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Celebrating Birthdays from
January through June

Sunday, January 21
10 am following worship

Potluck Style
Bring a brunch dish to share

Please sign up to host a birthday
table
At the Welcome Center

Meal Club Date January

Meal Club is changing it up in
January! The two meals this month
will be at **Russell's Restaurant** on
Thursdays.

January 11 – 11:30am
January 25 – 5:30pm

Come enjoy a meal and fellowship.
You are responsible for your own
meal. The conversation and fun
are free for all!!



2023 By the Numbers

Average In-Person Attendance – 44
Average Online Attendance – 177
COC events in the building - 317
Non-COC events in the building – 222
Average Daycare Attendance – 50

Using the website
www.wheresgeorge.com we were able to
track where some of the cash that was
put in the offering plate went.

Some of our bills have been found in:
Kansas, Nebraska, Missouri, Arizona,
Arkansas, Colorado, New Mexico,
Delaware, Pennsylvania, Iowa, and Texas

How can we pray for you?

Send your prayer requests the
following ways:

- Call or text Pastor Libby at
785-564-1977
- Email Pastor Libby at
pastorlibbyoberdorf@gmail.com
- Email the church office at
mollie.purcell@coc-salina.org
- Call the church office at
785-825-5170

The next issue of The
Message will be out in
February. Please
have all articles to the
church office by
January 23.

Would you like to
receive The Message
by email? Email Mollie
at mollie.purcell@coc-salina.org

PRAYER LIST

Joys and Concerns

MEMBERS:

Roberta Blakeley, Bobbie Brockway, Chris Davis, Sylvia Rice and Family

FAMILY:

FRIENDS:

David Budden
Lucas Nutter
Sharon (Judy Beck's mom)

ARMED FORCES:

We pray for those who are serving in the armed forces and for their families.

LOCAL COMMUNITY:

We pray for those who are homeless due to circumstances beyond their control. Interracial understanding.

OUR WORLD COMMUNITY:

We pray for those who are incarcerated and their families, for peace of God to rule in the hearts of our local and national leaders.

**Names are included on the prayer list for one month. If the prayer request needs to be on the list for multiple months, please contact the church office. To submit a prayer request please fill out a form in the pew at church or call the church office.*

A Word from Pastor Libby



Friends,

In this Christmas Season, yes, we are in it right now the twelve days from Christmas to Epiphany, I have spent time reflecting on the many things that have occurred in the past year and I give great thanks beyond the birth of our savior Jesus. Not only have I been serving at Church of the Cross and seen our spiritual growth and development of our inclusivity statement I am now also in ministry with the people at Roxbury United Parish. I enjoy getting to know the people and their ministries and all those who they impact as well.

I give thanks to all the people who came to my open house, sent me cards, shared their gifts in the form of homemade presents, and who gifted me with other wonderful presents, all of which were icing on the cake of being present with you all in ministry this year. I am thankful for our church leaders and staff who help us to continue to seek God's presence and to live God's will for us as we live into the abundance we possess to live into and out our ministries in these places.

From all this work together, I realize that I need to spend more time with God and focusing on what I must do to live out the calling God has on my life as a disciple and leader. Over the last several months, and especially the last few months, I have been refining what it means for me to be in ministry and to be a leader in this time and in these places as I prepare for further exploration in the coming year. As I have been discerning, listening, and learning I have found myself focusing on the word "intention." This is not the word I got as a star word last year, which was generosity. Rather it is the word that has come out of focusing on generosity and realizing I could be more generous in some aspects of my life and ministry particularly with truly living out my calling for justice and peace, not minimizing it because so many injustices do not directly affect my life.

I have been very intentional in planning out what I intend to do in the coming year. These are not resolutions, things I will do come hell or high water, but things I will do and adapt as I continue to focus on God's direction and will for my life. My first intention is to listen and follow God's will with boldness and grace. Thus, I have focused on the word intention more aptly fits my desire. Intention means "an aim or a plan." Except in the medical field, it means "the process of healing a wound." Both definitions fit what I think is necessary for me to draw closer to God in the coming year. As Bryant McGill says in Voice of Reason, "Every journey begins with the first step of articulating the intention, and then becoming the intention." Becoming is my hope for this year.

Part of my intention is to take Renewal Leave during 2024 that allows me to have more extended time away to explore more deeply my calling to engage further in justice and peace initiatives. I am receiving two four-week periods with a week of vacation attached for this exploration. One will be from April 29-June 1 and the other from September 11 -October 16.

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Thank You

The staff of Church of the Cross would like to thank all of those who brought in goodies and donated to the Silver Box this Christmas Season. We appreciate the care you show for us and we enjoy showing care for you.

Thank you,
Mollie, Tara, Dave, Libby, Pat, Carolyn, and Sandy

THANK YOU!

