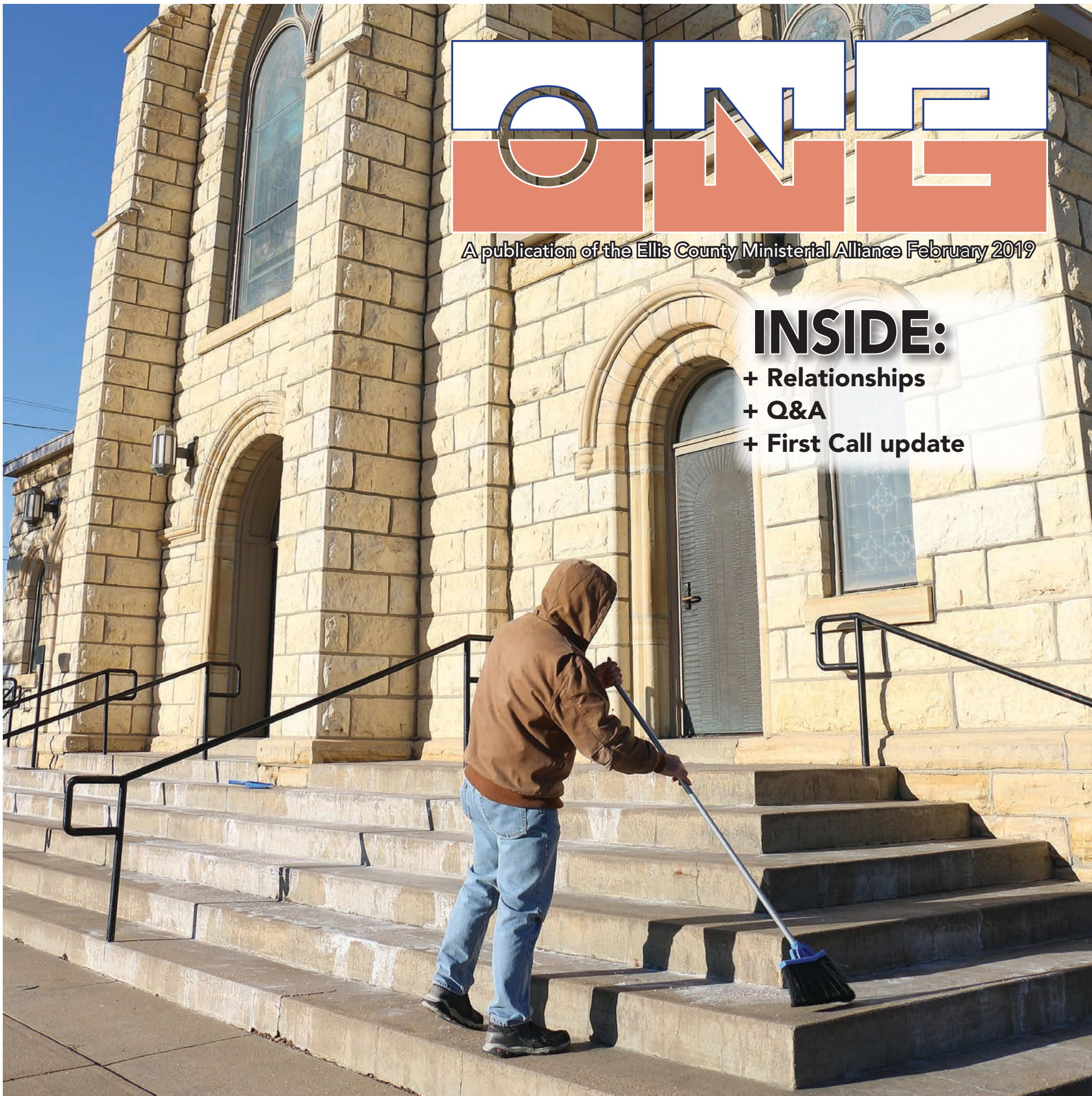


ONE

A publication of the Ellis County Ministerial Alliance February 2019

INSIDE:

- + Relationships
- + Q&A
- + First Call update



Treasure your relationships

As it pertains to relationships in my life I have been very blessed. As a college student I once described true love as “gazing into each other’s eyes over a candlelight dinner and dancing till dawn!” After I married Loren Ault, my FHSU sweetheart, we soon discovered that true love is really about strong commitment and patience through the tough times of dirty diapers, strained finances, stopped up plumbing, rebellious teenagers, and unexpected car trouble. Some humor thrown in from time to time was also helpful!

Loren and I had excellent examples in our parents. Both sets of parents were married for over 50 years. Bill and Evelyn Ault, long-time residents of Hays, were often seen on long walks around their neighborhood, hand-in-hand, as a way to reconnect after a busy day. My parents, Bill and Pauline Pershall, also taught us the importance of time alone as a couple. They often volunteered on birthdays and



The Rev. Karen Harvester
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anniversaries to babysit our three children so that we could have a weekend away. Unfortunately, Loren left us much too soon after a five-year battle with diabetic complications. During those final years together, we learned to treasure each day, sometimes even the moment, because we did not know what the future would bring.

Following his death my grief was overwhelming. Through a grief support group I found the help I needed to reimagine a

life that was about “me” instead of “us.” Even though I was only 50, I believed I would never marry again, thinking this would keep me “safe” from any further grief. However, God eventually brought Robert Harvester into my life and this past summer we celebrated our 10th wedding anniversary. We, too, try to live in the moment of each day, not taking for granted the blessings of our relationship.

