



ONE

A publication of the Ellis County Ministerial Alliance May 2017

INSIDE:

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- + ECMA News
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The women of our faith

If we knew nothing of God and could look at the world only through the eyes of someone completely ignorant of Scripture, then we would yet know something about God. The ancient pre-Christian philosophers address the ideas of spirits, gods, and immortality.

They also ponder the idea of a transcendent, singular first cause of all that is. They do all this without the aid of Scripture.

Human nature is geared toward a natural understanding of God.

Indeed, human imagining of a first cause and the innate longing of the human heart for immortality is considered a proof from nature that there is a God. Human conscience informs us that there is a God, even when that conscience is uninformed by Scripture.

It may be said that nature is like a

book, and looking into that book, we begin to read from it the existence of God. To really know who God is requires looking into another book, the Bible. It is in the Word of God that we read about who God is. We do not arrive at a full understanding of God through unaided natural reason. We

Welcome

Deacon Scott Watford

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arrive at such an understanding through reason enlightened by revelation. It is in the pages of Scripture that the revelation of who God is may

be found.

In order to understand what the Word of God reveals, we need someone to break open the Word for us. This doesn't mean someone simply saying to us what the Bible says, but it means a living faith that is modeled for us. We begin to see who God is through another. Faith is caught as much as it is taught.

For many, the primary persons through whom the Scriptures are opened and faith modeled are women. Take as an example from Scripture Paul's protégé, Timothy. He does not get his start in the Christian faith through the teaching of the Apostle, but it begins with the model of lived faith he first witnesses in his grandmother, Lois, and his mother, Eunice. These women are his first teachers. It is through the living examples of his grandmother and mother that the young Timothy first encounters the revelation of who God is.

In this issue of ONE magazine, the focus is on women in Scripture. As we consider these articles, we may also consider the many women who are instrumental in our personal faith formation.

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SUBMISSIONS

ONE and the Ellis County Ministerial Alliance encourage submissions from ECMA congregations. Photographs, stories, testimonies and other submissions should be directed toward your church leaders or sent via email to one@dailynews.net.

The ECMA advisory board will choose appropriate and timely submissions for publication.

The columns in ONE represent the views of the author.

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ON THE COVER



A group gathers to pray together during the annual National Day of Prayer event on May 5, 2016 on the Ellis County Courthouse lawn in Hays. Photo by Jolie Green, HDN.

Grateful for the first to preach the Good News

As I write this, it is Holy Week. Any other season, I might name the Woman at the Well, Esther, Sarah, Pharaoh's midwives, or many more strong and praise worthy women whose faith has instructed and strengthened mine. This week, however, it has to be Mary of the Galilean town of Magdala, called Magdalene. There are many Mary's who were part of Jesus' life and ministry. Magdalene identifies her specifically from the half dozen Mary's who were part of Jesus' inner circle.

She was the First Evangelist, called by Jesus to go and tell the Good News of his resurrection. Mary persisted, even when the men disregarded her proclamation as an "idle tale." She knew what she had seen on the dawn-

ing first day of the week; a strangely empty tomb, disturbing encounters with messengers of light, her Lord and Rabbi, who just days before, she had watched over in grief, and prayed through tears, now risen from the tomb. Mary remembered Jesus' disturbing prophecy of betrayal, crucifixion, and rising again on the third day. She would not be silenced in her testimony and witness even if no one else believed her. Her faith and trust in her Rabbi was stronger than social condemnation or fear of being labeled a liar or a fool.

Although Middle Eastern culture

often treated women as unworthy of education, Mary traveled with Jesus and called him Rabbi, which means Teacher. She traveled with Jesus during his Galilean ministry, as well as on that

final foretold journey to Jerusalem for the Passover. Mary stayed with Jesus through the grief and horror of his last days, bearing witness to

his suffering so that he would know he was not alone.

Down through time, Mary has been given a bad reputation she did not earn. Pope Gregory, in a sermon in 591 first labeled her a prostitute, even though there is nothing in the gospel accounts

to support that idea. She is named in many places as one who provided for him during his ministry. Perhaps some could only imagine one way that any woman could have an income. Given that the Galilean town of Magdala, just a few miles south along the shore from Capernaum, was known for its perfumes, cosmetic and scented oils, perhaps that was a source of her income.

The bible tells us that Mary was the Apostle to the Apostles. As a woman who was called to preach in a culture that is not always willing to hear women in the pulpit, I am grateful that Mary Magdalene was the first to preach the Resurrection Good News. May we hear her witness today as we learn from her faithfulness, following always in the way of Jesus.



The Rev. Celeste Lasich

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Making time to heal

By SAVANNAH DOWNING
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The second Healing Kids' Hearts Retreat organized by the Center for Life Experiences took place in early April at Sternberg Museum of Natural History in Hays.

The event was started as a way for children and their families to deal with the grief of losing a loved one.

Last year's event welcomed 13 children ages 7 to 12, while this year's retreat had 20 children in attendance.