LAITY SUMMIT

GREAT PLAINS UNITED METHODISTS

Laity Summit is in the works, so mark your calendars for March 10, 2024, from 1:30-5 p.m. CT and 12:30-4 p.m. MT.

Laity Summit is designed for laity from all churches large and small, rural and urban communities and established and emerging leaders. It is a time to share ideas, learn from others around our conference and beyond, and take away nuggets of knowledge to assist in growing our footprint of God's love in our respective mission fields.

Laity Summit 2024 is being planned to provide an opportunity for laity to gather in small groups and in community. Congregations are invited and encouraged to plan a watch party at your church. Together, you will be able to listen to the content of the messages from people in our Conference. Participants are encouraged to consider and discuss a couple questions within your group. How does what was said mean to us? Is there anything that we can put into action?

If you have ideas or questions, please email them to Jeanie Leeper at jleeper@greatplainsumc.org.

Intergenerational Ministry



Let's gather with others of all ages and stages of life to learn from each other and grow beginning Monday, January 8 from 6pm - 7:30pm. Explore calling, work through life situations, build lasting relationships, and learn about God all while sharing a meal together! (meal freely provided) Ages 0-110. Sign up via Facebook events or email Tara so we can get a headcount for food to be provided. This is an ongoing event with the following dates:

January 8 and 22
February 5 and 19
March 4 and 18
April 8 and 22
May 6 and 20



January/February Worship Series -Drawn In

We spend too much time being "driven" rather than "drawn in." We focus on what we "should" do rather than what we feel excited and compelled to do in our lives, in this world. During this series, we will connect with our inherent creativity and nurture this foundational aspect of being human, giving us renewed energy for passionate work, delightful play, and creative problem solving to make this world a better place for all.

January 7	Luke 4:13-21
January 14	Luke 4:1-13
January 21	Matthew 25:24-30
January 28	Acts 16:6-15
February 4	1 Corinthians 12:12-19
February 11	Exodus 20:8-11

Update your VANCO Information



VANCO makes giving to COC easier than ever!

Visit www.coc-salina.org and click on "Give your offering to Church of the Cross by clicking here." This will allow you to either give through a recurring payment or a one-time payment.

If you are currently signed up for a recurring payment you are able to edit your information by going to that same link and clicking login in the upper right corner. Then click on Payment Methods on the left side. You are also able to see the history of payments you have made to Church of the Cross through the VANCO system.

Stop by the church office between 9:30am and 1pm Monday-Friday to find out more information or ask any questions you may have.

If you have questions or need help, call the church (785-825-5170) and talk to either Mollie or Pat.

Blessing Box

The blessing box located in the shelter house south of the church is very frequently used. In the back of the narthex is a white cabinet for donations for the blessing box. When out shopping if each family picked up one or two items to go into the box it would help make sure people in our community do not go hungry. Donations can be left on the welcome center or put in the cabinet.



Suggestions of items for the blessing box are:

- Canned or bag tuna
- Vienna sausages
- Canned fruit (no individual sizes needed right now)
- Peanut butter
- Canned vegetables
- Crackers
- Grab and go snacks
- Macaroni and cheese.

Shopping at Dillons?

We recently received a generous check of \$235 from Dillons! If you shop at Dillons you can contribute simply by doing your grocery shopping. By participating in Dillons' Community Rewards program, you can help us make a difference in our community. To get started, visit www.dillons.com and navigate to the community rewards section. Our organization number is X1722, it is the key to ensuring your purchases benefit COC. As you prepare for your holiday grocery shopping, we kindly encourage you to set up Dillons giving and support our organization. Your support will greatly contribute to our efforts. If you need any help with this please talk to Mollie in the church office.



Church of the Cross Inclusivity Statement

As we grow in our understanding of what it means to be made in the image of God, we invite you to come be who you are. This means welcoming and affirming people of every gender identity/expression, sexual orientation, age, race, ethnicity, physical and mental ability, level of education, family structure; economic, immigration, marital and social status and so much more. This welcome includes those who struggle with our commitment to offering full participation to all those who have been hurt when we've failed and calls each of us to graciously live together in the community of Christ regardless of our differences. As followers of Jesus, we commit ourselves to the pursuit of justice while standing in solidarity with all who are marginalized and oppressed.

