expected to offer mercy to their neighbor, historically the church has called, trained, and set-

aside, certain leaders who have spiritual gifts of mercy. In the New Testament, these leaders were known as *Deacons*, taken from the Greek word, *diakonos*, which means “servant.” These servants, or *Deacons*, were charged with caring for the needs of the local church through acts of mercy and kindness.

At Red Hill, the responsibilities of the Deacon Team are:

- Visitation of our members who are hospitalized and/or homebound; Bringing Holy Communion to those who are unable to attend weekly Worship at Red Hill.
- Anointing with Holy Oil and praying with and for those who are in need of prayer for any reason.
- Sitting with someone and talking about life issues and challenges such as losing a job, a difficult relationship, or significant changes in one’s life.
- With staff assistance and church resources, helping church members with possible financial needs and concerns.



**If you would like to serve as a Deacon, you are invited to contact Stephanie McArthur or Pastor Seth to discuss the next steps in this process, and to be a part of our Deacon Training class.**

Lastly, I want to encourage you to share your prayer requests with us. We have a true desire to know what is happening in your life, and how we can come alongside you in prayer and praise. Here are ways we can request prayer, and how we are here to support you as a church family.

- **Worship “Connection Cards.”** (In the sanctuary and online) On the “Connection Card” there is a place to request prayers. You have the options of having your prayer requests included in the Sunday Worship Bulletin and/or forwarded to our Cordon of Prayer or restricted to confidential pastoral prayer only.
- **Cordon of Prayer.** This “prayer chain” has been an instrument of intercessory petitions at Red Hill for 47 years! Current members receive prayer requests via email, praying daily for those in need. Prayer requests for the Cordon of Prayer can be given to the church office by contacting Donna Kunz, Executive Assistant to the Senior Pastor at 714.544.3131 ext.100 or [dkunz@redhillchurch.org](mailto:dkunz@redhillchurch.org), who will then forward the requests to the Cordon.

**Please note that all prayer groups abide by rules of confidentiality.**



# “Loving the Lord and the Community at Red Hill With All Our Heart, Soul, Mind and Strength”

By Beth Stoffregen, Director of Youth and Family Ministry

Hi Red Hill Families! Welcome to the 2025–2026 Ministry Year!

This year’s theme is Mark 12:30: *“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.”* Jesus spoke these words in response to a question about the greatest commandment. He then added: “The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.” These two commandments—loving God fully and loving others as ourselves—are the foundation of Youth and Family Ministry.

School is back in session, and it’s been so fun to catch up with staff, students, and families on all that happened during the summer. The most common response to the question “How was your summer?” has been: “It went by so fast!”

Life is fast. So many things compete for our time and attention. Our days often feel filled with an endless list of responsibilities—at home, at school, or at work. From time to time, we face health challenges or relationship struggles. We celebrate joyful moments like the birth of a new baby, and we grieve painful losses of loved ones. Then there are the many in-between moments of everyday living that simply fill our time.

It’s easy for our thoughts and schedules to become consumed or even held hostage by the demands of daily life, our anxieties, or our fears. Yet in the midst of it all, the call remains clear: to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength—and to love others as ourselves. This is the heart of our Youth and Family Ministry (YFM).

Our YFM Team is devoted to supporting the whole family through every phase of life. We invite whole

families to join us for worship, study and service.

Each of our programming areas is led by dedicated staff, trained and invested small group leaders, and supported by loving parents. Together, we aim to build strong relationships that nurture deep faith in our children—from birth through adulthood.

Through weekly programming, connection events, and specialized classes on Baptism, Communion, and Confirmation, we’re committed to partnering with each family’s unique spiritual journey.

We are praying for you!

If we can support you throughout the coming year, please don’t hesitate to reach out. Whether it’s to encourage you, walk with you through a struggle, celebrate a milestone, or simply pray with you—we are here.

Our hope and prayer is that in the coming months, you and your children will grow closer to the Lord, experience His love more deeply, and join us in our mission: to know Christ and make Him known.



## Red Hill Youth & Family Ministry

Are you interested in learning more about Red Hill’s Youth & Family Ministry (YFM)? We’d love to connect with you! We’re here to support and serve your family—let’s connect!

## Join the YFM Team

All areas of YFM are growing, and we need your help! Do you have a heart to serve and make a lasting impact on the younger generation? We are looking for volunteers in the following areas:



- **T.O.T.S. Early Childhood Ministry:** Help with greeting, checking in children, playing with and supervising our little ones.
- **K.I.D.S. Ministry:** Small group leaders who can dedicate one hour of their time on Sunday mornings to make a difference in the lives of our children.
- **Middle School Ministry:** Small group leaders who can dedicate an hour and a half of their time on Wednesday nights to make a difference in the lives of our youth
- **High School Ministry:** Small group leaders who can dedicate an hour and a half of their time on Tuesday nights to make a difference in the lives of our youth.

If you, or someone you know, would like more information about these volunteer opportunities, please contact our YFM Team:

- **Beth Stoffregen** – Director of Youth & Family Ministry | [beths@redhillchurch.org](mailto:beths@redhillchurch.org)
- **Brie Longoria** – Early Childhood Ministry Co-Coordinator | [blongoria@redhillchurch.org](mailto:blongoria@redhillchurch.org)
- **Katelyn Der** – Early Childhood Ministry Co-Coordinator | [kder@redhillchurch.org](mailto:kder@redhillchurch.org)
- **Itzel Mancilla** – Children’s Ministry Coordinator | [imancilla@redhillchurch.org](mailto:imancilla@redhillchurch.org)
- **Tim Rivera** – Student Ministry Coordinator | [trivera@redhillchurch.org](mailto:trivera@redhillchurch.org)

We’re excited for the year ahead as we journey together—loving the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength.

Hugs and Blessings,  
Beth, Katelyn, Brie, Itzel, and Tim



### T.O.T.S. Early Childhood Ministry

Our T.O.T.S. (Tiny Ones Trust the Savior) Early Childhood Ministry provides a nurturing environment where Christ’s littlest disciples can play, learn about Jesus, sing praises to God, and grow excited about

joining the worshipping community. Through Sunday morning programming and connection events throughout the year, we joyfully partner with families as they guide their little ones to trust the Savior!

