



RESURRECTION REFLECTIONS

Volume 10, Issue 2

August 2018

OUR MISSION

Live the Faith! Lift High the Cross!

OUR VISION

We will grow in faith and numbers by seeing Christ in one another in all we say and do!

Pastor's Ponderings

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ;

Much has happened in the life of our congregation since the last newsletter. I hope that you enjoy reading the various articles in this issue and the chance to get to know some of the new members of our congregation in the Spotlight Section.



During this year's Central States Synod Assembly, changes to the Synod Constitution were proposed. One thing was to change from Area Ministries to Conferences within our synod. We are now part of the Central Kansas Conference. However, Area 5, the congregations that we have partnered with and prayed for, will continue to meet and continue to do things together. This was done to create more balance on the Synod Council and to make sure the congregations across the synod were represented equally.

Also, at this year's Synod Assembly I was nominated to attend the Churchwide Assembly in Milwaukee next summer. I look forward to representing our synod and sharing my experiences when I return.

As summer comes to a close, the people of Resurrection are in my prayers. I pray for your time together, your safe travels as you vacation, and for the start of school and Fall programming.

Peace and Blessings,

Pr. Elizabeth Cummings

Baptisms

Evelyn Rose Avritt, Child of God

Baptized June 3, 2018



Parents: Lyn & Matthew Avritt

Sponsors: Michelle Avritt, Gregory Buckley

Ella Jae Doll, Child of God

Baptized August 5, 2018



Parents: Stephanie & Luke Doll

Siblings: Harper & Emery

Sponsors: Jeremy & Kari White

For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. - 1 Corinthians 12:13

Council Notes

by Robert Nunn, Council President



Left to right; Gerald Yochum, Pam Porsch, Loretta Holmes, Pastor Elizabeth Cummings, Bob Schick, Shari Jordan – Secretary, Robert Nunn – President, Jeanette Westerhaus, Barry Schroeder - Vice President

Busy, Busy, and summer is half over. Sounds like an awesome time for our youth group in Houston and also for our campers at Camp Tomah Shinga. Great Turnout! Thank You, one and all!



Our church float for the July 4th parade was “very well represented”. Thank you to all for showing up and making this happen.

We have another float opportunity coming up for the Haysville Fall Festival. It’s a fun, candy tossing time.



This year our church is making plans for a booth at the Clearwater Fall Festival in September. Heads up, all you Clearwater folks. We have never before participated in the Clearwater Festival and we are needing you with your suggestions and ideas. If you would like to volunteer to help, and join the fun, please see Loretta Holmes, Bob Schick or Robert Nunn. Clearwater Festival Planning will be starting soon and we look forward to your help to highlight OUR CHURCH. Also don't forget to sign up for the very popular *Lunch with Pastor* – just one more luncheon. See you at Applebee’s.

Welcome to the Table Dinner & Silent Auction

“Welcome to the Table”, a fundraiser for St Paul’s kitchen remodeling project was held on Thursday, April 19 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at St. Paul’s. Outback Steakhouse grilled chicken and steak for a delicious meal. Gift baskets for the silent auction filled tables



Tornado in Eureka

Eureka sustained the 2nd major tornado in 2 years on July 26th. 8 people were injured, at this point all have been treated and released. 167 homes were affected with 19 of these a total loss. 20 commercial buildings were affected with 8 of these destroyed. The Community Activity Center and the Eureka Junior-Senior High buildings were impacted. Pastor Tim Meyer of Christ Lutheran Church in Eureka posted this on Facebook on June 29th: *“In the middle of suffering and tragedy God visits with grace and mercy. The outpouring of help from the community and the volunteers who keep coming from all over the state give hope to our town.”*

The cleanup will go on for a while yet, then there will be long-term recovery that the Greenwood County Emergency Management folks will be organizing. The Eureka Area Ministerial Alliance will again be in the middle of short- and long-term recovery work.

Please help! Christ-Eureka suggests that monetary donations be sent to the Eureka Area Ministerial Alliance (EAMA), PO Box 373, Eureka, KS 67045. Other options are the Eureka Foundation, PO Box 247; or Growing Greenwood c/o Emporia Community Foundation, 527 Commercial Street, Suite B, Emporia, KS 66801, with “Tornado Relief” in the memo line.