Our family is now made up of seven children and their spouses, as well

as seven grandchildren, with another expected in February. While our children have been supportive of the marriage, the combining of two families has not been easy. Old traditions sometimes have to be renegotiated and we are always looking for ways to make new memories together. It takes time, patience, commitment, and a lot of listening to another’s point of view. So, yes, I have been blessed. In these relationships, I have trusted in God’s promise from Proverbs 3:5-6. “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight.”

If you have not guessed by now, “Relationships” is the theme of this month’s issue of ONE. Do you ever wonder if everyone needs to be married? What about life as a single? What are the keys to a strong marriage? How does one find healing after divorce or the death of a spouse? These are just some of the questions that will be addressed in this issue. As we read the various articles, I pray that we all will find new insight for the special relationships in our lives.

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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News to know

Humane Society fundraiser is Jan. 27

The Humane Society of the High Plains will be hosting its 22nd Annual Soup ‘R Bowl fundraiser from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 27, at the Ellis County Fairgrounds’ Unrein Building.

Tickets prior to the day of the event are \$7 per person. Tickets at the door are \$8 per person.

Individuals will be able to sample the soups available and then eat a large cupful of their favorite soup. Desserts will also be available, along with door prizes, T-shirt sales and a raffle. In addition, cookbooks featuring all of this year’s soups will be available for purchase.

Tickets are available at Cerv’s convenience stores, Pet Sense, Barkley Suites, Fur is Flying, any of the veterinarians in Hays, or at the Humane Society, 2050 E. U.S. Highway 40.

More information is available at (785) 625-5252.

Martin Luther King Day of Remembrance slated

Fort Hays State University will be hosting a “Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Remembrance” from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday, Jan. 28, in the Sunset Atrium of the Memorial Union.

Participants may view a poster tour of King’s life, get information about upcoming Black History Month events, and enjoy free hot chocolate.

Red Cross schedules blood drives

The American Red Cross is holding a series of blood drives in Hays to replenish depleted stocks of blood and platelets.

The blood drives are 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday, Jan. 28, at the Comeau Catholic Campus Center, 506 W. Sixth; noon to 6 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 2, at the First United Methodist Church, 305 W. Seventh; and noon to 6 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 12, at St. Nicholas of Myra Catholic Church; 2901

E. 13th.

According to Cliff Numark, senior vice president of Red Cross Biomedical Services, the organization collected fewer pints of blood during the recent holidays than is needed to maintain an adequate supply.

He said donors with type O blood are particularly needed at this time. Donors may schedule an appointment at Red-CrossBlood.org or by calling (800) RED CROSS.

Federal commodities to be distributed

Federal commodities will be distributed at Unite Common Grounds Ministry, Eighth and Oak, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. and 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 30.

The commodities are available to those at 130 percent of the federal poverty level.

Have a news item you’d like to submit for ONE Magazine? Or perhaps do you have a story idea? Email Linn Ann Huntington at lhunting@fhsu.edu

What does Jesus say about singleness?

Jesus changes things. In fact, his coming so dramatically changed our world that even *prior* to his birth people wrote about it, pondered it, even died for it. When he arrived on the scene, being born to Mary, kings, shepherds, and leaders wondered, worshipped, and knelt. When the church was formed and outsiders were accepted, long-held traditions were scrapped (Acts 15), and people were forced to re-think what being a follower really meant. In the past few years, my mind was once again arrested with a Jesus *coup d'état* against the establishment with regards to singleness.

Before we get to that, let's start at the beginning. At Creation, God said:

Genesis 2:18,24 The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him"... That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.



Pastor Dave Buller

North Oak Community

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That seems pretty clear; and it has fashioned a dominant cultural milieu. There is an expectation that young men and young women will get married, that they will have a family and kids. The heroes always get the princess, and the fairytale stories end with a wedding and "happily ever after."

One of the first commands God gives to Adam and Eve is "Be fruitful and multiply" (Genesis 1:28). Proverbs 18:22 says "*He who finds a wife finds what is good and receives favor from the Lord.*" Does that verse mean that if I don't find a wife, I don't find what is good and miss out on His favor?

Enter Jesus. He says things that make me think. Things like:

Mark 12:25: When the dead rise, they will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven.

Hmm. I guess I haven't heard many sermons preached on that verse.

On another occasion, the Pharisees (a very religious group of people) came to

Jesus asking about divorce. When Jesus raised the bar on *sticking it out in marriage*, the disciples say:

NIV Matthew 19:10 The disciples said to him, "If this is the situation between a husband and wife, it is better not to marry."

And Jesus replies with:

NIV Matthew 19:11-12 "Not everyone can accept this word, but only those to whom it has been given. For there are eunuchs who were born that way, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by others-- and there are those who choose to live like eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. The one who can accept this should accept it."

Wait. What!? What did Jesus say? "The one who can accept this should accept it"? Jesus has just elevated singleness.

Personally, I am married, and I am

thankful for verses like 1 Corinthians 7:9 and 28 in which it is written, "It is better to marry than to burn with passion...if you do marry, you have not

sinned." But then Paul writes, "But those who marry will face many troubles in this life, and I want to spare you this." He knew what Jesus knew. The once dishonorable status of single people had now been elevated because, just like it was promised, Jesus had made "every valley filled in" and "every mountain and hill made low" (Luke 3:5). I recognize that this may sound strange...some may see it as anti-family, but as followers of Jesus, we must honor single people.