Children ages six weeks to five years are welcome to join us in Classroom 11 on Sunday mornings during both worship services and the DiscipleU educational hour. For the safety of all children, every team member is background-checked and fingerprinted, and certified in both CPR and First Aid.



This fall, our friends in T.O.T.S. Ministry are on a journey through the Old Testament. Our current teaching series, “Love Roots,” traces the story of God’s redemption promise from the tree in the Garden of Eden to the shoot from the stump of Jesse in Isaiah’s Messiah prophecy! Along the way, we will learn the 10 Commandments, rooting our hearts in the love of God and love for others, delighting in His good design. We will talk about all the pictures of Jesus hiding in

the pages of Scripture and play our way through God's epics of old. Then we will have fun with major and minor prophets leading up to the Advent of Christ in the winter.

We warmly invite all families with children in this ministry area to join us for these special events:

- Red Hill Ministry Expo – September 14<sup>th</sup>
- Preschool Family Playdate – September 27<sup>th</sup>
- Parent's Night Out – October 11<sup>th</sup>
- Oktoberfest Trunk-or-Treat – October 26<sup>th</sup>
- Family Baptism Class – November 2<sup>nd</sup>

**For additional information, contact:**

Katelyn Der, T.O.T.S. Early Childhood Ministry Coordinator at [kder@redhillchurch.org](mailto:kder@redhillchurch.org)

Brie Longoria, T.O.T.S. Early Childhood Ministry Coordinator at [blongoria@redhillchurch.org](mailto:blongoria@redhillchurch.org)

Beth Stoffregen, Director of Youth and Family Ministry at [beths@redhillchurch.org](mailto:beths@redhillchurch.org)

**Calling all preschool families!**

We are excited to invite you to our **Fall Preschool Family Playdate** at the RHLS Playground! Join us for a fun and casual connection event! While the kids play, parents and families will have the chance to chat and connect with each other, our RHL Preschool Staff and our T.O.T.S. Early Childhood Ministry Staff.

The event will take place on **Saturday, September 27<sup>th</sup>**, from **10:00am to 11:30am**, leaving you plenty of time to enjoy lunch afterward. No registration is required.



**For additional information, contact:**

Katelyn Der, Nursery and Preschool Ministry Coordinator, at [kder@redhillchurch.org](mailto:kder@redhillchurch.org)

Itzel Mancilla, Children's Ministry Coordinator at [imancilla@redhillchurch.org](mailto:imancilla@redhillchurch.org)

Beth Stoffregen, Director of Youth and Family Ministry, at [beths@redhillchurch.org](mailto:beths@redhillchurch.org)

**Sunday Morning K.I.D.S. Ministry**

Using a combination of large-group and small-group activities and conversations on Sunday mornings, our K.I.D.S. Ministry Team intentionally creates an engaging environment where children in kindergarten through 5th grade can:

- **Know Jesus**
- **Impact the world around them**
- **Become Disciples of Jesus**
- **Serve others**

That's what **K.I.D.S.** is all about!

**DiscipleU K.I.D.S.**

During our 9:15am DiscipleU Educational Hour, kids gather in a large group format to focus on God's Word and engage in related activities or crafts led by our dedicated leaders.



**DiscipleU K.I.D.S. Fellowship**

During our 10:15am worship service, kids have the opportunity to join in large and small group formats where we focus on God's Word through discussions and supplementary activities. All children are also brought into the sanctuary as a group to celebrate Communion with the entire church community.

All children in kindergarten through 5th grade are invited to join us for either or both programming formats, regardless of church affiliation.



Between now and November, K.I.D.S. Ministry is on a journey through the Old Testament.

- In September, we will be spending our time in the book of Psalms.
- In October, we will focus on the Biblical stories in the book of Daniel.
- In November, we will dive into the book of Esther

We warmly invite all families with children in this ministry area to join us for these special events:

- Red Hill Ministry Expo – September 14<sup>th</sup>
- Parent's Night Out – October 11th
- Oktoberfest Trunk-or-Treat – October 26th
- Family Baptism Class – November 2nd

**For more ministry information, please contact:**

Itzel Mancilla, Children's Ministry Coordinator at [imancilla@redhillchurch.org](mailto:imancilla@redhillchurch.org)

Beth Stoffregen, Director of Youth and Family Ministry at [beths@redhillchurch.org](mailto:beths@redhillchurch.org)

**Student Ministry**

At Red Hill Lutheran Church & School, we believe that middle school and high school is a crucial and integral part of a student's faith journey. We want to facilitate a place where students can grow, find purpose, step into their calling, and truly get to know Jesus for themselves! Middle School Ministry meets on Wednesday nights from 6:00pm-8:00pm inside Peter's Parish. High School Ministry meets on Tuesday nights from 6:00pm-8:00pm inside Peter's Parish.

**Student Ministry Confirmation Classes**

*Meeting weekly starting Sunday, September 21, 2025, from 9:15am-10:00am, in Peter's Parish*

At Red Hill, confirmation is a church rite that follows two years of instruction in God's Word and Lutheran doctrine. The Rite of Confirmation occurs at the end of these two years. It is designed to help baptized children of God grow in their faith and deepen their understanding of Him, while also fostering meaningful connections with peers, parents, the pastor, and the church—preparing them to embrace their lifelong identity as children of God. During these classes, we will explore Luther's Small Catechism in detail, covering the Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed, the Lord's Prayer, Baptism, Communion, Confession, and Forgiveness.

We warmly invite all students in this ministry area and their families to join us for these special events:

- Red Hill Ministry Expo – September 14<sup>th</sup>
- Oktoberfest Trunk-or-Treat – October 26<sup>th</sup>
- High School Pumpkin Palooza – October 28th
- Middle School Pumpkin Palooza – October 29th
- Family Baptism Class – November 2nd
- High School Friendsgiving – November 28th
- Middle School Friendsgiving – November 29th

**For more ministry information, please contact:**

Tim Rivera, Student Ministry Coordinator at [trivera@redhillchurch.org](mailto:trivera@redhillchurch.org)

Beth Stoffregen, Director of Youth and Family Ministry at [beths@redhillchurch.org](mailto:beths@redhillchurch.org)





# the grapevine





On Tuesday August 19th, the first day of school began for Kindergarten through second grade and middle school. This was a minimum day and a time for parents and students to arrive to see their classroom set ups.