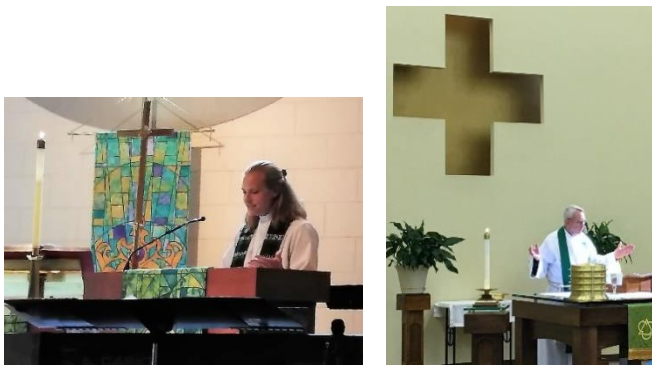
God bless you, and thank you for all your help.

PULPIT EXCHANGE

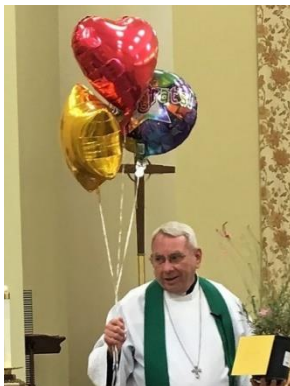
Pastor Elizabeth Cummings from Resurrection and Pastor Jennifer Whitt from Haysville United Methodist Church exchanged pulpits on April 15th, 2018.



A second pulpit exchange took place on July 29th Pastor Elizabeth conducted worship at Christ Lutheran, Wichita while Pastor Larry Cross from Christ Lutheran, conducted worship at Resurrection.



Pastor Cross was congratulated for the 50th anniversary of his ordination. He wrote: “Thanks for the photos -- I didn't know you took them! The observance of the 50th anniversary of my ordination during the announcement time on Sunday was a real surprise and so meaningful.”



**Listening for Peace
A Unity of Christians in Prayer**

The third Listening for Peace worship service was hosted by Saint Francis of Assisi Roman Catholic Parish, Wichita, on Thursday, June 7. Listening for Peace is a prayer service inviting all to engage in prayer and conversation. We seek to promote faith among all, building on the common ground of faith. This event was planned by a Roman Catholic, Lutheran and Episcopal team.



Pastor Dave Fulton, St. Paul's-Lutheran delivered one of three messages during the service.

The Weaving

My life is but a weaving
Between my God and me.
I cannot choose the colors
He weaveth steadily.

Oft' times He weaveth sorrow;
And I in foolish pride
Forget He sees the upper
And I the underside.

Not 'til the loom is silent
And the shuttles cease to fly
Will God unroll the canvas
And reveal the reason why.

The dark threads are as needful
In the weaver's skillful hand
As the threads of gold and silver
In the pattern He has planned

He knows, He loves, He cares;
Nothing this truth can dim.
He gives the very best to those
Who leave the choice to Him.

Corrie Ten Boom

Women of the ELCA, Cluster Meeting

On April 21, 2018 the Ark River Valley Cluster of the Central States Synod Women of the ELCA were hosted by Resurrection's Women of the ELCA for their annual meeting.



The program was presented by Nancy Maier and Julie Witt of Mosaic in Winfield.



Nancy Meier, Director



Julie Witt, Volunteer

Women attending learned about the many ways Mosaic serves their clients who are people with intellectual disabilities. One of the ways we can support Mosaic is providing prizes for bingo games which are often part of special events for people attending their programs. Cross of Glory is one of the churches which does this. Also Mosaic sells "Jumpy Monkey" coffee which provides employment for some of their clients. Their funding is largely from Medicaid and expanding Medicaid in Kansas would let them serve more people.



Central States Synod Women of the ELCA President Alice Burnett, of Cross of Glory, shared her experiences attending the 2017 Women of the ELCA Convention in Minneapolis, MN as well as updating us on the 2018 Central States Synod Women of the ELCA convention. Leadership changes - Kathy Drake (Reformation) and Loretta Holmes (Resurrection) are continuing and will be joined by Beth Shaw (Christ-Wichita.) Elaine Harvey (St. Paul's Wichita) is outgoing cluster coordinator. Next year's cluster meeting will be at Christ-Wichita.

Tomah Shinga Campers Comments



Carlie Schill - This year at Camp Tomah Shinga was definitely the best! I made so many awesome friends that I hope to see in the future!!

Adi Falconburg - The zip line was my favorite. We had to climb up 35 feet and ZIP down!