The morning began with the children being matched with their volunteer "buddies." The buddies worked with the children throughout the day in many projects to memorialize those they lost.

They made garden jars with electronic tea lights that could be placed on a grave or in their yard, memorial candles, scrapbook pages and memory boxes that included pictures of their loved ones.

Carolyn Younger, a volunteer, was Josie Brady's buddy for the day. Younger lost her son Cody in 2009.

"I wish there was something like this when my son passed," Younger said. "My daughter, even though she was older, could have used something like this because she needed to express herself."

Younger said that's why it's so important for her to be a part of the event. She likes working with the kids and believes it is important for them to have a place to talk about those they have lost.

She helped Josie, 6, create a box in memory of her brother, Jordan.

"I'm going to put it in my room so I can remember him," Josie said as she placed a photo of Jordan on the front of her memory box.

Hayden Creamer made a memory box for her dad, and Karsyn Hamlin made one in memory of her mom.

"She liked the Royals," Karsyn said as she put a picture of her mom wearing a Royals hat in the box. "But she liked the Broncos even more."

Downstairs, the parents who were able to attend watched a video about



JOLIE GREEN, jgreen@dailynews.net

Children gather around a table as they make garden jars at the Healing Kids' Hearts Retreat on April 8 at Sternberg Museum of Natural History in Hays.

how children grieve differently from adults and discussed the importance of creating traditions to remember those they have lost. They also had time to share their own personal stories and experiences with each other.

Josh Tanguay, therapist at Clinical Associates, and Myrna Jordan, a social worker at Hays Medical Center Hospice, talked with the parents about the challenges of grieving together as a family.

"No one grieves exactly the same," Jordan said. "And our society isn't great about encouraging those memorials. Some people feel like we should just get over it already, but we never get over it."

She encouraged the parents to be involved in a support group or find

someone they can talk to about what they're going through.

The video the parents watched said the mental/emotional health of the parent is the No. 1 factor that contributes to how well the children will deal with their own grief.

"You have to take care of yourselves," Jordan said.

Following a pizza lunch, the afternoon sessions included a nature walk, bird-house project and time for the children to share their own stories.

The day concluded with a balloon launch.

For more information about the different support groups and special events hosted by the Center for Life Ex-



Karsyn Hamlin makes a scrapbook page at the Healing Kids' Hearts Retreat.

periences, call (785) 625-2847 or email cfle@ruraltel.net.

The Woman in Matthew 9

Over the past few months, in different Bible studies I have been part of, we have been studying women of the Bible. I also recently bought the book “Bible Women: All Their Words and Why They Matter” by Lindsay Hardin Freeman, and have been using this in my studies as well. One of the women of the Bible who always has caught my attention, is not referred to by a name. She is known mostly as “The Bleeding Woman.”

Her story is found in all three of the synoptic gospels, the Gospel of Matthew, the Gospel of Mark and the Gospel of Luke. And in the Gospel of Matthew (Mt 9:20-22) and the Gospel of Mark (Mk 5:25-34), she speaks, and says pretty

much the same thing. In Matthew 9:26b NRSV she says to herself, “If I only touch his cloak, I will be made well.”

As a female, the story of the woman who was hemorrhaging or bleeding has always been an interesting story to me. She had been bleeding for 12 straight years. I find it fascinating that she comes up from behind Jesus to touch the fringe of his cloak while he is out walking among a crowd. It also is interesting to note that in Mark’s version of this story Jesus asks who touched him, where in

Matthew, Jesus knows it was the woman who touched him and heard her pep-talk with herself.

The Greek word that the NRSV translates as “be made well” is interesting. It is $\sigma\omega\zeta\omega$ (sozo), and a translation that I like better, is used in the KJV. The KJV translates sozo as made whole. Here sozo encompasses the debate between healing and curing. To be healed or made whole is more of a societal thing, where being cured has to do with more of a treatment of a disease. So when Jesus healed or made the woman who had been bleeding whole, he was returning her

to society, making her feel welcome again.

Women in the Bible are not usually referred to by their name but by another characteristic. In calling her Daughter (Mt 9:22), Jesus is naming her, calling her a beloved child of God. He also was telling her of her worth. Even though she was bleeding for 12 years, she still is worthy in God’s eyes.

You reader, are also worthy. You are a beloved child of God. You have been fearfully and wonderfully made. So, I encourage you to give yourself a pep-talk, tell yourself you are amazing and that you can do anything you put your mind to. Because you are worthy of wholeness, just like the woman who was bleeding was made whole.



Pastor Marie Sager

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Summer camp experience sticks, helps build faith

By **KALEY CONNER**
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As a fifth-grader, Conner Custer began attending an annual summer church camp in Missouri. He liked it so much that — 10 years later — he’s still going back.

Last summer, he became a staff member at the Heartland Center camp, where he says he has many fond childhood memories. The site is beautiful, he says, and there are many fun activities, such as horseback riding and archery.

But it’s much more than just fun in the sun, as the experience also encourages in-depth Bible reading and discussions.