The first full day of School, for preschool through 8th grade began on Wednesday August 20th. which also featured the first Chapel of the new school year!





# New Staff Members at Red Hill Lutheran Church and School

By Cyndi Tully, Church and School Administrator

Please allow me to introduce you to some of the changes and new staff here at Red Hill Lutheran Church and School.

Elizabeth Siegel, who has been with us as a Teachers' Aide since 2022, has moved into the 6th Grade Homeroom and Humanities Teacher.

Kylie Hammer, who also has been with us as at Teachers' Aide, has moved into the front office as the Admin Assistant – Communications. See who she is below.

Stephaine G. is our Director of Enrichment and Daycare Programs.

Elizabeth Crow has moved from our Daycare Coordinator to the Multi-tiered Support System Coordinator.

Jessica Hickey has moved from the Assistant Director of Preschool to the Preschool Director.

Paola Crose, who has been with us since 2019, has added the Assistant Preschool Director to her position as the Transitional-Kindergarten Teacher.

The wonderful new staff in the Preschool are:  
Sheree Cornelio – Preschool Outdoor Classroom Facilitator & Afternoon Daycare Teacher  
Crystal Martinez – Preschool Teacher  
Luciana Sanchez – Preschool Teacher  
Maria Cortes – Instructional Aide  
Susan Maros – Afternoon Teacher  
Theresa Guzman – Preschool Teacher

And here are the Elementary and Middle School staff:

Ryan Braze - Physical Education Teacher and Athletic Director  
Jessica Parks - Middle School Girls Physical Education Teacher and Girls Athletic Director  
Daniel Ujifusa – Classroom and Choral Music Teacher  
Talene Campbell – 6th Grade Language Arts Teacher  
Melanie Irwin – Reading Interventionist  
Emily Rayburn – Nurse  
Kelly Luu – Advance Math (Geometry) Teacher  
Christina Mannix – Teachers' Aide



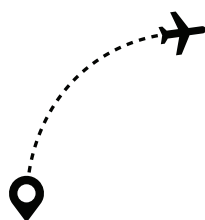


# 6 Things You Should Know About Mr. Braze

1. Family is everything to me. I have two beautiful parents, Ed and Carol, and two wonderful sons. Jack is 16 and Maks is 14. Jack will be a junior at Orange County School of the Arts (OCSA) and he is in the Musical Theater Conservatory and Maks will be a freshman at OCSA and he is in the Culinary Conservatory.



2. Sports are a big component of my life. I love the Anaheim Ducks and have season tickets. The Minnesota Vikings are my favorite football team. I also follow the Tottenham Hotspurs across the pond in North London. I love watching these teams with every win and loss and cheer them on every moment that I can.



3. Traveling the world is something that I wish I could do more. I love to see new places and do exciting new things. I've been to Europe, Canada, Mexico, Central America, South America, the Caribbean Islands and 35 States to date. I can't wait to add more to my list soon!!

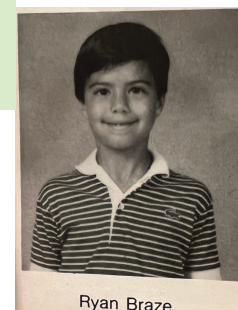
4. Another important piece of my life is my dog, Jerry. He is a six year-old Golden Doodle. He goes a lot places with me. He goes on RV trips, beach camping, and even some hotels. Wherever we go, he usually comes with us. He loves the Spectrum because he is allowed in all of the stores. Jerry is the best!!



5. Music is a great outlet. I love going to see concerts. I like all types of music, from country to pop to classic rock to jam bands. I try to go to as many concerts as I can. I've seen hundreds of concerts and always look forward to my next one!



6. A fun fact about me is that I attended Red Hill Lutheran School from preschool to the fourth grade. I have a lot of fond memories of the church, the playground and the school! I cannot wait to give back and be a part of the Red Hill Lutheran Community again.



Ryan Braze

# Six Things to Know About Mrs. Campbell

## Walkin' down the aisle

Mrs. Campbell has been married to her husband Jared for 12 years!



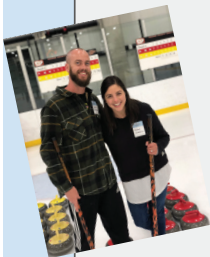
## Traveling

Mrs. Campbell loves to travel! She loves learning about other cultures. She's been to places like Thailand, Europe, Africa, and Cancun!



## Trying new things

She loves trying new things! From woodworking to soccer, curling, rock climbing and sewing. She loves pushing herself to try new things. She even gave an elephant a bath once!



## Baking all the treats

One of her favorite things to do is to cook and bake treats! Chocolate chip cookies and homemade twix bars are some of her favorites to bake.



## Reading

Mrs. Campbell loves reading and loves to share her love of books with students!



Mrs. Campbell has one daughter named Penelope. She loves learning, playing, and swimming! She will be joining RHLS this year!

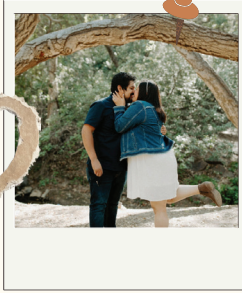




## 6 Things You Should Know About Mrs. Maria

1

HAVE BEEN MARRIED 9 YEARS. WE MET IN 2011, STARTED DATING IN 2013, AND GOT MARRIED IN 2016.



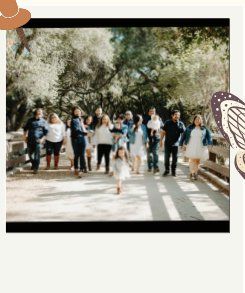
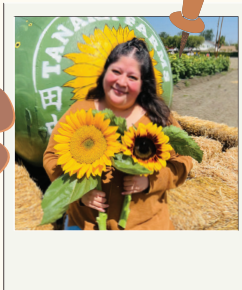
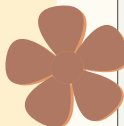
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PROUD DOG MOM OF 3 FUR BABIES. PRINCESS, COCO, AND LUNA



3

FAVORITE FLOWER: SUNFLOWERS  
THEY JUST MAKE ME FEEL HAPPY!