Cash Pegg-Westerhaus - Camp was good and swimming was my favorite.

Haylee Marshall - Camp was great! It was so nice to see all my friends again!

Landon Schill - My favorite things about Camp were my counselor Eli and the new friends that I met! Thank you!!

Jordan Vogt - I got 104 ticks, but I had a lot of fun swimming. I also liked the food.

Donovan Braun - Pretty awesome

Natasha Braun - Amazing and fun

Taeden Marshall - Camp Tomah Shinga was awesome! I love everything about it!

Alli Clevenger - I had a good time meeting new people. I liked canoeing a lot.

Madison Clevenger - It was awesome. I loved the zip-line and also really liked the songs.

Grayson Sample - It was fun and I really liked how they taught about God. I loved the game gags ball.

Avery Schill - As a CIT (counselor in training) for Tomah Shinga, I learned so many life skills and had tons of fun meeting new people.

YMT News & Events

by Pam Porsch

Vacation Bible School – Shipwrecked VBS was held July 16-20. We ventured onto an uncharted island where 26 kids survived and thrived. They were anchored in the truth that Jesus carries them through life’s storms. The church was transformed into a deserted island in the sanctuary and we were underwater in the Sunday School rooms and in Fellowship Hall.



Thanks to all the station leaders for leading the lessons each evening; all the crew leaders for leading the crews to their stations; everyone who helped decorate and clean-up. Thanks to all who donated items for the week. Thank You to everyone for making this ministry possible!!

Upcoming Events-

August 25 & October 27 – Sandwich Saturday 9:30-noon –Members of the church gather to prepare 200+ sack lunches and deliver them to St John’s Episcopal Church in Wichita at 11:00am. Come join the fun! The homeless are very grateful for this outreach project and the youth and adults continue to be excited to participate in this Community Service Project. This event is open to the entire congregation – come help make some sack lunches, help deliver them and see for yourself the gratitude from the homeless and the St John’s coordinators.

September 9th – Rally Day – Sunday School begins and Worship Service returns to 10am. Come join us for Sunday School – all ages welcome!!

October 6 & 7 – Bierocks anyone?! The youth will spend October 6th making 200+ bierocks, so that on Sunday, October 7th the congregation can purchase them and take them home to enjoy. The Youth sincerely thank the congregation for their support. **THANK YOU!!**

Dec 1st - 6th Annual All Saint’s Birthday Party and Bingo 2-4pm @ RLC –All attendees are guaranteed to have a fun afternoon and enjoying birthday cake and an ever exciting afternoon of bingo with over 50 winners.

January 12th – Will bring about the YMTs 7th Annual Chili Cook-Off and Dessert Auction. Get out your best chili and dessert recipes and dust them off - the challenge will be here shortly! Make sure to mark your calendar for this fun event for all ages!



Overall, we had 26 kids participate, 14 station leaders and helpers and 6 crew leaders. Kids gathered in the sanctuary each evening to sing praises, be introduced to the Bible Point and Bible Buddy for the evening. They then traveled around in their crews to the Bible Adventure Station, Imagination Station, KidVid Cinema, and Ship Rec Games Station. In the middle of their travels they stopped in at Tropical Treats for a yummy snack that tied in with their lesson for the evening. Preschoolers traveled to their own stations and joined the others for worship time and snack time.



New Member Reception

On June 3, 2018 our Resurrection family received into membership: Chris & Jennifer Knaak, Karen, Matthew & Lyn Avritt. Make them welcome and read their Spotlight stories featured in this newsletter.



Chris & Jennifer Knaak



Karen Avritt, Matthew & Lyn Avritt

CROP Walk

The 2018 Wichita CROP Hunger Walk is Sunday October 7th at Sedgwick County Park. This is a great opportunity to take a stand against hunger. There is no charge to walk. Walkers who raise \$100 will receive a t-shirt. Families, youth groups, social ministry groups and all interested are invited to form teams and walk. Teams may already register for secure online giving to the 2018 Wichita Walk on the Church World Service's website at www.crophungerwalk.org. See details of our Wichita walk at www.cropwalkwichita.org or call Dennis Harvey at 744-2935 for information.



2017 Crop Walkers

WELCA Notes

by Evelyn Clark

Another successful Book and Bake Sale!

WELCA's May Book and Bake Sale grossed \$475.21! \$48 was given to benevolence. With additional funds from the Fall Bazaar, \$900 was given to the flooring fund, \$300 to help with expenses of the youth going to the National Youth Gathering, and \$1600 for Camp Tomah Shinga scholarships. Additional Camp scholarships were made available this year with generous contributions from members of the congregation.