Listen. People put labels on us. Sometimes the things people say about us hurts. "They are a murderer." "They are divorced." "They are single." "They are a foreigner." There are many more besides. Jesus has a way of leveling the playing field. Listen to his words. If you are single, rejoice and receive what Jesus says about you — about how he has elevated the status of singleness and for at least some given it preference.

Stay in the Word. It never returns void. It "endures forever" (1 Peter 1:24-25).

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Love our neighbor and ourselves

“Then the king will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who will receive good things from my Father. Inherit the kingdom that was prepared for you before the world began. I was hungry and you gave me food to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me. I was naked and you gave me clothes to wear. I was sick and you took care of me. I was in prison and you visited me.’ Then those who are righteous will reply to him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you a drink? When did we see you as a stranger and welcome you, or naked and give you clothes to wear? When did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’ Then the king will reply to them, ‘I assure you that when you have done it for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you have done it for me.’” – Matthew 25:34-40 (CEB)



Pastor Marie Sager

Trinity Lutheran Church
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When I think of relationships with God, self, and creation, I think stewardship; care of God’s creation. And within stewardship, I think of the phrase, “Time, Talents, and Treasure.” The above verses from the Gospel of Matthew, relate to the first word in the phrase, time.

Time. Time is one of those things that we as humans always seem to be wanting more of. There is never enough time in the day, week, month, or year, to do what we would like to do. But, what if, instead of worrying about how much time we don’t have, we focused on the time we do have, and how we interact with the world around us? Each of us, no matter who we are, can take a second to carry out the practice of encounter, of seeing others in the *imago dei*, the image of God.

In taking time to encounter the *imago dei* in others, you will be changed. In carrying out the prac-

tice of encounter, you are also practicing hospitality. In Greek, the word for hospitality is *philoxenia*. *Philo*, one of the words for love, and *xenia*, stranger. So, when you put them together it is love of stranger. And isn’t that what we are called to do? In caring for God’s creation, in caring for one another, we are called to love another, to be in relationship with others and especially the stranger among us. In Matthew 22:34-40, Jesus informs those around him, and us, that the greatest commandments are about love. We are to love the Lord our God with all our heart, being, and mind, and to love our neighbor as ourselves.

Our neighbor also includes the stranger, in addition to those we know.

So, this new year, 2019, how will you carry out stewardship of time? How will you carry out the practice of encounter? When you seek to encounter people, to have a relationship with them, and see the *imago dei* in all those you meet, you will be changed.

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Starting with two new books



Bible Reading Plan

Pastor Steve Dinkel

Liberty Foursquare Church

lcfcsd@ruraltel.net

Greetings Bible reading partner. This month's reading plan will start two new books; Exodus and Acts. Both books are filled with engaging stories, empowering testimonies, and encouraging breakthroughs in God's story.

Our Old Testament readings pick up the story finding God's people enslaved in a corrupt nation. Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers continue the story of how God forms Israel into

February	
1.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Genesis 47-48 <input type="checkbox"/> Luke 24
2&3...	Weekend Review
4.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Genesis 49-50 <input type="checkbox"/> Acts 1
5.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Exodus 1-2 <input type="checkbox"/> Acts 2
6.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Exodus 3-4 <input type="checkbox"/> Acts 3
7.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Exodus 5-6 <input type="checkbox"/> Acts 4
8.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Exodus 7-8 <input type="checkbox"/> Acts 5
9&10...	Weekend Review
11.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Exodus 9-10 <input type="checkbox"/> Acts 6
12.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Exodus 11-12 <input type="checkbox"/> Acts 7
13.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Exodus 13-14 <input type="checkbox"/> Acts 8
14.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Exodus 15-16 <input type="checkbox"/> Acts 9
15.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Exodus 17-18 <input type="checkbox"/> Acts 10
16&17...	Weekend Review
18.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Exodus 19-20 <input type="checkbox"/> Acts 11
19.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Exodus 21-22 <input type="checkbox"/> Acts 12
20.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Exodus 23-24 <input type="checkbox"/> Acts 13
21.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Exodus 25-26 <input type="checkbox"/> Acts 14
22.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Exodus 27-28 <input type="checkbox"/> Acts 15
23&24...	Weekend Review
25.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Exodus 29-30 <input type="checkbox"/> Acts 16
26.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Exodus 31-32 <input type="checkbox"/> Acts 17
27.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Exodus 33-34 <input type="checkbox"/> Acts 18
28.....	<input type="checkbox"/> Exodus 35-36 <input type="checkbox"/> Acts 19

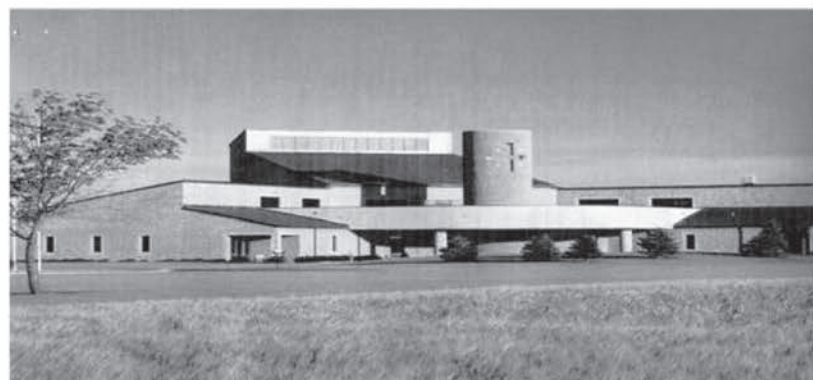
a nation that will play a significant role in His plans for the entire human race. I especially enjoy the narrative at the beginning of Exodus, recounting the mighty deliverance of the Israelites from bondage. God's nature is still to set the captives free!