4

I LOVE TO SPEND MY FREE TIME WITH MY FAMILY.



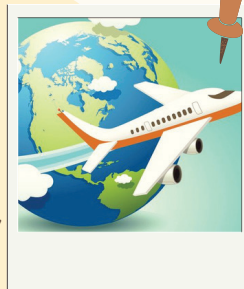
5

LOVE HIKING AND ENJOYING NATURE.



6

I ASPIRE TO TRAVEL AND EXPLORE NEW PLACES.



# Six Things About KYLIE Hammer

1.

## Red Hill Roots

I attended Red Hill Lutheran School from preschool all the way through 8th grade, and my mom has been a teacher here for over 20 years. RHLS has always been a special part of my life!

2.

## Family First

Family is very important to me. They have shaped who I am, encouraged my creativity, and supported me through all of life's adventures.

3.

## Animal Lover

I've had many pets over the years and absolutely LOVE animals (and bugs). Currently, I have a lionhead bunny named Mochi and a sulcata tortoise named Tonka. In the past, I've cared for parakeets, turtles, lizards, a tarantula, a cat, and dogs.

4.

## Creativity

I love crafting of all kinds—though I may not be an expert in any one craft, having a chance to be creative in my work makes me happiest.

5.

## Nature & Adventure

I love being outdoors, whether it's camping, hiking (even if I start out begrudgingly!), or just enjoying God's creation. I always end up loving the adventures that come with being outside.

6.

## Education

After graduating from RHLS, I went to Foothill High School and was a part of the Cross Country/Track Team. I then attended Cal State Fullerton, where I earned my Bachelor's degree in Geography. Studying the earth and the people who live here deepened my appreciation for all of God's creation.





Hi! My name is Melanie Irwin and I am a so excited to be joining RHLS!

1. I have been married for 26 years and have 4 kids. I have 3 boys and one girl and my boys are triplets! They are 21 and my daughter is 19. 4 kids in college!!

2. I love to exercise and be outside. I also like to take classes at the gym. About 8 years ago, I started playing competitive tennis! I love it! I play in lots of leagues and doubles tournaments.

3. Coffee, the beach and making sourdough bread are some of my most favorite things!

4. Before we had kids, my husband and I hiked to the base camp of Mt Everest in Nepal! It was about 19,000 feet high and the total trip took around 20 days! It was quite an adventure!

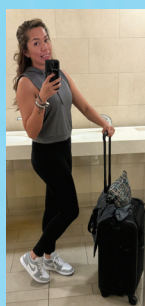
5. We love Golden Retrievers and have had quite a few in our family. In fact, about 22 years ago, our 2 Goldens had 10 puppies together and that was a lot of fun. The 2 Goldens we have now are called Koa and Sam! If you ever see me with hair on my clothes, it will be because of them!

6. My most treasured times are being with my family and close friends. Every year we go camping in the summer up to Silver Lake (up by Mammoth) and we enjoy taking the time with each other and visiting Yosemite to hike and bike.

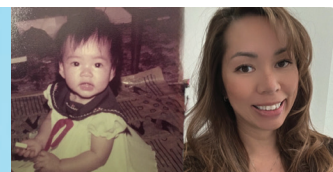


## 6 THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT- MISS KELLY LUV

### THE GLOBETROTTER'S PATCHWORK LIFE



Travel isn't just something I do; it's part of who I am. I've been to 19 countries. I make it my mission to experience each place through its most authentic flavors by tasting foods in the very city where they were invented. Rather than collecting knick-knacks, I sew a fabric patch from each country onto my travel backpack: my living scrapbook of memories. Top 3 moments: In Peru, I climbed the entire Andes mountain range & went as high as Everest's base camp and I got to touch a cloud. In the Bahamas, I sat & watched a NBA game on TV, drinking OJ & Coke with Michael Jordan. In Vatican City, I had breakfast with the Ecumenical Patriarch, an humbling experience.



### THE ROOTS OF MY EDUCATION- JACK OF ALL TRADES IN EDUCATION

For over 20 years, God has been guiding my journey in education from switching me from pre-med after getting into med school to teaching in public and private schools in California to counseling internationally, to college prep, tutoring and homeschooling to creating an international education service company. I earned my B.A. at the University of California, Irvine, along with a minor in Psychology from Regent's College in London that focused on child development. I hold a multi-subject teaching credential from UC Irvine. I have taught 1st, 5th and 4th through 8th grade math in a classroom. Taught all levels of math, English and APs to the majority of the local high schools online students and community colleges.



### THE MIDDLE CHILD OF MAYHEM

Born and raised in Orange County as the middle child of six. My two older and two younger brothers were both my protectors and my co-conspirators in endless mischief. Our house was a creative minefield of booby traps, pranks, and experiments that would have impressed MacGyver. Somehow, my parents never discovered the half of it, which I think is a testament to both our ingenuity and our sibling loyalty.

### THE ACCIDENTAL MANGO DISCOVERY

I'm basically a walking food allergy list: gluten, dairy, preservatives... But my ultimate nemesis is mango. I found that out on a family trip to Hawaii when I was 12. Let's just say the island hospitality included a very quick introduction to the local hospital. I've learned how to navigate life like a pro in a world full of foods plotting against me. I still manage to enjoy every bite.



### THE WORDSMITH BEHIND THE SCENES

I've always had a way with words, and over the years, it's become one of my favorite side pursuits: ghostwriting. I've helped create novels, screenplays, TV scripts, essays, journals, letters, presentations, campaigns, and even sermons. My role is to actively listen to capture someone's voice and bring their ideas to life so powerfully that no one knows I was there, except the person whose vision I helped realize. Basically, I am Chat for some, but humanized.

### PROVERBS IN ACTION

I am the founder of a faith-based brand inspired by the book of Proverbs. It's all about taking blessings and turning them into opportunities for others. The mission: give students a first chance, or even a second chance, to discover their passions through hands-on internships. The impact has been rewarding; one student discovered a passion for drone filming, built a portfolio during their internship, and ended up launching a LLC media company that's now booked solid. For me, this isn't just business; it's a way to live out my faith by using my blessings to see the ripple effect of giving someone a door to walk through.





# 6 THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT.. Ms. Susan



## *From California to Idaho and Back*

I grew up in Southern California and spent 19 wonderful years in beautiful Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. I recently moved back to California to help out family.