“It helped me really open my eyes to my own faith and beliefs,” said Custer, 20, a member of First Presbyterian Church in Hays.

The particular camp he always attended as a student was work camp. It might not sound like fun, but don’t let the name fool you, he says. The students at that camp worked to help staff with summer preparations.

The experience helped build his faith and gave him the opportunity to build friendships with other like-minded youth, he said.

“It could benefit anyone that is interested or loves religion, believes in God,” Custer said. “For me, it’s one place that I could go that I feel a lot of the people would agree. It was just very comfortable.”

Custer already has been hired as a staff member again this summer, and will return to the camp from May to August. His goal is simply to help make sure future generations of campers have the same memorable experiences

he had, Custer said.

And it’s also rewarding for him to watch other children grow in their faith.

“If you’ve experienced it, you want them to have nothing less,” he said. “It’s so nice to be able to see kids grow in just the week that they’re there, and everything they bring to the table to offer spiritually.”

It’s an experience Custer said he would be quick to recommend for other students, or for parents who are considering sending their child to camp for the first time.

“Go out and try it,” he said, noting some camps will allow visitors to preview the location and program offerings.

Several Hays-area churches offer summer camp programs or can provide recommendations. For more information, check with your local pastor.

FHSU instructor, class advocate for refugees through marathon race

Special to The Hays Daily News

Jared Nielsen, Fort Hays State University instructor of leadership studies at Sias International University in Zhengzhou, China, recently ran in the ZhengKai International Marathon to raise money for and awareness of the international refugee crisis.

Nielsen ran the nearly 26-mile race in just under 4 hours while pushing his 21-month-old son, Andrew, in a stroller. The race started in Zhengzhou and ended in Kaifeng.

Nielsen taught four sections of the LDRS 310: Fieldwork in Leadership Studies course in the Department of Leadership Studies last fall. Students in the course exemplify leadership by planning, organizing and carrying-out a service learning project that will bring positive change to their community in a global or local context.

“We found that many people are not familiar with the refugee crisis or that people wrongly associate refugees with immigrants,” said Nielsen. “I was able to present our plan to the students in my LDRS 310 course and show them that I believed in what I was teaching”

Nearly \$3,000 was raised during the campaign for a U.S. faith-based community organization, Go to Every Nation, which provides assistance to refugees who are able to resettle in the United States. Nielsen estimated that the campaign has reached more than 3,000 individuals through class presentations, email, mail, events, social media and a recent article published by

the media team of the Zheng-Kai marathon. More than 100 people participated by donating to the campaign that started in December 2016.

“The best aspect of the campaign was our student team, which was comprised of 13 FHSU students, six of the students being from the Leadership Studies Department,” said Nielsen.

After getting back to Sias, a student told Nielsen, “Today you made me really understand what leadership is; there are so many theories of leadership, and no one is the best.”

The student continued, “The best leadership is within the whole team to achieve the goal of the process.”

For more information or to donate, visit <http://run4refugees.org/campaigns/zhengkai-marathon/>.



Nielsen

NEWS TO KNOW

Operation Christmas Child seeking volunteers

The Northwest Kansas Area Team that coordinates Operation Christmas Child is seeking year-round volunteers. Openings exist on the Church, Community, Media and Student Relations committees. Operation Christmas Child is a ministry of Samaritan's Purse, which encourages people to fill shoeboxes each Christmas with gifts for a child. These gifts are then distributed in more than 150 different countries. Messiah Lutheran Church has been the drop-off point for shoeboxes in Hays the past few years.

"Every shoebox is a powerful tool for evangelism and discipleship," said Rachel Albin, Northwest Kansas area director. Those interested in volunteering may contact her at (785) 639-1325 or at albinmk@yahoo.com.

Church garage sale this weekend

Liberty Foursquare Church, 400 E. Seventh St., will be having a garage sale from 1 to 7 p.m. Friday, April 28, and 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, April 29. Proceeds will help send kids to Camp Victory near Tulsa in June. The sale will take place on the church lawn. In case of inclement weather, it will be moved inside to the fellowship hall and foyer. More information is available at (785) 625-6245.

Disc golfers raising money for charity

The Fort Hays State University Leadership 310 Team, In-sole-in-ones, is hosting a disc golf charity event on Saturday, April 29, at Frontier Park.

"Drive Away Diabetes" will raise awareness for diabetes and raise money to help find a cure, said Dalton Steinert, one of the student organizers and a member of Trinity Lutheran Church in Hays.

Registration will begin at 1:30 p.m. at the shelter house at the west end of the park, with the event getting under way at 2 p.m. Registration is \$30 for a two-person team, or \$50 for a four-person team. First and second-place prizes will be awarded in each division, Steinert said.

Other members of the Leadership 310 team are Tucker Serna and Michelle Peeks. For more information or to register, e-mail driveawaydiabetes@gmail.com, or check out the Step It Up For A Cure Facebook page.

Run/Walk to benefit Herndon Clinic

The Run/Walk to Help Children Talk will take place Saturday, April 29, on the Fort Hays State University campus in the Quad between Picken and Rarick Halls.