Our New Testament readings will

begin our story; the book of Acts. Let the stories from this book embolden you to live your faith "out loud". Jesus has not gone to sleep, or changed His strategy. He still desires to love people through you and it. May the Holy Spirit write His words on your heart as you read.



On the cover:
Curtis Wolfe, custodian for St. Joseph Catholic Church, sweeps salt debris off the front steps of the church Friday, Dec. 28, 2018.



St. Nicholas of Myra Catholic Church

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 Tuesday Spanish 6:30 PM

Reconciliation: Saturday 4 PM and Thursday 5 PM



LINN ANN HUNTINGON

Becky Rogowski is shown at her desk at First Presbyterian Church in Hays, where she serves as the Generations in Faith Together (GIFT) coordinator.

Q & A Secretary of the ECMA

as told to
Linn Ann
Huntington

Editor's Note: This is the latest in a multiple-part series titled "Get to Know the Officers in the Ellis County Ministerial Alliance (ECMA)." In this article we meet Becky Rogowski, the ECMA's new secretary, who took over that position in January. Rogowski is the Generations in Faith Together Coordinator at First Presbyterian Church, 2900 Hall St.

Personal Information:

Where were you born and raised?

I was born in Wichita and raised in Hays.

Please tell us a little about your childhood.

I was born in Wichita, but spent my entire childhood in Hays. I attended Wilson Elementary, Felten Middle School, and Hays High School. I am an only child. My mother was a stay-home-mom, and my father is a self-employed cattle buyer. I was involved in orchestra, choir, and playing the piano in my younger days. I was active in the American Quarter Horse Association, as well. I competed at the national level for

many years. I was also involved with journalism at HHS, both photojournalism and writing feature stories for the Guidon Newspaper. My favorite subjects in school were English, journalism, and choir/orchestra. I wanted to be an environmental journalist when I grew up, after dreams of becoming a veterinarian were dashed in high school. (Passing out at the sight of massive amounts of blood isn't a good sign.)

Are you married? Do you have children?

I am divorced; Samantha is 24; Andriana is 16; twins Emma and Beth are 13.

How long have you lived in Ellis County?

From birth to 18, and then I moved back here 13 years ago when my twins were newborns.

Please list your hobbies and interests outside of work.

I am usually kept busy with my children's activities. They are active in sports and music. My oldest is getting married in November, so we are busy wedding planning. During football and basketball season, I can be found cheering on my K-State Wildcats. I bleed very purple! I also enjoy a good book and have been known to binge-watch a show or two, though I'm not a fan of television in general.

Academic Information:

Please list degrees/certificates held and from where.

B.S. Baker University (triple major in mass communication, psychology, and secondary education).

M.S. Kansas State University (Family studies and human service, emphasis early childhood special education).

Career Information:

Please list your current job title and describe its purpose.

Generations in Faith Together (GIFT) Coordinator at First Presbyterian Church in Hays. Intergenerational ministry takes place when people from at least two generations intentionally gather for the same activity in the name of Christ, interacting with one another in ways that reflect mutual respect and appreciation. Every church can be intentionally intergenerational in its ministry and faith formation experiences. We all have gifts. All ages gift each other in a reciprocal manner. It keeps us alive!

How long have you served in this position?

Since April of 2016.

Please list previous ministry positions held.

This is my first employment in the church. I was previously working in education as a paraeducator and teacher, both for USD 489 and other districts before settling in Hays.

For the church, I taught Sunday School and a class for our Wednesday night educational programming. I also



COURTESY PHOTO

Becky Rogowski, second from left, cheers on her Kansas State University Wildcats, along with daughter Beth and fellow fans Mason Emerson, Carla Emerson, and Katrina Von Fange at the KSU-Iowa State game in Manhattan in November 2017.



LINN ANN HUNTINGTON

Rogowski straightens up the "pray ground" area for children in the sanctuary at First Presbyterian Church.

taught Vacation Bible School classes. I've always been an active member, even before becoming staff. I have also served as a deacon and elder. I am currently clerk of our session (the governing structure for Presbyterian church-

es), and I serve on the Youth Ministry Committee for the Presbytery of Northern Kansas.

What aspect of your current position at the church do you enjoy the most?

Having grown up at Hays First Presbyterian Church, I most enjoy working with all the people. I've known most of our people, literally, my whole life. I enjoy meeting new people who come to us, and I love organizing and planning new and exciting things for us to try as we move forward and decide what our church's path forward is.

ECMA Information:

Current Position Held: Secretary since January.

How long have you been involved in ECMA?

I started attending ECMA meetings shortly before I was elected to the secretary position. I have written articles for the ONE Magazine since taking my position at the church.

Why do you believe ECMA is important to our community?

I believe it's important for the churches and ministries of the county to be connected. We all serve the same God and have the same good intentions. It is good to work together to know and fulfill the needs of the community. We are better together.

Contact Information: presbychsec@gmail.com. (785) 625-2847.

Some things I have learned about grieving

It was fall 2005. I was on my lunch hour driving north on Vine Street when a blue van that looked exactly like ours turned into Wendy's. I wondered what my husband was doing at Wendy's. He and I met every day for lunch at a certain restaurant — not this one — even on the days when he had just finished dialysis.

So I pulled in behind the blue van and parked beside it. Two women got out of the van and opened the sliding side doors. A jumble of little kids piled out.