## *Proud Grandma and Great-Grandma*

Being "grandma" is the greatest joy of my life. I have one grandson, one granddaughter, and two great granddaughters who light up my world.

## *Sophie the Traveling Cat*

My cat Sophie flew with me back to California! She loves this sunshine!

## *Birthday Tradition*

Every year on my birthday I celebrate with my favorite food... a big plate of lasagna!

## *Hobbies & Favorites*

I enjoy reading historical fiction, and I love peaceful walks around the lakes and forests in Coeur d'Alene.

## *A Heart for Teaching*

I've been working with children for 35 years! Over the years I have been a classroom aide, a Pre-K teacher, a preschool director, and a Kindergarten teacher for children with special needs. Teaching little ones is truly my passion.





## Mrs. Jessica Parks 6 Things

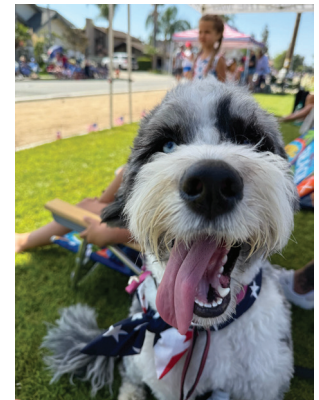
**ONE** - I have been married for 9 years, this upcoming December, and I continue to fall more in love with my husband, Matthew, each year. Our secret to a happy marriage is a hug each morning and being always down to adventure!

**TWO** - Our daughter Paisley is our world! She runs the show and brings so much light and giggles into each room! She is currently in TK and loves to be super silly, swim, make up stories about unicorn mermaids, and spend time with her friends!



**THREE** - Fitness is my heart and soul. I have been an athlete my whole life with a love for running, swimming, cycling, and more. I currently do Titian Training at a local gym and love to enter a 5k whenever I can! I am excited to share my love for fitness with the middle school girls this year!

**FOUR** - Fun adventures with my family: hiking with our dog Oakley, paddle boarding, camping, kayaking, and vacations are where I love to spend my free time. Making memories is something I treasure most!



**FIVE** - The beach is my happy place. I not only got married on the sand but rain or shine the sand and the water is saltwater gospel to my soul. You can find me collecting shells and building sand castles with my daughter often at the beach. We love to jump the waves and gather that ocean breeze whenever we can. My family spent many days together this summer at many different beaches!

**SIX** - Country music makes me smile! I enjoy line dancing for a good time!





## 6 Things You Should Know About Mr Ujifusa!



1. Mr. Ujifusa married his wife Mya in 2023! They met in high school choir and have been making music together ever since! They love to travel, cook together and watch movies.
2. Mr. Ujifusa was born in Munich, Germany and is a dual citizen of the United States and England. He has lived in 4 different countries!
3. Mr. Ujifusa has played handbells since 7th grade. He loves to write handbell music and has written music that has been performed on TV and all over the United States.
4. Mr. Ujifusa loves board games and card games. His favorites are 7 Wonders, Dominion and Codenames.
5. Mr. Ujifusa has been playing hockey since he was 8 years old! He played goalie growing up but has since switched to skating out.
6. Mr. Ujifusa's favorite hobby is cubing! He learned how to solve the Rubik's Cube in 2020 and his best time is 5.96 seconds!

# Love God, Love People- A Commitment to Philanthropies

By Bailey Darley, Philanthropy Coordinator/Teacher

Jesus teaches us God's greatest command is to "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength." (Mark 12:30) As we focus as a church and school this year on what it means to love God with our everything, this includes looking to Jesus' next instruction: "The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these." (Mark 12:31) To love God with all we have is to love others well. This is our focus as we seek to support philanthropies year round.

This September, we are loving students in our community through La Semilla Learning Center in Santa Ana. La Semilla's mission is to create a faith-based environment which fosters academic growth and strengthens parents in their roles at home and in the community. La Semilla serves 30 students in Santa Ana with an after school program every day that helps them learn and grow. We are supporting La Semilla's students by collecting whiteboard markers, Sharpie markers, heavy-duty tape, staplers and staples, Clorox wipes, and tissues, which are La Semilla's most needed items. Students are also raising funds to purchase school uniforms for La Semilla students.

Looking forward, we will turn our attention to our global "neighbors" around the world. In October, we will support well building efforts through World Vision. Clean water is one of the world's most important resources and one communities cannot thrive without. RHL students will be competing in a "change for change" drive, collecting coins to support World Vision. In November, our church and school community will team up to pack Operation Christmas Child boxes. This is a favorite for many families as we send the love of Jesus to children around the world through Christmas gifts. Look for specific information coming about what to pack and boxes and when to bring them.

As we partner with these philanthropies in the months ahead, may we remember that every act of generosity, from donating supplies, giving financially, to lifting up these ministries in prayer, is an expression of loving our neighbors as ourselves. Together, as a church

and school family, we have the opportunity to reflect Christ's love in both our local community and across the globe. Let us faithfully support these efforts, trusting that God will use our gifts and prayers to bring hope, joy, and the good news of Jesus to those who need it most.





## Wholehearted: Building a Strong Foundation in Christ from the Start

As we step into this new school year, we do so with hearts set on our Theme: Wholehearted, which comes from Mark 12:30. It states, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.” This powerful verse sets the tone for our entire school community, from our tiniest learners in Preschool, all the way to eighth grade.

In keeping with this unified vision, our Preschool program is excited to announce two key updates that will help strengthen our connection with the greater school community and deepen our students’ spiritual and personal growth.

First, we are aligning our Bible curriculum to go along with the rest of the school by adopting the Enduring Faith Religion Curriculum. This means that our preschoolers will now be learning the same Bible stories and themes at the same time as their older peers. This is a beautiful opportunity to foster school-wide conversations about faith, create consistency in teaching and build a shared spiritual experience across all grade levels.

Second, our preschool team has chosen to integrate the Habits of Mind into our daily teaching. This research-based framework helps children to develop important social-emotional and critical thinking skills such as persistence, empathy and thoughtful communication, which are skills that are vital not only for academic success but also for forming Christ-like character.