Registration will begin at 10:30 a.m., with the event to follow at 11 a.m. Participants may register for a 5K run, a 1-mile fun walk, or just come for the post-race celebration for lunch and games. Registration is \$25 for adults, \$20 for FHSU students and \$15 for children. Delta Zeta Sorority will have child-friendly games available. Registration includes lunch and a T-shirt.



FILE PHOTO, Hays Daily News
A group of breast cancer survivors stand as they are honored at the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure on May 7, 2016 in Hays.

Proceeds will go towards scholarships for children who are in need of speech-language-hearing services at the Herndon Clinic at FHSU and to purchase clinic materials. The clinic is part of the FHSU Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders.

Registration forms are available at www.fhsu.edu/csd by clicking "news/events" and choosing "Run/Walk to Help Children Talk."

Bowl for Kids' Sake coming up

Fort Hays State University students in the Leadership Studies 310 team Tigers and Badges are participating in Bowl for Kids' Sake on Sunday, April 30, and Monday, May 1.

Proceeds will benefit Big Brothers Big Sisters of Ellis County. Sessions are scheduled at 2 and 3:30 p.m. on April 30 and at 5:30 and 7 p.m. on May 1, all at Centennial Lanes, 2400 Vine St. in Hays.

Jenny Bates, executive director of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Ellis County, said 42 children in the county currently are waiting to be matched with a big brother or sister. Bates said this year's goal is for each team of six to raise at least \$960, which is \$160 per person. All money raised will stay in the community to help Ellis County children, she said.

Those wishing to form a team may call 785-625-6672, or individuals may use the following link to donate: <https://www.4kidsake.org/EllisCounty/Team/View/37415/Tigers-Badges>.

FHSU students on the Tigers and Badges team are Hayden Pixler, Charles W. Murphy, Carissa Mikesic and Brock Johnson.

Tourney to benefit Make-A-Wish

The Student Athlete Advisory Committee at Fort Hays State University is holding a Dodgeball Tournament on Sunday, April 30, with proceeds to benefit the Make-A-Wish Foundation.

The foundation, which was formed in 1980, grants wishes to children with life-threatening illnesses.

The entry fee for the tournament is \$20 per team, with each team consisting of six to eight players. Play will begin at 1 p.m. in the Cunningham Hall gyms on campus. Emma Stroyan, one of the student organizers, said there will be free food, prizes, gift cards and music throughout the day for spectators, with prizes also going to the winning teams.

To register or obtain more information, e-mail her at ecstroyan@mail.fhsu.edu with the team's name, number of players, and one team member's cell phone number.

NEWS TO KNOW

Missouri float trip offered for youth

First Presbyterian Church of Hays is offering youngsters an opportunity to participate in a Kayak/Canoe Float Trip down the Missouri River June 19 to 21. The trip is open to youth grades 6 through 12, and they will be joining other youth from the Presbytery of Northern Kansas.

The youth and sponsors will be traveling to the Niangua River Oasis in Roach, Mo. Cost before Monday, May 1, is \$110 per person. After May 1, the cost is \$130. Scholarships are available, but space is limited. For more information and to obtain a registration packet, contact Becky Rogowski at (785) 625-2847.

Komen Race for the Cure is May 6

The Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure is set for Saturday, May 6, in Hays Municipal Park. Proceeds will go to Komen Kansas to fund research to find a cure for breast cancer and to provide programs and services for patients.

Registration fees, if paid by Sunday, April 30, are as follows: adults, \$30; breast cancer survivors, \$30; kids 12 and under, \$15; virtual racers (who can't make it on race day, but still want to participate), \$30. After April 30, fees go up by \$5 per category.

Registration begins the day of the race at 7 a.m. A survivors' continental breakfast will run from 7 to 9:15 a.m. at the southwest shelter in the park. The Hays Med 5K race begins at 7:45 a.m. Activities for Kids for the Cure also begin at 7:45 a.m. The Kids Dash will start from Main Street at 8:45 a.m.

The survivor celebration and awards ceremony will commence at 9:15 a.m. The Midwest Energy Family Mile will begin at 9:45 a.m.

Individuals may register online at www.KomenKansas.org. More information is available at (316) 440-7033.

Summer camp registration open

North Oak Community Church is offering the following summer camp opportunities: Kids Camp for grades 3 through 5, June 21 to 24 at Tabor College in Hillsboro. Cost is \$165. Registration deadline is May 8.

Junior High Camp for grades 6 through 8 is June 30 to July 4 at Sky Ranch-Cave Springs in Quapaw, Okla. Cost is \$235.



FILE PHOTO, Hays Daily News

People break out into groups during the National Day of Prayer on May 5, 2016, outside the Ellis County Courthouse.

Registration deadline is May 15.

To register or learn more information, go to www.sdcmbuyouth.org.

Paintball tourney signups due May 13

REXFORD—The Shepherd's Staff Christian Conference and Retreat Center is hosting a paintball tournament for ages 10 and older starting at 2 p.m. Saturday, May 20. Teams of eight to 10 people will square off in the double-elimination tournament, with prizes being awarded.