That's when it hit me. It wasn't *our* blue van. I had sold my husband's handicapped-accessible van weeks earlier, after he had died in July.

For a moment I wondered if I was indeed going crazy, a thought that had kept occurring to me ever since his death. Then I put my head on my steering wheel and began to sob.

I'm not sure how long I sat there weeping uncontrollably, only that I was startled to hear someone knocking on my window.

I looked up to see the concerned face of one of the women in the blue van. They had apparently finished eating and were getting back in their vehicle.

"Are you OK?" she asked through my window.

I definitely was not, but I nodded, rolled down my window and lied, "I'm fine."

She gently placed her hand on my arm. "I just want you to know," she said softly, "that God cares about you, and I do, too. May I pray for you?"

I nodded again, the tears still coursing down my face, and she said a brief prayer. I have no memory of what she said, only that her eyes were warm and compassionate.

About a month after this incident, my mother, who had always been in good health, was diagnosed with final-stage pancreatic cancer. Within 30 days she was dead also.

That's the short version of how within three months' time, at the age of 52, I became the last surviving member of my family. In the following paragraphs I am going to share a few of the things I have learned about the grieving process.

First, the thought that one is going crazy while dealing with grief is not unusual. Nor is it true.

After my husband died, I began reading every book I could find on the grieving process; I wanted to make sure I did it the right way. I decided grieving was so awful I wanted to get through it as quickly and efficiently as possible. To me, that meant finding out how grieving is supposed to be done and getting

it over with.

But it doesn't work that way.

Every book I read said grieving is not something that can be rushed. Give yourself at least two years before you even start to feel normal again, they all said. This was not something I particularly wanted to hear. The addendum to that was, don't make any major life changes within that two-year period either.

But I also read of many individuals who had gone through similar experiences as mine in the parking lot — of being on autopilot, going through a typical day, and then suddenly realizing, with a jolt, that your loved one is dead. It is like experiencing the person's death all over again.

I began to realize this was not an indication that I was losing my mind. It meant I was normal.

Secondly, I learned there is no one right or wrong way to grieve. Some people cry bucket loads of tears. Some people find they cannot cry at all—and

that worries them and, sometimes, their families. I've discovered people grieve in many different ways. I've also learned it's best simply to let them.

I was one of those people who for years rarely cried at all—oh, maybe occasionally at a sad movie, but not very often. All of that changed when my husband died. In a restaurant, hearing a familiar love song, I would suddenly find tears running down my face. (This still happens to me occasionally, even 13 years later.) I began dreading special holidays weeks in advance. I'd choke up seeing other couples holding hands.

To this day, I avoid the Valentine's Day service at my church, which always features pictures of smiling church members on their wedding days. Seeing all those other Baby Boomer-age couples in their familiar wedding attire of the 1970's, I would always have to get up and leave the service. Now I just don't go.

Which brings me to item No. 3. I have learned to carry lots of hankies and just do the best I can. I no longer apologize for the holidays I don't celebrate. I no longer apologize for the events I don't attend. I just take it one day at a time and do the best I can. I have found that I am more patient with myself and more forgiving of others.

One thing the books all say — and which I would echo — is anyone who has suffered a major loss must find a "new normal."

The person you love is never coming back. At

some point that means creating new routines, developing new habits, perhaps joining a new group and making new friends. My first effort in this regard was rearranging the furniture in my living room and donating my husband's lift chair, which had sat in that room, to charity. As I look back, it was a small start, but it was significant.

Lastly, I'd like to offer some helpful advice to those who know someone who is grieving, but don't know how to help. For heaven's sake, don't avoid them!

Most grieving individuals don't need clichés or words of wisdom from well-meaning friends. Often, they just need someone who will listen quietly.

The Rev. Doug Manning, who has written extensively about the grieving process, asserts that those journeying through grief are healed by "companionship... We need a safe place, and we need safe people, who will just be near us and lend us an ear" ("Thoughts for the Holidays: Finding Permission to Grieve." In-Sight Books, 2001).

My mother was very good at this. One day she took off work (which she rarely did) to go visit a friend whose only child had recently died. The woman lived in another town, and I went with my mother, even though I did not know the woman well.

Upon arriving, we learned the woman's teenage son, Randy, had died of a self-inflicted gunshot. The woman, named Jimmie Sue, tearfully told us how the county coroner had ruled her son's death a suicide. But, for several reasons, Jimmie Sue was convinced her son's death was an accident.

I am sure my mother had planned on us having a short visit with her friend. Instead, for several hours, my mother sat beside Jimmie Sue, holding her hand, handing her tissues, and nodding silently as Jimmie Sue told us everything about Randy. We saw his room, his sports trophies, his scouting badges.

My mother offered no clichés, no platitudes—she just offered her ears, her own tears and her hugs.

I have been very fortunate in that I have had many friends who have done this for me. Grief is a journey. As long as our memories of our deceased loved one live on, the grief journey goes on, as well. Would we want it any other way?

I believe that God sends special people into our lives to help us when we are grieving — even a concerned stranger in a parking lot. It is important that we know God is caring for us, and that in time we will start to feel better.

And, if there is one last thing I would like to emphasize, it's this: It does get better.



**Linn Ann
Huntington**
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ONE COLORING CONTEST

Once again, ONE magazine is sponsoring an Easter coloring contest with the winning entry being selected for the Easter edition of ONE. The children's contest will feature the top five entries with the top drawing awarded the front page of the magazine. To enter, simply take out a blank sheet of 8.5x11 paper and illustrate the phrase "He is Risen." Write your name, age and church on the back. Entries can be turned in at your church or dropped by The Hays Daily News office at 507 Main Street. Entries must be received by 5 p.m. Monday, March 11, and will be judged later that week.