Save the Date! - The annual **Fall Bazaar** has been scheduled for Nov. 9-10, from 9-4 in Fellowship Hall. This year promises great finds: Christmas décor, unique hand-crafted items, gift baskets, baked goods, linens and textiles, and the ever-popular Granny's Attic where you never know what treasure you'll find. Soup, pies, sloppy joes, and cinnamon rolls will be available for lunch, breaks in your busy day, and carry-out.

This is WELCA's major fund-raiser of the year and the congregation always responds with items for sale and their purchases. See you Friday and Saturday, Nov. 9-10.

Upcoming Bible Studies - In September, October and November, WELCA's Bible study "Repentance: How do we as Lutheran Christians understand the role of repentance in our faith," will be the focus of our meetings at 10 a.m., the second Tuesday of each month.

In December ladies will be provided with "An Advent/Christmas Devotional" and enjoy their annual Christmas brunch.

The Bible study for January through April will be "The Gospel of John: Meetings with Jesus through his interactions with various characters within the gospel."

All ladies and friends are invited to attend WELCA/Women of the ELCA meetings. at 10 a.m., the second Tuesday of each month.

Altar Guild's Paint Party

Altar Guild doesn't hold official meetings during the summer months, but has often taken on major projects. Last year the beautiful angel banners now displayed in the sanctuary were created. This summer, a fun activity was planned, a paint party. In Old Town, Wichita, at Pinot's Palette we became artists! It was daunting to see large, blank, art canvases lined up on easels waiting for us as we arrived, but with some instruction, a few snacks and a little wine, we did create paintings of God's beautiful world. Just look and see:



Front L-R: Holly Gonzales, Jacyi Gonzales, Vicki Nunn, Patti Meserve; Middle L-R: Tressa Vogt, Shari Jordan, Rebecca McKusker, Karen Vogt; Back L-R: Lydia Evans, Jennifer Knaak, Alice Yoachum, Vickie Sample, Vicki Larsen.

Haysville Read-A-Thon



On April 20th Pastor Elizabeth and son, Oliver, were busy reading the book, Paddington during Haysville's Library Read-A-Thon.

Haysville 4th of July Parade

Resurrection participated in Haysville Parade. Members had a great time creating a float for the Haysville 4th of July Parade. This year our float featured the Bible and the Declaration of Independence.



Youth Dinner and Mystery Theater



April 14th, Resurrection's youth and dedicated parents produced 'MOOLAH' as a dinner/mystery theater. After a sumptuous dinner served on fine china and 'real' silverware, guests were entertained with a 'Who Done It' mystery play. A delightful evening for a packed house supporting the youth for their trip to the National Youth Gathering in Houston. Well done, RLC Youth!



Moolah Cast



Moolah Servers

National Youth Gathering

Reflections from Bishop Roger

“This Changes Everything.” That was the banner that more than 31,000 of us assembled under at the ELCA Youth Gathering in Houston. So what’s the “This?” God’s call, God’s grace, God’s love, and God’s hope. And they do indeed change everything, as we heard from speaker after speaker who invited our youth to embrace God’s unconditional love in Jesus Christ.

Four days of worship, interactive learning, faith formation, connecting with other youth in our synod and the wider church, and service work in Houston produced some pretty exhausted young people and their adult leaders, but you’d be hard-pressed to find anybody who didn’t have a great time. Check out some blog entries at blogs.elca.org/youthgathering for some first-hand accounts.

One personal note: On Synod Day, when the Central States youth gathered for worship, each of us was given a blue stone with the name Jesus written on one side. We were to write our own first name and last initial on the other side. We pooled all of those stones when we came forward in a thanksgiving for baptism, then picked one up randomly when we came forward for communion.

The idea was to commit to praying daily for the person who we knew only by first name. Nobody mentioned an expiration date, so Garrett, you’ll be in my prayers from now on; prayers of thanksgiving for your life, for God’s guidance as you make decisions, for hope as you create your future, for joy in your living, for a growing faith as you follow where Christ leads. They got the theme right: *This does change everything.*

--- Bishop Roger Gustafson



Reflections from Our RLC Youth



Some of 31,000 strong in Houston

Natasha Braun: “It was exciting to be with so many others of my faith.”