Cost is \$40 per person, which includes a CO2 tank, gun, at least two hoppers full of paintballs and a helmet. Concessions will be available for purchase.

Registrations are due by Saturday, May 13, at www.shepherdstaff.org. The center is located at 270 Main St. in Rexford. For more information, contact D.J. TerHaar at (785) 269-7492 or at office@shepherdstaff.org.

Cross+Gen Workshop coming to Hays

First Presbyterian Church of Hays will be hosting a one-day Cross+Gen Workshop featuring the Rev. Rich Melheim on Wednesday, May 17. Registration will run from 8 to 8:45 a.m. The workshop will run from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the church, 2900 Hall St.

According to organizers, the workshop "attempts to recreate healthy Cross+Gen environments where the wisdom of the elder and the wonder of the child collide on a weekly basis, teaching young and old to connect their stories with God's story, unveiling a theme every week at church and returning to it every night in every home. Having a blast doing it!"

The workshop is designed for families, youth leaders, Christian educators, pastors, lay leaders, worship teams, music leaders and drama teams. Hays is one of the stops on Melheim's 50-city U.S. tour.

There is no cost for members of First Presbyterian Church. The advance regis-

tration fee is \$99 per person for others, but that price goes down \$10 for each additional member of a church who attends. Lunch is included in the registration fee. If 10 or more attend from a single church, the cost per person is just the \$10 for lunch. Advance registration is available at <http://www.cross-genlife.org>.

National Day of Prayer set

May 4 is the annual National Day of Prayer, which takes place on the first Thursday in May.

The theme for this year — the 66th annual national observance — is "For Your Great Name's Sake! Hear Us... Forgive Us... Heal Us!" taken from Daniel 9:19:

"O Lord, Listen! O Lord, Forgive! O Lord, Hear and Act! For Your Sake, O My God..."

Local pastors and leaders will lead the Hays prayer service, taking place from 12:10 to 12:50 p.m. Thursday, May 4 outside the Ellis County Courthouse.

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Dorcas was a great Christian

If you were to be remembered for all time with only one sentence what would you want people to say?

Read what was said about one particular woman in the New Testament.

“In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (which, when translated, is Dorcas), who was always doing good and helping the poor.” Acts 9:36

We learn later that Dorcas grew sick and died. The disciples washed her and placed her in an upper room. When Jesus’ disciple Peter entered the room “all the widows stood by him weeping, showing the tunics and garments which Dorcas had made while she was with them.” Acts 9:39

You can just hear how this woman Dorcas made an enormous impact on the people around her by “always doing good and helping the poor,” by making robes and other clothing.”

When she died, the room was filled with mourners, very likely many of the people she had helped.

No other religious system in history has elevated women in society like Christianity has. Don’t ever let anyone tell you that true Christianity is oppressive to women. Consider the plight of women in the eastern religions, in Judaism, and Islam the worst of all.

The Apostle Paul in his writings praised women in his ministry. How is it that Paul gained a reputation for being a misogynist?

My belief is that Paul did not have a low opinion of women. Far from it. Paul warmly mentions more than a few women in his letters, especially in his greetings.

Apphia is the only woman men-

tioned by name being addressed at the beginning of a letter, but many other women are mentioned in his closing greetings. From these greetings, we can see that Paul was a man who loved and valued women ministers.

Consider Jesus’ relationships with women. Respect...equality. It was women who ministered to Him during His life. Women stayed to watch the crucifixion...women came to the tomb to anoint the body of Christ, and by that were the first witnesses of the resurrection. Jesus recognized the worth of women, appreciated their efforts, and received their following.

The scripture passage mentioned today from the book of Acts speaks of a great woman, a woman so great in her community that her fellow believers could not bear to lose her to death.

From this passage we see the importance of our Christian labors in life and in eternity. We

are known by what we do for others. Whatever we are on the inside, will show up on the outside. Dorcas was a great Christian.

One reason we know about her today is because she died and Peter raised her from the dead. But as glorious as her resurrection was, her character is what impresses me: “She was always doing good and helping the poor.” Oh, how this one sentence stands out for me!

While sometimes we may think our life is boring, can we see our humble and common circumstances as opportunities for God’s eternal purposes, just as Dorcas did? Can we seek to spread kindness, discovering an important and fulfilling ministry as we do?

Years from now, how will you be remembered? My hope is that I will be remembered as fondly as Dorcas.



Pastor Kyle Ermoian

Celebration Community Church

kyle@celebratejesus.org

Plant the words deeply in your heart

Welcome to the May Bible reading plan. Summer is just around the corner! May is always a busy month. Mother's Day, Memorial Day, and graduations galore will no doubt fill your schedule. May is a beautiful month in Kansas. The wheat is growing, the flowers are blooming, and our gardens are beginning to grow. There are some excellent passages of Scripture in this month's readings. I would encourage you to save some time to plant a few of them in your heart. The harvest is life-changing.



