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# The Steeple

July 10, 2025

**The Weekly Newsletter of St. Luke's Episcopal Church**

## A Summer of Growth, Faith, and Community at St. Crispin's

There is gentle glow peering over the labyrinth at St. Crispin's this year, one that not only reflects the radiance of the sunlit lakes but one that brightens the hearts of our campers, staff, and the whole Diocese of Oklahoma. I'm thrilled to share news from Teresa that this year, a last-minute registration tipped camp registrations over the top of the goal she set of 500 campers this summer!

In a post Teresa wrote:

> *In 2021, just after COVID, the program had 352 registrations. In 2022, my first year as director, we reached 419. Last year, we had 480.*
>
> *More than a number, it's a reflection of something deeper: a community that's growing, reconnecting, and investing in this place. I've watched returning campers grow in confidence and faith, and I've been so proud of the way we've welcomed new faces into the circle. Every registration represents a story, a friendship, a life touched by this camp.*
>
> *It's been such a rewarding role and this milestone just makes me even more excited for the future of our camp community. Thank you to everyone who has helped build and nurture this space. Let's keep going!*

From 352 to 500 strong that growth speaks volumes. It's more than statistics friends; it's the work of weaving souls together and building lasting friendships. And, what is more, you had a hand in that.

This summer's programming was drawn from Gospel of John, where Jesus said, "I have called you friends!" As members of St. Luke's, we are part of that broader story rooted in not just our Diocese's mission of supporting and sustaining vital congregations, steadfast prayer, and offering courageous witness but also that we are called to build friendships across generational experience.

Your prayers lifted up camp staff, volunteers, and their families. Your contributions the diocesan scholarship fund ensured not only St. Luke's campers, but that all children could attend camp, regardless of financial barriers. Your encouragement of our own families with children, teens, or grandchildren to attend camp widened the circle at camp and that is wonderful.

Five hundred registrations is a landmark but what fills me with greater joy is something deeper - listening to Teresa speak about how God's grace is at work through community that builds up our children in Faith. Each camper's laughter, each sunset service, each new friendship reflects the Spirit's movement in our midst, and we should celebrate that!

To the camp staff, volunteers, donors, families, the Diocese, to **Teresa** and the team at St. Crispin's, to Bishop Reed and diocesan leadership…thank you for birthing, sustaining, and expanding the mission of St. Crispin's and providing a place of holy encounter for our kids here at St. Luke's.

I am already looking forward to next year and to see the way that our tangible support as a parish remains steadfast for such an important and vital ministry within our Diocese. Together, we can continue to help build creative, faith-filled spaces where every camper, every soul, can hear God whisper: You are beloved. You are my friend.

Peace,
Nick+

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**At Luke's Place: July 11th – July 17th, 2025**

**July 13th** Holy Eucharist, Rite I, 8:00am, Chapel
Faith Forum, 9:15am, Metcalf
Holy Eucharist, Rite II, 10:30am, Nave
**July 14th** Finance Committee, noon, Vestry Room
Vestry, 5:30pm, Vestry Room
**July 17th** Men's Fellowship, 7am, Metcalf Hall
Bible Study, 9:15am, Metcalf Hall
Green Country MP Eucharist, 1pm, GCV

## Theologian's Corner: Benedict of Nursia

As. Benedict of Nursia became aware of the world in which he lived, he was moved to disgust by the barbarism he witnessed in the political instability and general dissolution of society around him. Benedict did what many of us would very much like to do: he checked out. He found a nice hillside cave overlooking Lake Subiaco, about forty miles outside Rome, where he set up a household with a monk who had prior claims to this hole in the ground-probably another malcontent seized by a longing for higher moral ground. Gradually a community grew up around Benedict, a development about which he was none too happy, but which he seems to have indulged, if begrudgingly. There is no evidence that Benedict ever contemplated establishing a formal order, and it is particularly noteworthy that he was not ordained.