**Leadership Team approved on
September 13, 2023.**

JANUARY AT COC

Monday, January 1

Happy New Year – Office Closed

7:00 PM AA Group 3 – Webster East Classroom

Wednesday, January 3

7:00 PM AA Group 3 – Webster East Classroom

Thursday, January 4

10:00 AM TLC – Webster Room

Sunday, January 7

9:00 AM In-Person and Online Worship

10:00 AM Adult Sunday School – Webster East Classroom

6:00 PM Gym Reserved

Monday, January 8

1:00 PM Prayer Shawl – Courtyard Room

6:00 PM Intergenerational Ministry – Webster Room

7:00 PM AA Group 3 – Webster East Classroom

Tuesday, January 9

1:30 PM UMW

6:30 PM Scouts

Wednesday, January 10

7:00 PM AA Group 3 – Webster East Classroom

Thursday, January 11

10:00 AM TLC – Webster Room

11:30 AM Meal Club – Russell's Restaurant

Sunday, January 14

9:00 AM In-Person and Online Worship

10:00 AM Adult Sunday School – Webster East Classroom

6:00 PM Gym Reserved

Monday, January 15

1:00 PM Prayer Shawl – Courtyard Room

7:00 PM AA Group 3 – Webster East Classroom

Tuesday, January 16

6:30 PM Scouts

Wednesday, January 17

7:00 PM AA Group 3 – Webster East Classroom

Thursday, January 18

10:00 AM TLC

Sunday, January 21

9:00 AM In-Person and Online Worship

10:00 AM All Church Birthday Party – Webster Room

6:00 PM Gym Reserved

Monday, January 22

1:00 PM Prayer Shawl – Courtyard Room

6:00 PM Intergenerational Ministry – Webster Room

7:00 PM AA Group 3 – Webster East Classroom

Tuesday, January 23

6:30 PM Scouts

Wednesday, January 24

7:00 PM AA Group 3 – Webster East Classroom

Thursday, January 25

10:00 AM TLC – Webster Room

5:30 PM Meal Club – Russell's Restaurant

Sunday, January 28

9:00 AM In-Person and Online Worship

10:00 AM Adult Sunday School – Webster East Classroom

6:00 PM Gym Reserved

Monday, January 29

1:00 PM Prayer Shawl - Courtyard Room

7:00 PM AA Group 3 – Webster East Classroom

Tuesday, January 30

6:30 PM Scouts

Wednesday, January 31

7:00 PM AA Group 3 – Webster East Classroom

January Birthdays

01/10 – John Estep

01/12 – Roger Plankehorn

01/21 – Ella Kresky
Raymond Stevenson

01/27 – Florence Caldwell

Pastor Ponderings cont. from page 2

I have written a plan and the Staff Parish Committees and Leadership Teams of both churches as well as our Annual Conference have approved my request. With the approval from the Great Plains Annual Conference comes a grant that will provide for your continued pastoral care and pulpit supply while our leadership continues to lead us forward while I spend this time with God. In the coming months you will learn more about this, but I wanted to share it as part of what I am thankful for in 2023 and 2024 that I hope will help me grow as a disciple, leader, pastor, and in spirit in the coming year.

In the coming year may we all “be mindful of intention. Intention is the seed that creates our future” as Jack Kornfield says. God’s blessings and joy for all of you in 2024 my friends!

+Love, Pastor Libby

Do you have a talent or passion you want to share with the community?

Email Tara Baxter at tara.baxter@coc-salina.org to get signed up to teach a class!

Stay up to date by visiting:
www.coc-salina.org/discover-u

Mental Health Training Opportunities

NAMI, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, is the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to building better lives for the millions of Americans affected by mental illness.

NAMI is a non-profit organization that provides **free** education, support and advocacy for those persons and their families who are impacted by a mental health disorder.

All NAMI trained family program leaders are family members with a loved one living with mental illness; i.e., depression, anxiety, bipolar, schizophrenia, borderline personality disorder, OCD, PTSD.

We recognize the challenges facing families to find and receive mental health education and care for their loved ones. NAMI class curriculum is all evidence based and updated.

Our virtual class offerings scheduled for Spring 2024 include: NAMI Family to Family, NAMI Basics, NAMI Homefront,

- NAMI Family to Family class is a **free** virtual eight week class for family members, significant others and friends of people with mental health conditions. It facilitates a better understanding of mental health conditions, increases coping skills and empowers participants to become advocates for their loved one. Family members who have taken this course report it was life-changing for them in the education they received to better understand their loved one, how to best be their advocate, and how to communicate more effectively, and how to establish healthy boundaries.
- NAMI Basics is a six week class for parents, guardians and other family caregivers who provide care for youth (age 22 or younger) who are experiencing mental health symptoms.
- NAMI Homefront is a six week virtual class for families, caregivers and friends of military service members and veterans with mental health conditions. The course is designed specifically to help these families understand those challenges and improve their ability to support their service member or veteran.

Virtual classes are capped at 20 persons with any additional registrants being placed on a waitlist.

See the flyers posted on our info board.

Please see Pastor Libby if you would like to discuss any of these options further.

Where have you seen God?

Share your photos of where you have seen God. To submit your photos please email them to Mollie at Mollie.purcell@coc-salina.org.





United Methodist
Church of the Cross
1600 Rush St.
Salina, KS 67401

Church office hours:
Monday – Friday 9:30 AM – 1:00 PM

Church of the Cross

In-Person and Online Sunday Worship – 9 AM

Church Staff

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Dave Musil, Custodian