Bible Reading Plan

Pastor Steve Dinkel

Liberty Foursquare Church
lcfcsd@ruraltel.net

For our Old Testament readings this month we will finish the book of Isaiah. These last chapters communicate the plans for Israel after their exile; the rebuilding of their community, the future splendor of God's people, and the promise of a Messiah, Jesus our Savior! There are so many verses that communicate the amazing things Jesus would (and did) accomplish for us.

One of my favorite sections is 53:4-5 — Jesus bore all of my sin, and healed me completely! And 55:10-11, a promise concerning God's Word, and 57:14-21 — healing the backslider, and so many more. Read these chapters

May	
1.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 46..... <input type="checkbox"/> John 15
2.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 47..... <input type="checkbox"/> John 16
3.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 48..... <input type="checkbox"/> John 17
4.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 49..... <input type="checkbox"/> John 18
5.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 50..... <input type="checkbox"/> John 19
6&7.....	Weekend Review
8.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 51..... <input type="checkbox"/> John 20
9.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 52..... <input type="checkbox"/> John 21
10.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 53..... <input type="checkbox"/> 1 John 1
11.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 54..... <input type="checkbox"/> 1 John 2
12.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 55..... <input type="checkbox"/> 1 John 3
13&14.....	Weekend Review
15.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 56..... <input type="checkbox"/> 1 John 4
16.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 57..... <input type="checkbox"/> 1 John 5
17.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 58..... <input type="checkbox"/> 2 John
18.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 59..... <input type="checkbox"/> 3 John
19.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 60..... <input type="checkbox"/> Rev. 1
20&21.....	Weekend Review
22.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 61..... <input type="checkbox"/> Rev. 2
23.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 62..... <input type="checkbox"/> Rev. 3
24.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 63..... <input type="checkbox"/> Rev. 4
25.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 64..... <input type="checkbox"/> Rev. 5
26.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 65..... <input type="checkbox"/> Rev. 6
27&28.....	Weekend Review
29.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Isaiah 66..... <input type="checkbox"/> Rev. 7
30.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Zephan 1..... <input type="checkbox"/> Rev. 8
31.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Zephan 2..... <input type="checkbox"/> Rev. 9

thoroughly, and plant them deeply in your heart.

Our New Testament readings will continue with the books written by the Apostle John. Pay special attention to the passion in John's writings. It increases as he continues to write. John states the purpose of his writings

in 20:31; to believe, and the result of that faith will be life! As we transition into John's final work; Revelation, keep this purpose in mind. These books will build your faith if you meditate on them.

And the end result will be life, and life more abundant. Read on!



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2901 E. 13th, Hays, Kansas, Parish Offices:
(785) 628-1446

Fax: (785) 623-4207, website: www.heartlandparishes.org
Fr. Jarett Konrade

Mass Schedule:

Saturday at 5 PM

Sunday at 9:30 AM and 11:00 AM

Daily Mass - Wednesday, and Friday at 7:00 AM

Reconciliation: Saturday at 4:00 PM

Immaculate Heart of Mary Church



1805 Vine Street - Hays, Kansas

Fr. Barry Brinkman, Pastor

Parish Office: 785-685-7339

Website: www.ihm-church.com

Weekend Mass Schedule:

Saturday 5 PM - Sunday 8 AM - 10 AM - 6 PM

Sunday Spanish Mass - 12 PM

Weekday Mass Schedule:

MWF 6:45 AM - TTh 8 AM Wednesday Spanish 6:30 PM

Reconciliation: Saturday 4 PM and Thursday 5 PM

Homelessness, poverty in Ellis County

By JUNO OGLE
juno@dailynews.net

They are here, even if you do not see them.

It could be a former neighbor whose home was condemned because he couldn't keep up the maintenance. He doesn't want to wear out his welcome with friends, so he mostly sleeps in abandoned buildings or ditches.

It might be a woman who works at your child's school, asking for assistance for another two weeks at a motel because she hasn't quite saved enough for a deposit and first month's rent.

Or it could be an industrious co-worker for whom going "home" at the end of the day means finding a discreet place to park his car for the night.

These are some of the stories of the poor and homeless in Hays.

And some who work with assistance agencies are saying it is time for Hays to acknowledge them and do more to help them.

'A drop in the bucket'

It is hard to say just how many homeless people there are in Ellis County, but an annual survey conducted by First Call for Help, a Hays agency that provides emergency assistance and referrals for those in need, gives at least a snapshot of homelessness here.

The Point in Time is a census of sheltered and unsheltered people on one night in January, conducted this year on Jan. 24 and 25.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development requires the survey in communities that receive funds through the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Grants. That funding can be used for permanent and supportive housing, transitional housing and services.

"HUD's goal is to end homelessness by 2020," said Linda Mills, executive director of First Call for Help, 205 E. Seventh, Ste. 204. "To do that, they have to know where and how many there are, and how is homelessness in rural counties different from homelessness in cities, because we do know it is very different.

"The Point in Time count is an effort to do that," she said.