Avery Schill: “During the NYG, I really got to bond with the other high school youth in our church and I also had an amazing time worshipping with teens from around the US!!”

Emma Atcheson: “The singers were amazing and the speakers really blew my mind, one in particular really touched me. I’m glad I got to experience that. Thank you for a wonderful trip.”

Derick Marshall: “The NYG was phenomenal; it changes everything!”

Some things we learned:

Don't take the stairs

Don't give Emma ice cream after 10 - *Derick*

Don't play UNO with Emma - *Everyone*

Bring earplugs

Don't ask Olive Garden for a bowl of blueberries
(they'll give you a *SMALL* cup)

Don't let Derick run down a ramp
(he rolled down and cracked his phone)

Don't try rose water



Sandwich Saturday

Resurrection is one of the Area Ministry 5 Churches who take turns preparing 200 sack lunches to distribute at St. John's Episcopal Church on Sandwich Saturdays. The picture here shows some of the people who gathered to prepare lunches early on April 28th to distribute at 11:00 a.m. that day.



Hello Property Stewards,

Well summer is flying by fast and it's been very busy on church property. Our spring church clean-up work day was a success, although we were confined to inside items due to cold weather. Items completed - Replaced numerous light bulbs along with bug removal from fixtures, Vacuumed cobwebs from sanctuary and narthex areas, Bathroom stall door in ladies restroom fixed by adding a shim, Grab rails installed in ladies restroom non-ADA stalls, Absorbent pads placed in men's restroom and New emergency light installed in Sunday School hallway.

We have a new mowing company this year and I think they are doing an outstanding job for us. We are currently looking at some landscaping items; removal of the dead junipers out front and trees out back. (still deciding on what to replace the junipers with).

Numerous other items that have been completed this summer, narthex front window (small section) was replaced, carpet cleaning for sanctuary, new control board for the fellowship hall AC unit, new filters for AC units, monthly emergency lighting system checks, font cleanings, Sterling water system 6 month cleaning and filters, playground north fence repaired, mailbox repaired and I know I'm missing several other small constant maintenance items. Thank you to all who help, as it is never ending.

We will have another church clean-up day this fall and we look forward to seeing you there. –

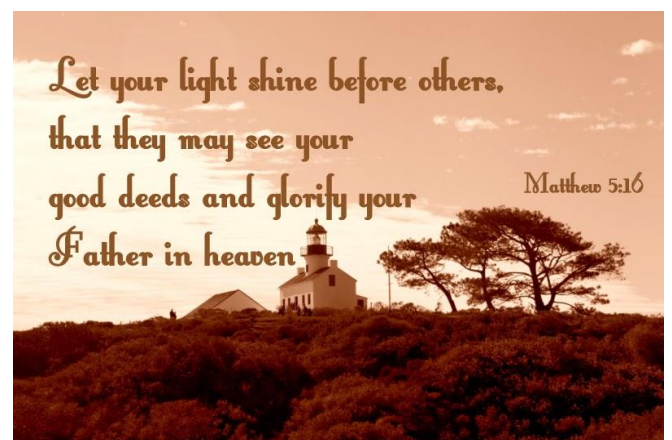
-----Thanks Be To God-----Robert Nunn



Church Staff
Pastor Elizabeth Cummings
Office Administrator..... Vicky Tully
Treasurer Heather Porsch
Financial Secretary Evelyn Clark
Nursery Supervisor Holly Gonzales
Music Director Evelyn Clark
Sexton David & Jessie Cook

Church Council
President Robert Nunn
Vice President..... Barry Schroeder
Secretary Shari Jordan
Loretta Holmes
Pam Porsch
Bob Shick
Jeanette Westerhaus
Gerald Yoachum

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Karen Avritt

I was born in Concordia, KS, 3 months early. I was a twin, but due to our early birth, my twin sister, Sharron Ann died at 4 days old. My mother, Ona Mae Springsted, was a telephone operator and my father, Gerald Edward Springsted, was an accountant for Western Power. My younger sister, Cheryl, was born 9 years later. When I was young our family moved to Dodge City, KS. I attended Dodge City High School, ironically at the same time as my future husband, although we didn't meet until several years after graduation.



I was baptized and married at the United Presbyterian Church in Dodge City, KS. I attended the Sublette Christian Church for most of my adult life, until I moved to Haysville to help take care of my granddaughter. My son and daughter-in-law are Lutheran and invited me to attend Resurrection with them this past spring. I liked it because it was a small church and everyone was very friendly, and so I decided to become a member when they did.