Does everyone need to get married?

Is it God's will for each person to get married? The Bible's answer is no. According to the Bible, both singleness and marriage are good conditions to be in.

Singleness is a good gift

The Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 7:1-40 gives reasons why singleness is a good gift with powerful potential. Right off the bat in the text, Paul says, it's okay to be single! In fact, it's more than okay. It's good! For any of you who are wondering why God has not "blessed" you with a compatible partner, feeling that somehow God does not deem you "worthy" or "ready" yet to bestow such a privilege, think again. If you've bought into the belief that your lack of being romantically attached to anyone makes you less of a human being, consider the counsel of Paul. In 1 Corinthians 7:7 Paul addresses the unmarried and widows and says, *"I wish everyone could get along without marrying, just as I do. But we are not all the same. God gives some the gift of a husband or wife, and others he gives the gift of being able to stay happily unmarried."* (The Living Bible)

Stanley Hauerwas, one of the great theologians of our age, argues that Christianity was the very first religion to hold up single adulthood as a viable way of life. This was a clear difference between Christianity and all other traditional religions, including Judaism, all of which made family and the bearing of children an absolute value, without which there was no honor. [Stanley Hauerwas, "A Community of Character," p.174]

In ancient culture, long-term single adults were considered to be living a human life that was less than fully realized. But along came Christianity — whose founder was an adult single man and whose great theologian (the Apostle Paul) was also single and advocated for the value and goodness of singleness.

In Christianity, single adults cannot be seen as

somehow less fully formed or realized human beings than married persons because Jesus Christ, a single man, was the perfect man (Hebrews 4:15; 1 Peter 2:22). Singleness is a good condition, blessed by God, and in many circumstances better than marriage. (1 Corinthians 7:25-40) As a result of this revolutionary attitude, the early church did not pressure people to marry.

Singleness, according to Christianity, is not Plan B — it is a viable option for those who choose it. Singleness is no better or worse than marriage. Choosing singleness must be for the right reasons just as choosing marriage must be for the right reasons.

A Culturally Nuanced Answer: Marriage is a must!



Pastor Ken Ediger

North Oak Community

kediger@northoak.net

modern belief and practice, the Bible declares that sex is part of God's wonderful creation, and it is to be enjoyed in the way God designed it — within the covenant of marriage.

In 1 Corinthians 7:2 the Apostle Paul warns unmarried people about the temptation of "immorality" (the Greek term is *porneias*). This term as used in the Bible consistently refers to voluntary sexual intercourse of an unmarried person with anyone. It refers simply to all sexual activity outside of marriage. Paul had spoken of the dangers of sexuality outside of marriage in 1 Corinthians 6 where he concludes with this guiding principle to all followers of Christ, *"Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body."* (1 Corinthians 6:19-20) Furthermore,

because there is so much immorality in society and in order to avoid illicit sexual relationships, Paul says it may be necessary for a person to marry... each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband." (1 Corinthians 7:2)

So, let's go back to the original question with personal touch.

Should I get married or should I stay single?

Maybe you have been married and are now either divorced or widowed. Or maybe you have never been married. How do you know if you have "the gift" of singleness?

- If marriage is not a pressing necessity,
- If marriage is not a driving "need", and
- If you do not burn with that physical desire, you

have the "gift" and should consider remaining single. Remaining single is not without struggle nor on the other hand an experience of misery. It is fruitfulness in life and ministry through singleness. Paul makes the point that the single life with its greater simplicity in obligations allows a potentially greater commitment of time, resources, and self to the Lord than would be possible for a married person dutifully carrying out the marital and familial obligations attached to that state.

If you feel being single is

- Unfulfilling,
- Uncomfortable, or
- Very tempting, consider the great benefits of your

current singleness and be the man or woman that God wants you to be and wait on Him to provide the answer to your prayers for a spouse. But don't look down on singleness as if it's a second-class life; it is not. 1 Corinthians 7 teaches us that one is not better than another. They are both good gifts.

The only thing that makes us less than what God would have us to be is not our marital status but our spiritual commitment. Whether married, single, divorced, or widowed we should live for the glory of God.

News, from 2

Ground Hog Day Supper planned

St. John Lutheran Church will be hosting its annual Ground Hog Day Supper from 5 to 7 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 2. The church is located six miles north of Ellis on the blacktop road.

On the menu will be pancakes, scrambled eggs and sausage. A free will offering will be taken. Proceeds will benefit women's ELCA projects.

Women invited to live stream event

The Women's Ministry at North Oak Community Church, 3000 Oak St., will be hosting a live stream of the IF: Gathering from Austin, Texas, on Friday and Saturday, Feb. 8-9. Area women are invited to attend.

Thousands of women worldwide will participate in this event that provides an opportunity for women to wrestle with essential questions of faith, to dream, and to connect during the two-day gathering.

The event will take place from 6 to 9 p.m. Feb. 8 and from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Feb. 9. Registration is \$15, which will include snacks. Participants are on their own for lunch on Saturday.

Registration is available at www.northoak.net/for-women-if-gathering-2019.

More information is available from Emily Buller at (785) 272-7131 or bullerbunch@gmail.com or Amy Rohr at (785) 259-5356 or abrohr@yahoo.com.

Church schedules Valentine's Dinner

The First United Methodist Church, 305 W. Seventh, will hold its annual Valentine's Dinner from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 9. Adult tickets are \$15 each and will be on sale through Sunday, Feb. 3.