In Hays, the PIT was conducted this year through surveys offered at several agencies — the Salvation Army, Options, First Care Clinic, Ellis County Health Department, Hays Public Library and Western Kansas Association of the Concerns of the Disabled. It was first conducted here in 2014.

The surveys were voluntary, and questions were asked to help prevent an individual from being counted more than once.

Of the 163 people who took the survey this year, 25 were identified as homeless, with another seven at risk of becoming homeless.

Mills and others doubt that number is accurate, however, because of how the survey is administered.

"We're selecting our places where we're administering the survey because we know low-income populations utilize those services," Mills said. "We know we can't cover the whole city of Hays for one thing, so we want to target where we're going."

That was one problem Laurie Mortinger, co-director of the Community Assistance Center, 208 E. 12th, had with the



JUNO OGLE, uno@dailynews.net

Brandon Nimz, founder of Unite Common Grounds Coffee House, 208 E. Eighth, offers a free store with household goods, clothing and food with no proof of income or residency required.

survey.

Mortinger said she thinks the number from the PIT survey is too high.

"All they did was have us ask a few people that came in here one day, two days," she said. "That doesn't really catch the people I think that may be homeless."

Those seeking food boxes from the CAC must show proof of Ellis County residence.

"They have to show us an electric bill, water bill or a lease. So if they don't have that, obviously they're homeless, so we don't hear much of that," she said.

Her co-director, Theresa Hill, agreed, and added the center sees maybe five transients a year seeking help.

Mills and Sherry Dryden, executive director of United Way of Ellis County, 205 E. Seventh, Ste., 111, disagree but acknowledge the survey's method will not offer an accurate count.

"You know with any issue that society faces, whether it's rape

or sexual assault, whether it's drug use or alcohol abuse, that the number that actually gets reported is usually just a drop in the bucket of what it is," Mills said.

"We have a lot more," Dryden said. "There's people that you know are homeless and you think you can contact them and reach them, but it appears they are spending their time just surviving."

"To do this in a 24-hour period, we're missing a lot," she said.

But to say how many homeless people there are in Hays is

difficult. Dryden said it could be up to three times what the PIT survey showed.

"I don't know, but I feel strongly that 25 is not even touching it. And yet 25 is too many," she said.

A safe space

Anecdotally, the need for assistance in Hays is growing.

Although the number of clients the Community Assistance Center has served in the last few years has remained steady, its board decided recently to increase the number of times people can receive food in a year's time from four to six.

"We saw that people were coming in more often and asking, and then they couldn't get them because they had already used their four in a year's time," Mortinger said.

Three different size boxes are available depending on the number of people in the household. Each box contains approximately a week's worth of food, Mortinger said.

The center gave out 1,127 food orders in 2016, and assisted a total of 5,405 people.

A few blocks away, Brandon Nimz has seen growth at his ministry, Unite Common Grounds Coffee House, 208 E. Eighth. The 3,700-square foot space in the Hadley Center is also the home of businesses Nimz runs — the Gamer's Guild and Aikido of Northwest Kansas. Both of those make just enough money to allow the ministry to operate with little expense, he said. The site also is a location for distribution of government commodities.

But the growth he is seeing, along with increases in rent, have him searching for a new space.

The ministry's free store, in particular, has seen an increase in use. The store offers almost anything people donate — cookware, utensils, linen, clothing and food. Nimz requires no proof of residence or an income level to use the store. The coffee

INVISIBLE
People Homelessness and poverty
in Hays and Ellis County

shop, which operates when a volunteer barista is available and has suggested donations for drinks, is tucked into a corner.

“Three years ago when we started the Gamers Guild, we had a little table, the free store table. Then we had the two free store shelves. Then we had the four, then we had the six, then we had to add more space,” he said.

On a recent afternoon, stacks of out-of-date Pepsi, Crystal Pepsi and Aquafina, donated by a local bottler, sat nearby. A fairly new Wi-Fi printer sat on a shelf near the men’s dressing room — a small area shielded by a door fashioned out of cardboard that shares space with the refrigerator and freezer required for the government commodities.

On the opposite wall, a long, tall shelf holds neatly folded clothing for children and adults.

“Sometimes people donate really nice stuff,” Nimz said. “Sometimes it’s really nasty, and we have to either re-donate it to someone who has a cleaning center for the clothes, or we have to throw it away if it’s extremely soiled.”

Some of the people who come in to the ministry are referred from agencies such as First Call or the Community Assistance Center because they don’t have the proper documentation to get help there, Nimz said.

Some people come as an escape, he said, which is what he intended when he opened the Gamers Guild. It is a space to play games such as Magic the Gathering, Yugioh, Warhammer, Dungeons and Dragons or traditional board or card games.

“We wanted it to be a safe space to hang out,” he said.

The guild, which has its origins in a game night Nimz started while in college, is open from 6 to 11 p.m. Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays, and 5 p.m. to 2 a.m. Fridays. There are about 10 hours per week when Nimz is available for sales of games, and tournaments attract players from as far away as Colorado and Nebraska.