By aligning both our spiritual and developmental goals with the rest of the K-8 program, we hope to create a seamless and supportive foundation for our youngest learners. We believe that when children are nurtured in both faith and emotional intelligence from the very beginning, children are equipped to grow into compassionate, confident and wholehearted followers of Christ.

We are excited for all that God has in store for this school year. Thank you for partnering with us in raising up children who love the Lord with all their hearts, minds, souls, and strength.



## RHLS Performing Arts Department

The RHLS Performing Arts Department (PAD) had a busy and fun end of the 24-25 school year! We are excited to meet our new classes and foster a healthy learning environment for both our returning students, and those students new to RHLS, as we focus on reminding students to love our Lord with all their hearts, souls, minds and strength.

The RHLS Performing Arts Department is led by veteran teachers Mr. Ben Hunter (Instrumental Music), Ms. Deana Occhipinti (Theatre Arts and Dance/Cheer), Mr. Isaiah Coughran and Mrs. Noah Rivera (Praise Band), Mrs. Bailey Darley (Preschool Music) and newly added Mr. Daniel Ujifusa (Choral and Classroom Music)! Mr. Ujifusa comes to RHLS with many years of experience in choir, handbells and music education. We feel confident he will be a great, inspiring and impactful addition to our cast of Performing Arts teachers.

Fostering a healthy learning environment starts with knowing the Truth of the gospel. The RHLS Performing Arts Department has always made it a priority to teach the context of the songs and pieces of music that we teach. Our classrooms are safe places to ask questions about what we sing and learn. If our PAD staff does not know an answer, we follow up with Tim Rivera, Ms. Beth, or Pastor Seth to get the students the answers for their questions. This school year, and will be continuing to include more direct Biblical truths into our lessons and performances at RHLS.

Though our first large performance is not until December, PAD is still moving and creating great opportunities for students on a smaller scale. Our student Praise Band led by Mr. Isaiah Coughran and Mrs. Noah Rivera started the school year off as usual by leading the school community in worship at our K-8 chapel. This is always such a powerful way to start the school year! We thank the Praise Band students for the work they put in over the summer to be ready on the first day of school, and we thank the amazing Isaiah Coughran for picking the music, setting up the equipment, preparing the students, and everything else he does for the PAD department and for RHLS.

The RHLS Concert Band will again be performing the National Anthem with other local bands on the field of Angels Stadium at the Angels game on Thursday, September 25th. We sell tickets for this event as a fundraiser for the music department. We also treat this as a community event and it is a great opportunity for new families to meet returning families.

RHLS Performing Arts Enrichment classes will begin practices the week of September 8th. These classes include String Orchestra (grades 4-8), Singspiration Choir (grades 4-8) and Spirit Squad (grades 1-5). These classes will allow students to take a deeper dive into music and dance beyond regular RHLS classes under the care of our professional Performing Arts teachers.

Our PAD teachers all feel blessed to teach in this wonderful environment. We thank the entire community of both church and school for supporting the Performing Arts at RHLS and for making all these wonderful opportunities possible for the students! We look forward to a great new school year!





# Wholehearted: Loving God with All We Are

By Lisa Tarkoff, Assistant Principal

This year, our theme at Red Hill Lutheran School is **Wholehearted**—a simple word with a big challenge: *“Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.”* Mark 12:30

During our back-to-school week, teachers and staff came together not just to prepare classrooms, but to prepare our hearts for the year ahead. Here’s a glimpse of how our days reflected each part of this verse:

♥ **Heart** – Monday began with a joyful reunion of our entire RHLS staff. Over a continental breakfast, we shared laughter, stories from summer, and prayer. We then gathered in worship, led by Pastor Seth, dedicating the school year to the Lord. The morning continued with grade-level partner meetings, where teachers encouraged one another and planned for their students. In the afternoon, our faculty session—*A Wholehearted Year Ahead*—set the foundation for the year. We focused on aligning our mission, ministry, and mindsets, discussed updates on accreditation, and revisited the **Habits of Mind** that will shape our instruction. This day reminded us that the heart of RHLS is not just in what we teach, but in the love we pour into our students and community.

✦ **Soul** – On Tuesday, we turned our focus to the soul of teaching—discipleship. The morning session, *The Habits of a Wholehearted Disciple*, was led by different members of our leadership team. Each one shared practical ways that the 16 Habits of Mind connect to spiritual growth and faith-filled living. We discussed what it means to be teachers who don’t just teach subjects, but who shepherd students toward Christ. The conversations were uplifting, reminding us that our own walk with the Lord shapes how we guide children daily. After enjoying lunch together, we shifted to important safety

and medical training to ensure we are ready for any emergency. The day ended with classroom preparation time—where teachers put their souls into creating warm, welcoming spaces that reflect God’s love.

🧠 **Mind** – Wednesday was a day for learning! We explored Universal Design for Learning (UDL) alongside an overview of MTSS (Multi-Tiered Systems of Support), both designed to help every child flourish. These tools equip our teachers to meet the needs of all learners—stretching minds, encouraging growth, and ensuring no student is overlooked. The afternoon was spent in Atlas curriculum mapping, aligning lessons with excellence and creativity.

💪 **Strength** – On Thursday, we rolled up our sleeves for safety training with Safe Kids, Inc., ensuring we are equipped to protect and care for our students. We also poured our energy into classrooms—arranging desks, organizing supplies, and preparing spaces where children can learn and grow.

Why do we give our *heart, soul, mind, and strength* so fully? Because we know our work is for the Lord. As Colossians 3:23 reminds us: *“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord.”*

Now, we look forward to sharing this *Wholehearted* theme with our students and families. Together, may we learn what it truly means to love God with everything we are—heart, soul, mind, and strength.



# Church Membership: We Are the Body of Christ!

Why do we encourage church membership at Red Hill? Church membership properly understood reflects commitment beyond ourselves. Church membership is not an opportunity to say, “I’m a part of a club,” or now “I am due religious goods and services,” rather, membership is a scriptural expression of *covenant*; a personal commitment to a particular community in order to grow in faith and serve our Lord and His people. Additionally, we believe in church membership because:

## Membership Reflects What the Church Is.

One of the primary metaphors of the church in Scripture is the human “body.” Just as a body cannot afford one of its “members” saying, “I don’t need this body,” or “I’m not important in this body, neither can Jesus’ “body.” Again, quoting Stetter, he believes that “too many churches or Christian gatherings look like piles of dismembered body parts, not a body knit together as God’s agent, his body, his kingdom, at work in the world. To reject the value of membership is to deny what God has already established in fact.”