The theme of this year's dinner is "Rock & Roll the Night Away," said Susan Jansonius, Wednesday worship food coordinator.

Attendees will hear music from the 1950s, 60s, and 70s. Live performances will be provided by The Hendersons, with Hondo Drums, and singer Tiffany Barbee. Barbee is a professional entertainer who has done shows in Las Vegas, Nev., and Branson, Mo.

The event is being sponsored by the church's middle school and senior high youth groups and youth leaders. The nursery is available upon request. Tickets are available by calling the church at (785) 625-3408.

CASA sets Valentine's fundraiser

CASA of the High Plains will hold a Valentine's Evening Fundraiser at 5 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 9, at the Robbins Center on the Fort Hays State University campus.

Events will include a live and silent auction, dinner and an open bar. Participants must be 21 to drink. Tickets are \$60 per person or \$420 for a table of eight.

When a child enters the foster care system because his or her home is no longer safe, a judge may appoint a committed volunteer to help them. That volunteer is called a Court Appointed Special Advocate.

CASA volunteers are screened and highly trained and are each assigned to help one child or set of siblings at a time, so they can focus on giving that child or sibling group the individualized advocacy and attention they need.

Tickets for the event are available at Commerce Bank, or by calling CASA at (785) 628-8641, or online at <https://events.ticketprinting.com/event/2019-Casa-Of-The-High-Plains-Valentines-Dinner-25632?fbclid=IwAR0wFqyhXxSsrCa6NEUToag9f3r3iZIQyBNFhMLValqAZrAWpIA4JAdn0Vw>.

More information is available by contacting Board Member April Terry at anterry2@fhsu.edu.

High Plains Barbershop Chorus to perform

The High Plains Barbershop Chorus will be providing special music at the February meeting of the Hays After 5 Christian women's group. The dinner program will take place from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Monday, Feb. 11, at the Rose Garden Banquet Hall, 2350 E. Eighth.

Also on the program will be inspirational speaker Mary Walton of Hutchin-son. Walton, a former early childhood/disability teacher, will discuss what kind

of wardrobe a woman should have.

Cost of the event is \$12.50. Reservations are due by Thursday, Feb. 7, to daisymae0917@yahoo.com or to (785) 202-1036.

Hays After 5 is affiliated with Stonecroft Ministry of Overland Park.

ECMA Board to meet Feb. 13

The Ellis County Ministerial Alliance (ECMA) Board of Directors will meet at 10 a.m. Wednesday, Feb. 13, at First Presbyterian Church, 2900 Hall St.

Presentations to the board must be scheduled in advance with the ECMA president at president@ourecma.com.

Operation Christmas Child craft night coming up

Operation Christmas Child will be having a craft night from 7 to 8 p.m. Monday, Feb. 18, at Messiah Lutheran Church, 2000 Main St., to make items for next year's shoeboxes.

Rachel Albin, area coordinator, said participants do not need to have special skills, and youth are welcome to participate.

Two items will be made. The first is shaped crayons, which involves melting crayon pieces into shapes such as hearts and stars. The second item is popsicle stick puzzles. Albin said participants will "Mod Podge" a picture on top of popsicle sticks to create a puzzle.

"If you want to take some of the items you make that night for your own shoeboxes or for your church's shoeboxes, that's absolutely fine," Albin said. She added that if participants have crafts they are working on for their own shoeboxes, they are welcome to bring them along.

"This will be a fun time when we can gather together as an inter-denominational group and work on projects and share ideas. But, most of all, it's a way to keep the excitement of Operation Christmas Child going throughout the year," she said.

Operation Christmas Child is a project of Samaritan's Purse, an international relief agency headquartered in Boone, N.C., and led by the Rev. Franklin Graham. Every Christmas thousands of individuals prepare shoeboxes filled

with small toys, school supplies and hygiene items, which are then delivered to needy children around the world.

Children receiving shoeboxes also receive a booklet titled "The Greatest Journey," which tells the children about Jesus and how much he loves them. For many of the children, this is the first gift they have ever received.

Albin said in 2018, individuals in Ellis County donated 2,615 shoeboxes.

Albin and her staff plan to host a shoebox craft night every month through October, and she is looking for other churches willing to host one. While the supplies for February's night are being provided, in the future there might be a donation requested, depending on the craft supplies' cost, she said.

Donations for additional supplies are always accepted and appreciated, Albin said. More information is available by contacting her at (785) 639-1325 or at ralbinmk@yahoo.com.

First Call plans Community Challenge fundraiser

First Call for Help will hold its "4th Annual Community Challenge" fundraiser on Saturday, March 2, 2019. Registration for each team of four is \$300.

Laura Shoaff, project coordinator, said each team will solve clues to arrive at various locations in Hays. Once there, the team must complete a challenge before receiving a clue to the next location. The team finishing a specified number of challenges with the fastest time will be the winner.

The challenge is open to anyone 12 and over. There must be a licensed driver on each team, Shoaff said, since contestants may drive to the secret locations.

The team that raises the most funds will be named the Ultimate Fundraiser and will receive a three-minute head start in the race. All teams raising \$500 or more will receive time deductions. Those teams choosing to wear costumes may compete for the Best Costumes Prize, as well.

Registration is available at www.firstcallelliscounty.com/AmazingRace or by calling (785) 623-2800.

Keys to a strong marriage?