The earlier evening hours tend to attract a younger crowd, especially after Hays Public Library closes.

“Late at night tends to be more of the crowd who got off work, but they may not have anything else to do. A lot of them live quite a few of them crammed into a trailer in what would technically be illegal situations if someone reported it,” he said.

“They don’t want to be at home in a tight, oppressive place with a bunch of other people, so they come down here and play games instead.”

Sometimes, volunteers with the ministry will stay even later if patrons need it.

“We close a lot later a lot of the time,” Nimz said. “It just depends on who’s here and what’s going on.”

On a recent cold, rainy night, a volunteer stayed until 2 a.m. so a homeless man could stay out of the elements.

Ideally, Nimz said, he would like to find a new location that would allow the three entities to operate under one roof and expand the free store.

“Now we’re at the point where people want to donate and need to receive bigger furniture items,” he said.

“I don’t have anywhere to do it,” he said, looking around the space crammed with shelves and tables.

He made an offer on a nearby property recently, but was turned down. He hopes to either find another location soon, or work out an affordable deal with the owner of the Hadley Center to stay another year while searching for the right property. He’s grateful the management has worked with him so far, and doesn’t consider the rent increase to be unreasonable from a business perspective.

But it does put a squeeze on his ability to pay the bills.

“My ideal place would be a place that can accommodate all. This is ideal. This is what I see. God may have a different plan, and that may be better,” he said. “But to me, the ministry exists rent-free because the other two entities can foot the bill.”

‘It’s never too late to start’

The homeless might find a place to hang out at the Gamers

Snapshot of Homeless in Hays

Number of surveys offered: 163 — includes refusals

	Total	25+	18-24	17 & under
Where did you stay overnight during the night of Jan. 25?				
In a car or on the street	8	8	0	0
In a shelter	11	8	3	0
In a hotel paid for by someone else	6	5	0	1
With a family or friend you do not pay	7	5	2	0
Not homeless	118	88	20	10
Result of domestic violence	11	11	NA	0

 = Literally homeless

 = At risk

The following questions were not asked of those 17 and under

Which of the following best describes your current situation?

Continually homeless for a year or more	9	8	1
First time homeless in past three years	10	9	1
Two or three times homeless in past three years	9	6	1
Homeless at least four different times in past three years, 12 months total	2	2	0

Have you ever received treatment or were offered services or diagnosis for:

Alcohol abuse	8	8	0
Drug abuse	7	7	0
Serious mental illness	13	11	2
Development disability	3	2	0
Physical disability	6	6	0
Traumatic brain injury	2	2	0
PTSD	5	5	0

Notes:

- The 11 reported at a shelter and the 11 reported as a domestic violence situation are not all connected. Linda Mills, executive director of First Call for Help, said this might be because some respondents had been in a shelter in another town for the night in question but were in Hays when answering the survey.
- Total number reported in “Best describes your situation” is more than the actual number reported as homeless, indicating that some individuals were not currently homeless but had been homeless at some time.
- Forty five of the respondents reported they were single; 38 as single with children; 23 were in a household with two people and no children; and 25 in a household of two people with children.

— Source: 2017 Point in Time Survey, First Call for Help

Guild, but they will not find a shelter in Hays. Many are given a voucher for a bus ticket to Salina, or even transported there, where shelters provide meals, a place to sleep, laundry services, medical attention and help finding a job.

The Salina Rescue Mission is a faith-based shelter for men, while Ashby House assists families and single women.

Mills and Dryden say it is time Hays has one, too. But they realize getting that process started first will mean educating people.

“People say, ‘Do we really need one?’ ” Mills said. “Yeah, we kind of do. We do have homeless people here. It may not be 40 or 50 homeless people, but we do have homeless people here.”

“We are past the point we should have been doing something, but it’s never too late to start,” Dryden said.

“I know there is concern that if you build a homeless shelter, we’ll get more homeless people,” she said. “I understand and respect that concern.”

Mills also concedes there is that belief.

“That’s probably true, but is that a reason not to have a shelter?” she said.

Both also acknowledge there is an attitude in Hays that the

community does not have homeless people, despite what the PIT survey shows.

“I think it would surprise people,” Mills said. “I also think that some people won’t accept it, or maybe not believe it because they don’t really see it anywhere like you would in a big city.”

“There’s a fear that if we had a homeless shelter, or if we acknowledge we have homeless people here, it won’t be as nice of a community because we have those problems,” she said.

“I love living in Hays, and I think it’s a wonderful city, but we do close our eyes to some of the issues here. It’s hard to acknowledge that people are closing their eyes to the problem, because they’re generous, but it’s only up to a point.”

Mills said she is grateful the generosity of Hays residents has allowed First Call and other organizations to provide the assistance they have.

She’s hopeful that generosity would be there to make a shelter a reality if the need is understood.

“It could be just because we’ve never asked, we’ve never just said, ‘There needs to be a homeless shelter, who’s going to help us raise the funds to do it?’ ”

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