I attended Fort Hays State University and graduated with a degree in Elementary Education in 1968. I student taught in Dodge City and took my first teaching job in Sublette, KS in January of 1969. I taught there for 40 years, until my retirement in 2009. Even after retiring, I couldn't part from the school and spent several years going in 4 days a week for a few hours to tutor and read with 2nd graders.

When I started teaching, I taught 1st grade for about 20 years. Then I taught writing and reading skills for K-2, although one year I taught middle school as well. I love teaching and had worked with younger students for so long that middle school students were quite an adjustment. After that, I became the school reading specialist and Title 1 reading for the elementary school.

Before I had my own children, I also taught migrant school every summer. This was a program for the children of the migrant workers who would come in to work the sugar beets. Their children had a mixed academic experience. Some had never attended school before, and most spoke no English. I found this to be extremely fulfilling. While I worked on teaching English and reading, a lot of this job focused on exposing these children to new experiences. We would take them on field trips, out to eat, and once we even took them to ride in a plane. We would also take them to the dentist. I loved teaching migrant school, but the summer I adopted my oldest, Michelle, was my last year to teach migrant school. After that, I spent my summers with her, initially chasing after a toddler and it didn't take long to progress to swim meets and t-ball games.

My husband, Allen "Mickey" Avritt grew up in Dodge City. After he graduated high school, he started college. However, a professor made a negative remark about him attending school to avoid Vietnam, and he promptly left school and enlisted in the army. He was a military intelligence specialist during the Vietnam War, and served 3 tours there. We met during his leave on the final tour. When we met, I had just finished student teaching. My mentor teacher, Penny Avritt, thought that she should set me up with her brother. I was not a fan of blind dates, and I remember that she told me to 'suck it up, because it wasn't like I was going to marry the guy or anything'. Our first date, which included his sister and her husband, was attending Christmas Eve Services together at Dodge City Presbyterian Church. Our second date was a bit more conventional and we went to the movies. This sounds really cliché, but when he dropped me off that night and kissed me goodbye, I knew I would marry him one day! Shortly after that, he had to return to Vietnam, and we continued dating and writing to one another. We were married on April 1, 1972, over Easter weekend. We were married for 42

**** SPOTLIGHT ****

years. Mickey passed away on June 11, 2014 after a long illness. I miss him every day, but I have our memories and our beautiful children to remember him.

I have 4 beautiful children. I always wanted to be a mother. However, after many years and several unsuccessful fertility treatments, I was not able to get pregnant. Adoption is an emotional roller coaster and it took several years, and to be honest, multiple heartbreaks, before I was blessed with my daughter, Michelle Lynne. She was born on February 22, 1976 and we took her home on the 25th. She is a 3rd grade teacher in Sublette, KS now, with my grandson, Jeremiah Zane.

About 2 years after my daughter was born, Mickey and I felt like our family had room to grow and we began the adoption process again. My son, Michael Allen, was born September 30, 1981. Due to some complicated custody/parental rights issues between his biological parents, he stayed with 'cradle parents' for 4 weeks. Cradle parents are short-term foster parents who take care of infants between the time of birth and the time when they can be placed in their adoptive home. We finally were able to take him home at a month old. He was born with a cleft lip and had to have surgery at 3 months old. He had a challenging childhood with several medical issues, but I am proud of the man he is today. Michael now lives in Garden City, KS with his wife Tiffany.

When I was in my early 40s, I went to my doctor for a check-up, and left rather upset because my blood sugar was high and my blood pressure was slightly elevated, with no known cause. He made me come back a month later, after I returned from vacation (where I rode all the roller coasters at Silver Dollar City). My doctor was trying to determine what was going on health wise, and decided to check me with a fetal heart monitor. Imagine my shock when it picked up a heartbeat! I had spent nearly 20 years believing that I was unable to have children biologically, and then found out that I was nearly 5 months pregnant! Matthew Jon was born on November 26, 1988. I named him Matthew because it means Gift from God, and he was my miracle baby! However, God wasn't finished with my family just yet. About a year after Matt, I found out I was pregnant again! Amanda Dawn was born October 7, 1990. After her birth, our family was finally complete. Amanda Miranda lives in Abilene, KS, with her husband Jorge Miranda.