That an order grew up around Benedict and became the abundant stream that eventually gave life to nearly all western monasticism may be due, in part, to these factors, and to Benedict's faith. By the latter I mean not his pious devotion, but rather his quiet and very practical confidence that God will care for and make order of our lives. This quiet confidence does not rely upon its own designs, but is content to approach each day openly. In short, Benedict seems to have approached discipleship content to make it up as he went along.

Along the way, Benedict came to the realization that the incarnate Christ visits us as the guest, that the attention of others is less intrusion than it is gift. That he insinuated himself into the life of the monk who had already staked out that hermitage on Lake Subiaco reveals a rude selfishness in the young Benedict. As others came to intrude upon his life, however, Benedict was challenged to make room in his life for them, was forced to give as much as he had demanded from his unnamed host.

This is one of Christianity's hardest demands on the modern person, whose propensities tend toward self-protection and privacy, toward suspicion and isolation-all the ingredients of the barbarism we claim to deplore. When Jesus speaks of the builder who must calculate the whole cost of the tower before breaking ground, of the ruler who assesses the enemy's strength before sending troops to battle, or of every disciple's inevitable encounter with the cross (Luke 14:27-33), he is simply reminding us that participation in the life of God means anticipation and acceptance of its full cost. For Benedict, the cost was a solitude invaded by God incarnate in others, a life prized open to the world.

In our modern affection for and affectations of the spirituality of the monastics, and of Benedict in particular, we neglect this component to our detriment. We have emulated monastic retreat and envied monastic solitude. We have imitated monastic prayer and

yearned for monastic community. But if we desire a closer relationship with God, what we need most is the monastery's open door.
Together we pray: Gracious God, whose service is perfect freedom and in whose commandments there is nothing harsh nor burdensome: Grant that we, with your servant Benedict, may listen with attentive minds, pray with fervent hearts, and serve you with willing hands, so that we live at peace with one another and in obedience to your Word, Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

## *Prayer List*

**Please pray for: Ben** Baker, **Steve** McCraw, **Josh** Harris, **David** Swindell, **Connie** Finch, **Terry** Grogan, **Tyler** Roberson, **Jerry** Nezam**, Miriam** Petrovich**, Lynette** Beebe, **Jack** Smith, **Danny** Clem, **David** McAtee, **Shawn**, **Stephanie** Gallegos, **Pat** Sare, **Steve** Linn, **Jean** Mason, **Adam** Thomas, **Tom** Oakes, **Bill** Pendley, **Mary** Wallace, **Lynda** Stephens, **Marcie** Zervas, **Audrey** Harris, **Peggy** Rockey, **Lauren** Barlowe, **Ken** Harvey, **Nan** Buhlinger, **Bill** Birk, **Carol** McSpadden, **Dionna** Cameron, **Betty** Rogers, **David** Anderson, **Dan** & **JoAnn** Gallery, **Freda** Bretz, **Kathleen** Turner, **Susan** Dick, **Steve** Clark, **Sue** Sherrill, and **Lauren** Gandy.

**Please add the following to your prayers for the Fourth Week of Pentecost**
**St. James, Wagoner  Trinity, Eufaula  The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion)**