## Membership is Biblical

The Scriptures speak a great deal about our need for spiritual authority (See *Hebrews 13:7, 13:17, 1 Thessalonians 5:10-12*). Unlike our culture that questions any type of authority, and views such authority as limiting our “freedom,” the New Testament sees true, Biblical authority as a primary means *for our freedom*.

The letters of Paul particularly, considered a believer’s incorporation into a local church community as indispensable to spiritual maturing and discipleship. In fact, removing a person from “membership” in a local church family was Paul’s ultimate means of church discipline.

God has created us in such a way that we need the guidance and stability that only a larger community and the spiritual authority of leadership within a local church can provide. This leads us to a third consideration:

## Membership Serves as an Anchor of Stability

Being part of a church family and community will help you to remain faithful when bad times, fatigue, and disappointments come your way. When you are a part of a church family, you are known, loved, cared for and prayed for! And, you offer the same care and prayer for others! The issue of stability; not jumping from one church to another, is a critical discipleship issue. The church needs you; you need the church.

## Becoming a Member of Red Hill Lutheran Church

### “New Member Class: 101”

**Sunday, October 5<sup>th</sup>, 11:30am to 1:00pm  
In the Christian Life Center (CLC)**

If you are not a member of a church, is God calling you to commit to a church family where you can grow, serve, and be a part of God’s plan to redeem and reconcile this world? Or, maybe you are not a Christian? Perhaps you have been searching and questioning and desiring to connect with God in your life? The good news is: God wants you!

You are invited to join us for our next new member class, “New Member Class: 101” on Sunday, October 5<sup>th</sup>, 11:30 am to 1:00 pm in the Christian Life Center (CLC). (Childcare is available by reservation). Registration for the class (and childcare if needed), can be made on Sundays by marking a “Connection Card” in the Worship service or online, or by calling/emailing Donna Kunz, at 714-544-3131 ext.100 or [dkunz@redhillchurch.org](mailto:dkunz@redhillchurch.org).

One of the goals of the 101 Class is to enable those new to the church to meet others and begin the life of discipleship and personal connecting here at Red Hill. You do not have to join the church after this class but, on the other hand, we would love to have you at the same time!

Mark your calendars now and plan to join us! We are looking forward to seeing you!



## Family/Visiting Churches Update

Bartolo Family Missionaries



Barto and Tienielle Update

“Show me Your ways, Lord, teach me Your paths. Guide me in Your truth and teach me, for You are God my Savior, and my hope is in You all day long. Remember, Lord, Your great mercy and love, for they are from of old.” -Psalm 25: 4-6

### School/Garden Project Update

School will be starting in another month, so this next month will be a busy one preparing for the new school year. We have different

construction projects happening and hoping things will be ready in good time. I’m always constantly reminded that my timing doesn’t matter, and that God’s timing is perfect. We are excited for what this year will bring and praying for the children that the Lord will send us, we ask for you to pray with us for this new year. For the Lord to work in the hearts of the kids to know Him, and that the kids can learn their studies well. God is always faithful, and we know He is always at work!

All of the garden projects will be starting back up again after the regular rainy season harvest, which is in October. So, we will be preparing for all of that as well. We are excited for the opportunities that God has already brought up and we are leaning on Him for all He wants us to do. We praise the Lord for He has brought in the support we needed for a water tower and water tank for the new garden project near our school that will be for children who struggle in school or have dropped out. We are so thankful for all the amazing support people have been giving to this mission, and we are so excited for this new project.

We praise the Lord for this past month, we were able to visit many wonderful churches and be a part of 3 different worship nights. It was a huge blessing to us, and we were so happy to see so many wonderful friends and supporters. You all mean so much to us, and we couldn’t do this without all of you! While speaking at one of the churches, Barto made the comment to a congregation “when you get to Heaven and you get to meet these faces, you will see that it was your support and prayers that helped get them there!” And it brought tears to my eyes, what an amazing truth. One day in Heaven, we will get to see the impact of the seeds planted, the relationships we all invested in, and the love we shared that helped bring people to Jesus. How awesome we get to spend eternity with them in Heaven! All the work and challenges are worth it, to see someone give their lives to Christ!

*“Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.” - 1 Corinthians 15:58*

Our family is doing well, the girls really enjoyed visiting different places, we were blessed to go to see some fun places in Rapid City while we were visiting a church in South Dakota. Our girls love animals and dinosaurs so much, so the Mammoth site, a Dino Museum, Bear Country, and Reptile Gardens were huge hits. We will be heading back soon to Burkina, which is always bittersweet. We love what we do in Africa, we love the people, and are always excited to see our African family but it is hard to leave our American family. Pray for the girls as they transition back, and for the logistics of our trip and just all that we need to do in returning.

**IMPORTANT REMINDER AGAIN:** Please make all donations out to Loved by God Ministries instead of Shepherds Way. We still have the same PO Box and PayPal. If you have any questions, please email us!

# The Reformation

By Pastor Seth Britton

Sunday, October 26th is Reformation Sunday, celebrating the Day of Reformation that occurred on October 31st. The Lutheran Reformation, and subsequently, Lutheran theology, was founded upon the Bible as God's Word and our highest authority for Christian thinking and living. How did it all begin?

In the little town of Wittenberg, Germany, on October 31, 1517, Martin Luther, an Augustinian Monk, nailed a document to the village church door, challenging the church's leadership to debate some theological principles. Later referred to as Luther's, "Ninety-Five Theses," Luther desired that his church address some issues of theology and Biblical truth, particularly, the church's sale of indulgences, which were guarantees of escaping purgatory. No one may have noticed then, but within the week, copies of his theses would be discussed throughout the surrounding regions; and within a decade, Europe itself would be shaken by his simple act. However, was it Luther's intention to shake up the world and the church? Just what did Luther think he was doing at the time? To answer these questions, we need to understand a little about Luther's own spiritual journey.