My ultimate goal is to see all of our children settled and happy. They are all grown up now, and working on their own careers and families. I also enjoy spoiling my grandchildren. My grandson, Jeremiah, is 13. He is growing into a mature young man. He loves sports and takes wonderful care of his new cousin, Evelyn, when they get to visit. I moved to Haysville last year upon the birth of my granddaughter, Evelyn, to care for her while her parents are at work. Taking care of her keeps me busy and very happy. She is a crazy girl and one of the loudest babies I've ever met! I am hopeful for more grandkids to spoil in the future!

Matt and Lyn Avritt

Lyn was born on January 2, 1989 in West Chester, Pennsylvania, on the evening of a Philadelphia Eagles game. My mother always says that she had to keep reminding my father and the doctor that she was in labor to tear them away from the game. My mother, Deb Buckley, was a social worker when I was first born but has been a middle school science teacher for the last 10 years. My father works for a doctor and medical network doing claims. They live in Tennessee now, having moved there 3 years ago. I was the oldest child; my younger brother Shawn was born in 1991 and Greg in 1994.



*** SPOTLIGHT ***

When I was in first grade, my family moved to Glendale, Arizona, where I did most of my 'growing up.' Last time I went back to visit, the area had been very developed, but when I was a child, I remember it being on the outskirts of the desert. We used to ride our bikes to the lemon orchards and mountain bike through the desert.

We moved again, to Kansas City when I was a junior in high school. That year, I also enlisted in the US Army Reserves. After moving across the country, I felt lost and thought that the military would be a way to serve my country and also help me find my path. While I never had a combat deployment, the Army helped me grow as a person and learn how to lead. I served an 8 year contract which ended in 2014.

After graduating high school, I attended Kansas State University and received a degree in psychology. After some career exploration, I followed my passion for reading and went back to school to get my secondary teaching degree in English. One of my primary loves is reading! I like a wide variety of books. I love the classics, and Frankenstein is probably my all-time favorite, but I also read a lot of science fiction like Michael Crichton, and teen-lit, so I can relate to my high school students.

I was baptized at Calvary Lutheran Church in Pennsylvania and confirmed at Peace Lutheran in Peoria, Arizona. When we moved to the Wichita/Haysville area, we attended several different churches. After the birth of our daughter, we looked specifically for a church that had a large and active youth community for her to grow in. When we attended Resurrection in early 2018, we really loved the church community. It was very welcoming and we felt like it was the church for us. We joined the church on June 2, and our daughter, Evelyn was baptized a week later.

I have taught English, Speech, and Drama at Oxford High School for the last 3 years. I also coach competitive speech and drama. I love my job! Like anything, there are ups and downs, but at the end of the day, I truly feel fulfilled. I knew I wanted to teach at a rural school, and I am the only English teacher there. That means that I am able to work with my students for 4 years, which gives me a fairly unique opportunity to form a bond with my students and really see them grow and mature over that time.

Matt was born on November 26, 1988 in Garden City, Kansas to Allen and Karen Avritt. My older siblings were adopted and my mom says that I was her miracle baby. My mother was an elementary school teacher, teaching first grade and reading recovery for her whole professional career in Sublette. My father worked for Sublette cooperative as a chemical applicator. He passed on June 11, 2014. I lived my whole life in Sublette, KS until I moved to Manhattan, KS for college. From there I moved to Wichita in 2014 after being assigned to Sedgwick County as a Kansas Department of Agriculture Meat and Poultry Inspector. My wife and I then moved to Haysville in 2016. I am one of the middle children of four siblings: Michelle, Michael, and Amanda. One childhood memory that I cherish was hunting pheasants with my dad in the fall and fishing in the warmer months.

Growing up I attended church at Sublette Christian Church and was baptized there at the age of nine. I didn't start attending a Lutheran Church until I met my wife Lyn in college just few days after moving into the dorms my first year at Kansas State University. We dated through college and had a long engagement. After we both were finished with school we were married on July 12, 2014 at First Lutheran Church in Manhattan,

*** SPOTLIGHT ***

KS. We moved to Wichita just a few months before we were married, and we moved to Haysville in 2016. We have attended the Lutheran Church ever since.