**Birthdays and Anniversaries July 13th – July 19th, 2025**

**Birthdays**

**Anniversaries**

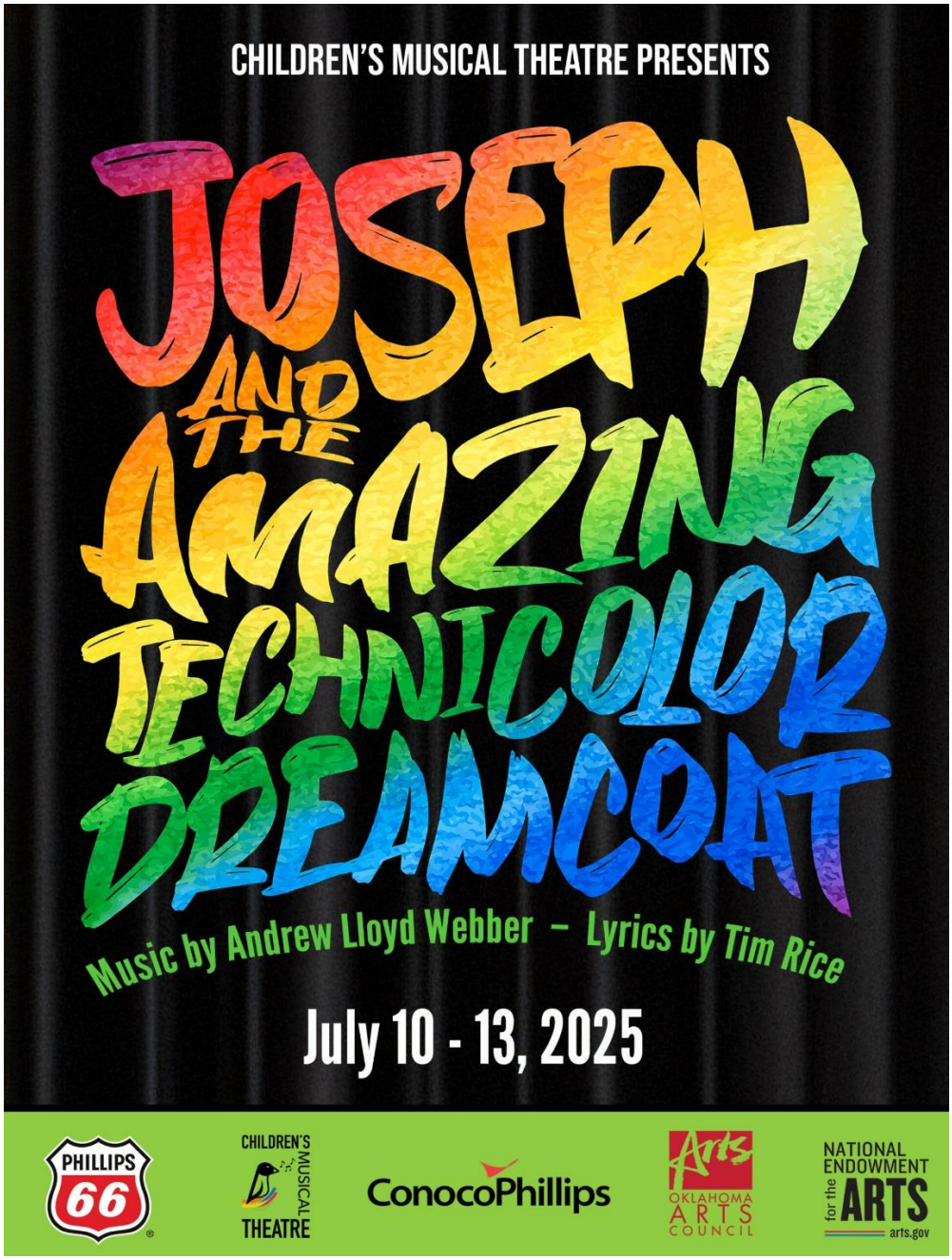
| | |
|---|---|
| **Sherry Deason** | **(7/13)** |
| **Jeff Hall** | **(7/14)** |
| **Jeanne Julstrom** | **(7/17)** |
| **Susan Brooks** | **(7/18)** |
| **Heather McCraw** | **(7/18)** |

**David & Kim Breedlove (7/18)**

If your or a loved one's name doesn't appear on the list, please email or call the office, and we will add your birthday or anniversary!

# Pack the Backpacks Item for July

Just a reminder that Fr Nick is on vacation until the 19th of July and Penny will also be on vacation this coming week. However, the office will be open in the mornings, many thanks, Nancy Woods! Mother Andrea will be celebrating the Eucharist on Sunday (13th) and Tom Reyburn will guiding Faith Forum and the Thursday Bible Study. Thank you to everyone who is helping out!




Bartlesville Community Center
The Center
Based on the Book of Genesis 37-47

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