Lord have mercy! It's difficult for me to believe that we're already into February of 2019. Time hurries on, as Valentine's Day approaches, and as I consider the topic for today's epistle, I can't help but think back 44 years ago. It was then that my wife Theresa and I were preparing for marriage. Theresa and I were introduced by my older brother, John, who was a class mate with Theresa in college. We were both living in Wichita, and I still remember the first time we met. She was, and still is by the way, simply awesome! Beautiful, smart, caring, creative, and independent were just a few of the qualities that I loved about her. Okay, and I love the way she cooks...and bakes, too! In fact, when I proposed to her, her hands were covered in flour as she prepared a special meal for me. I could go on and on. Suffice it to say, though, we have a story and a history that spans over four decades, five children, and seven Kansas towns with more ups and downs, and ins and outs then you can shake a stick at. There were days of great difficulty and days of immense joy, and everything in between. And I'm so glad that Theresa chose to stick it out with me. I do love her so.

So what are the keys to a strong marriage?

In my experience, the first key of a strong marriage is "to

be love for the other.' And I'm not referring to just any kind of love, either. What I'm talking about is the kind of love found in 1st Corinthians 13, that instructs that, "Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things,

hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends" (13:4-8a). So, an excellent question to ask yourself as a married person might be, "Am I being 'love' to my spouse?" If you can answer 'yes' (most days), chances are, your marriage will be long and strong.

In my experience, the second key to a strong marriage is to never lose that sense of God's loving presence in your marriage. 1 John 4:16 informs us, saying, "And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love, lives in God, and God in them." Always thank God for your spouse, even- no, especially- on those days that are difficult. Remember to pray at least daily for them for they truly are a gift from God to you... and realize that you are a gift from God to them, so to make your marriage long and strong, act like it!

In my experience, the third key to a strong marriage is the

Holy Forgiveness of God. If your marriage is a long one, and I hope that it is, giving and receiving forgiveness is crucial. In Ephesians 4:31-32, the Apostle Paul instructs the church in Ephesus on forgiveness, saying, "Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you." Now, I admit that I've never used this scripture in a wedding ceremony, but I have used it for marriage counseling. If your heart is full of "bitterness, rage, and anger" toward your spouse or if you've been "brawling, slanderous, or malicious" in your relationship, *stop it!* "Be kind and compassionate" to your spouse, "forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you." This goes for the big and little hurts you're holding on to that are harming your marriage, your spouse, and you... so to strengthen your marriage, forgive; let go and let God, for Christ's sake!

After almost 44 years of marriage, I could go on and on, but I want to leave you with this: Time goes by faster than we can imagine, and in this life there are many changes, but one thing is constant: love. One of the greatest gifts you can give yourself, your spouse, your family, and God, is to love one another. In his final message to his disciples, then and now, Jesus instructed, "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you." (John 15:12) Apply it to your marriage so it will be long and strong!

Rev. Mike Rose

First United Methodist
mikerose994@gmail.com



Loving with God's help

My favorite relationship began in 1948. We had graduated from high school, Jim from Ness City, I from Ellis. When we met, we were each "ONE" by ourselves. We fell in love, married in 1949 then became "ONE" together.

In 2010, Jim passed away. I was again ONE but only to the outside world. Myself, I will always have Jim in my heart so that makes me "Two in ONE".

We weren't Jim and Opal; we were "Jim 'n Opal" always together. We worked side-by-side on the farm raising our five children and enjoyed life together. Ann Leiker called me Jopal.

After Jim was gone, I continued coming and going and doing as we had done before. But now by myself. I write about my feelings, attending support meetings, knowing Jim would approve.

I appreciated all the kind words of sympathy, realizing how many missed my partner. I was proud — and still am — to have been his woman. I believe the Lord brought us together and helped me find the support I needed when he took Jim with him.

Opal Flinn
St. John Lutheran

I found the "Healing After Loss" support group soon after I lost Jim. The young pastor at HMC recommended them to me.

I'm so thankful I got up the nerve to attend a meeting.

I have continued to be part of the support group. I feel it is important to be there; to be with those who have lost someone. We share, and people will find they aren't alone and don't have to be lonely.

I have good memories and I am thankful I was lucky to have met and loved Jim with God's help.

First Call: Why your support matters

First Call for Help assisted 99 Ellis County households, totaling 249 individuals, with either rent or utility costs during 2018. This was an increase of approximately 6 percent over last year.

This assistance impacts 250-300 moms, dads, children and single individuals each year by preventing evictions or lack of basic services. Our goals are to prevent homelessness, provide guidance for prioritizing expenses, and to assist in finding other resources to meet their needs.

First Call for Help also assisted 316 transients who were stranded in Hays with no cash or other resources. This was an increase of 8 percent over last year's services. Transients can request assistance with fuel (125 individuals), shelter (160) or bus transportation (31) to the nearest shelter services, which are in Salina.

Our goal is to help transients to reach their planned destination or assist them in getting to a shelter where other services are also provided. Ellis County does not have any type of shelters for the homeless except a domestic violence shelter.

The Second Mile Fund, sponsored by the Ellis County Ministerial Alliance (ECMA), supports the costs of the assistance that First Call for Help provides to local residents and transients.

Churches, the United Way, the City of Hays and many individuals also provide support for these services. Without your continued support, First Call for Help would not have the resources to provide these needed services.



Linda Mills

First Call for Help
lmills@firstcallelliscounty.com

Have a news item you'd like to submit for ONE Magazine? Or perhaps do you have a story idea? Email Linn Ann Huntington at lhunting@fhsu.edu

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pastorcelestehays@gmail.com

2900 Hall 625-2847



Pastor Ken Ediger
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