After I graduated high school I attended Kansas State University and obtained a Bachelor's of Science in Agriculture. My major course of study was animal science and industry. My interests in this field were science applications and pre-veterinary medicine. After I graduated I accepted a job with the Kansas Department of Agriculture as a Meat and Poultry Inspector. I was promoted to the South Central Lead Inspector in 2016. I take great pride in my job because of the essential service I help to provide to consumers. My job has a three pronged approach, I ensure that meat and poultry establishments provide a safe, wholesome, and correctly labeled product. I do this by overseeing slaughter operations, so that only healthy animals fit for human consumption go into commerce. I also inspect and perform evaluations on manufacturing processes and products to make sure products were produced in a safe manner and environment. I also evaluate labels and the finished product for sale so that consumers are not defrauded by misbranding.



Our daughter, Evelyn Rose Avritt, was born on June 2, 2017. Lyn woke me up at 3 in the morning saying she wasn't sure she needed to go to the hospital, but maybe she should make sure. Evelyn was born 2 and a half hours later, so it was a good thing we decided to go to the hospital.

Evie is definitely the center and light of our lives. She loves going for walks through Riggs Park in her wagon and piggyback rides. She also loves our three dogs, and their names were one of her first words. We have loved every minute of her first year. She has grown so much and she has such a bold personality. We look forward to all the adventures we will get to share with her.

Most of our hobbies revolve around outdoor recreation. We enjoy going to the lake on weekends and spending time outside. We have three dogs. They make sure things are never dull at our house. There is a Shiba-Inu named Kiki, a Collie named Mellie, and a German Shorthair named Fin. Fin and Matt have a special relationship, if something ends up destroyed the best bet is that Fin is the culprit. Matt's personal hobbies revolve mostly around hunting and spending time outdoors. I have a passion for chasing upland game birds with my German Shorthair Fin. In the warmer months I enjoy fishing and skeet shooting on Sunday afternoons.



Our goals, hopes, and dreams are fairly simple. We are hoping to grow in our community and also grow our family. We want to raise our daughter and any future children to be kind, good, and productive members of society and enjoy everything life has to offer.

We'd also love to travel some in the future. 3 years ago, we went to Wyoming and Yellowstone Park and loved it. In the future, we would love to be able to explore some more of the natural wonders that the world has to offer.

Chris & Jen Knaak

Jen was born in Wellington Kansas. Jen's parents are Jeff and Shelly Russell and she has one younger sister Heather. Heather and Jen's parents all live in Derby. Jen was baptized at First Baptist Church, Mulvane. One of Jen's fondest memories is playing in the woods behind her grandparent's house with her cousin Rebecca. We would pretend to build houses out of leaves and play outside for hours together. When we were done we would go back into the house and make grinder sandwiches with our grandpa. Jen still has the same grinder that she used as a child with her grandpa and makes grinder sandwiches with it for special family events.



Jen attended Derby schools and graduated from Derby High School in 1999. She went on to attend Cowley County Community College then Wichita State University. Jen has a bachelor's degree in social work and started her master's in gerontology. Jen is now a homemaker, able to spend full time with their young son.

Chris was born in Elgin Illinois. Chris' parents are Jerry and Judy Knaak. He has three brothers: Ben is the oldest, then Chris, Andy and the youngest is Danny. Chris' parents live in Rochelle Illinois as well as Andy and Danny and Ben lives in Salt Lake City Utah. Chris grew up and was baptized at First Baptist Church of Elgin. One of Chris' fond memories from childhood is when he and his brothers would get to go for two or three weeks over the summer to stay with his grandparents. He remembers waiting with his brothers for the ice cream man and getting to have special time with his grandparents.



Chris attended elementary school in Elgin Illinois and his family then moved to Brighton Michigan when he was in fourth grade. Chris then attended school in Brighton and graduated from Brighton High School in 1993. After high school Chris entered the Air Force. In 2013 Chris started attending college and obtained two associates from the Community College of the Air Force. Presently Chris is the Safety Superintendent for the 184th Intelligence wing.



Chris and Jen met in 2000 at a friend's house. We eventually started dating but Chris then took a job assignment in Washington DC. After two years on that assignment we started talking again and felt it was obvious that we were meant to be together. After Chris got approval to end his tour in DC early and come back to Kansas he proposed and of course I said yes! So we were engaged in February of 2005 and married in November of 2005. We were married in the Kansas Masonic Chapel. This year we will be celebrating our 13th anniversary. We have one son, Everett Ryan James Knaak. He was born on 3/30/2017. We are so proud of him and we could not be happier to get to show him off.

We enjoy going to concerts, working the garden and the yard, trying new restaurants, DIY projects around the house and spending time with our son, family and friends. We have one dog, Duke, a dachshund who is about 10 years old.