As a young man in Germany at the beginning of the sixteenth century, Luther was studying law at the university. One day he was caught in a storm and was almost killed by lightening. He cried out to St. Anne and promised God he would become a monk. In 1505, Luther entered the Augustinian monastery, and in 1507 became a priest. His monastic leaders sent him to Rome in 1510, but Luther was disenchanted with the ritualism and dead faith he found in the papal city. There was nothing in Rome to mend his despairing spirit or settle his restless soul. Consequently, he felt alienated from God, and could not seem to find an answer that would address his "anfechtung;" a German word for an inner anxiety and feeling of hopelessness.

Hoping both to ease his spiritual anxieties, as well as to utilize his evident intelligence, Luther's superiors sent him to teach theology at the University of Wittenberg. In 1515, he began teaching Paul's epistle to the Romans. Slowly, Paul's words in Romans began to break through the gloom of Luther's soul. Luther wrote

*My situation was that, although an impeccable monk, I stood before God as a sinner troubled in conscience, and I had no confidence that my merit would assuage him. Night and day I pondered until I saw the connection between the justice of God and the statement "the just shall live by faith." Then I grasped that the justice of God is that righteousness by which through grace and sheer mercy God justifies us through faith. Thereupon I felt myself to be reborn and to have gone through open doors into paradise. The whole of Scripture took on a new meaning...This passage of Paul became to me a gate to heaven.*

The more Luther's eyes were opened by his study of Romans, the more he saw the corruption of the church in his day. The glorious truth of justification by faith alone had become obscured by greed, corruption, and false teaching. However, as the church sought greater and greater reform, the truth of the Gospel, that human salvation based on God's grace alone through Christ alone, received through faith alone, became the doctrine upon which the orthodox, Protestant church now stands!

What began as a humble desire to debate theological concerns, became a world-wide movement that reflected the power of God's Word. As Luther himself responded to the leaders of the church in his time, when told to recant his writings and teachings, Luther replied:

*Unless I am convinced by the testimony of the Scriptures or by clear reason (for I do not trust either in the Pope or in councils alone, since it is well known that they have often erred and contradicted themselves), I am bound by the Scriptures I have quoted and my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and I will not retract anything, since it is neither safe nor right to go against conscience. Here I stand. I cannot do otherwise. May God help me. Amen.*

May the church today continue to stand upon the Word of God!



**Red Hill Lutheran Church & School's**

# **Oktoberfest**

**Sunday, October 26th**

**Reformation Worship at 10:15am**

**Followed by our annual Trunk or Treat at 11:30am**

**FOOD • GAMES • FELLOWSHIP • FUN**

**INVITE  
YOUR  
FRIENDS &  
NEIGHBORS**



# Honoring Our Heroes: The Meaning and History of Veterans Day

Each year on November 11, communities across the United States pause to honor the men and women who have served in our nation's armed forces. Veterans Day is more than just a date on the calendar—it is a day of gratitude, reflection, and recognition for the sacrifices made by those who have answered the call to serve.

## What Is Veterans Day?

Veterans Day is a federal holiday set aside to honor all U.S. military veterans—those who served in times of war and peace, whether active duty, retired, or discharged. It is a day to say “thank you” to those who have served and to acknowledge the role they’ve played in securing the freedoms we often take for granted.

It is important to note that Veterans Day is different from Memorial Day. While Memorial Day (observed in May) honors those who gave their lives in military service, Veterans Day celebrates all veterans, living or deceased, who have served honorably.

## The Origins of Veterans Day

The roots of Veterans Day go back to World War I, which officially ended when the Treaty of Versailles was signed in June 1919. However, the fighting had ceased several months earlier when an armistice went into effect on November 11, 1918, at 11:00 a.m.—“the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month.”

In 1919, President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed

November 11 as Armistice Day, a day to honor the bravery of the American soldiers who served in World War I. In 1938, it became a federal holiday, still known as Armistice Day.

Following the immense sacrifices of American troops in World War II and the Korean War, the U.S. Congress, at the urging of veterans' organizations, amended the holiday in 1954. That year, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed legislation renaming it Veterans Day—broadening its purpose to include all veterans, from every branch and every era of service.

## A Time for Gratitude and Prayer

In our church community, Veterans Day is a time to reflect on the values of service, sacrifice, and faith. Many of our veterans carried their faith with them through difficult deployments and continue to serve others in our congregations today.

Let us take this opportunity to not only thank them for their service, but also to pray for their well-being, for the families of those still serving, and for peace in our world.

“Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's

friends.” — John 15:13 (NIV)

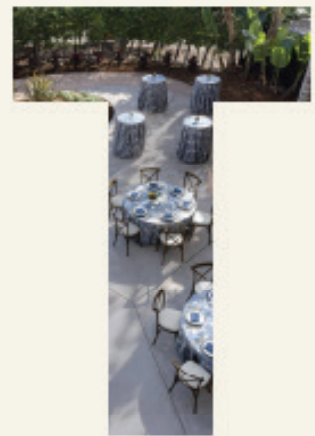
This Veterans Day, may we honor those who served with our words, our prayers, and our commitment to being a community that remembers and values their sacrifice.





# Red Hill Lutheran Women's Retreat

November 7<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025



This is your opportunity to truly unplug and reconnect —with yourself, with other women, and most importantly, with Christ. We'll gather in the beautiful bayfront setting for a weekend of community, teaching, worship, and rest. Take a moment for yourself to unwind with ocean views, food you don't have to cook, and a bed that is made each morning. It is time to find REST before December arrives.

**Scan for  
more  
information.**



\$550 Double Occupancy  
\$650 Single Occupancy

Rooms Friday & Saturday night  
Kayak & Paddleboard Rental

Parking, Resort Fee & Taxes  
Time to Rest, Renew & Recharge

[www.RedHillChurch.org](http://www.RedHillChurch.org)

[smcarthur@redhillchurch.org](mailto:smcarthur@redhillchurch.org)



# Dates to Remember

**October 26th: Reformation Sunday**

**Worship and Oktoberfest**

**One Worship service at 10:15am followed by Red Hill's  
Annual Oktoberfest Celebration and Trunk or Treat**

**November 2nd: All Souls Sunday**

**Daylight Saving Time Ends**

**November 11th: Veterans Day, Campus Closed**

**November 26th: Thanksgiving Worship, 7:00pm**

**November 27th: Thanksgiving Day**

**Campus Closed Thursday and Friday**