DISTRICT NEWS

INDIANA

LCMS/Erik M. Lunsford

OUR LIFE-GIVING THEOLOGY AND SAVING DOCTRINE

Rev. Dr. D. Richard Stuckwisch
District President

From time to time one hears the comment that we should not over-emphasize our doctrine or stress theology to the detriment of the Gospel. Recently I was told that we should not get too deep into theology, but simply "give the people Jesus." Such assertions are surely well-intended, with the speakers seeking to express that our confession of the faith must be clear and focused on the centrality of the cross and resurrection of Christ Jesus.

After all, the creeds of the church and the Small Catechism, for example, zero in on the fundamental articles and the chief parts of the saving faith, and surely no one sermon or hymn could or should attempt to say everything there is to say. Even so, no matter how sincere the sentiments may be, we dare not buy into the notion that our theology and doctrine are at odds with the Gospel, contrary to grace, or in competition with the catechesis and confession of Christ.

Theology is not simply a word (*logos*) about God (*Theos*), but properly speaking it is the Word of God, the self-revelation of God the Father in His Son and by His Holy Spirit. And that theology, that Word of God, is not only spoken by the prophets and apostles, recorded in the Holy Scriptures, confessed by the church from generation to generation, and preached by the called and ordained servants of the Lord; it is also manifest in the person and work of the incarnate Son, Christ Jesus, who is the Word-made-flesh.

> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. … And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. **ST. JOHN 1:1, 14**

That is the heart and soul and substance of our theology, upon which the entire church and ministry of the Gospel depend. It is this theology — this Word of God — that both gives and sustains the life of all the children of God, unto the Resurrection and the Life everlasting, because it is by and through this Word that the Holy Spirit is breathed upon us, and it is by and with this same Word that the Holy Spirit accomplishes repentance and faith in our hearts, sanctifies us in body and soul and strengthens and sustains each and all of us with Christ Jesus in the true and saving faith.

Doctrine is the teaching of this life-giving theology, the very thing

See **MESSAGE**, page 6

Nineteen years of joy

I began serving the Indiana District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod on Aug. 1, 2007. I am retiring from serving the Indiana District on July 31, 2026. On that date, I will have completed 19 years of serving the district.

First, let me say that serving the district has been a great joy for me. Thank you to the Board of Directors who called me to this position. Thank you to the pastors, commissioned workers and laypeople who supported me in the work of serving the district as the Missions, Human Care and Stewardship executive of the Indiana District.

Also, thank you to the three district presidents whom I have had the privilege to serve under these many years — Rev. Dr. Daniel May, Rev. Dr. Daniel Brege and Rev. Dr. D. Richard Stuckwisch. Each of these men have unique gifts and distinctive styles of leadership. I have learned from them all.

Those of you who know me well know that retirement is never something I have looked forward to. I believe that the ability to work is a blessing from God. I want to assure you that while I am leaving this position of service, I will move into another area of service to Christ and His church as the Lord enables.

It is my prayer that God will provide a man to follow me who will have a heart and mind for supporting the established churches of the Indiana District as well as beginning new congregations.

Evangelism — reaching out to the lost and erring with the Gospel of Christ — is not an option. It is why God has left each Christian here on this side of the Vale of Tears. That is, to witness to Christ and by God's grace be the hands, feet and mouths through which God reaches out to others with works of mercy, caring, invitation and bringing, as well as profession of His Word to people who are not Christians or who are erring in their devotion to Christ.

Let me paraphrase Martin Luther by stating that, "The Christian church is not about being, but it is always about becoming."

God's richest blessings to all of you!

Rev. Dr. Geoffrey L. Robinson

Lutherans For Life is a nationwide network of Lutherans dedicated to sharing the Good News of life in Jesus Christ with all our neighbors. Since our founding in 1979, Lutherans For Life has striven to educate and equip all Lutherans and their neighbors to be "Gospel-motived voices for Life." That is to say, our goal is to equip all people to uphold the value of every human life in their own vocations, and to do so in a way that is centered in the work and love of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Lutherans For Life applies God's Word, both His Law and His Gospel, to all life issues: abortion, chastity and sexual purity, suicide, assisted suicide and more.

Our work of equipping occurs in several ways. Lutherans For Life provides many Gospel-centered educational resources for people of all ages, from preschool-aged children to adults. These resources include magazines, newsletters, booklets, brochures, videos, lesson plans and podcasts. Lutherans For Life also provides education through conferences, workshops and other in-person presentations.

Lutherans For Life provides direct services through our Word of Hope outreach, which provides Gospel-centered care and hope to women contemplating abortion or in need of post-abortion counseling. We also encourage Lutherans to engage and serve their neighbors by forming Life Teams or Life Chapters in their own communities, and we provide training resources to help them organize and give them ideas on how they can serve.

To view our resources, connect with a local Life Team or Life Chapter, or request a speaker for a workshop please visit at **lutheransforlife.org** or **y4life.org** or call 888-364-LIFE (5433).

If you or someone you know is considering abortion or in need of post-abortion care, talk to your pastor and reach out to Word of Hope at 888-217-8679, or visit **word-of-hope.org**. You can also visit our social media pages on Facebook, Instagram, X, and YouTube.

Our Redeemer, Knox, HAS FOOD PANTRY

The Food Pantry at Our Redeemer, Knox, has been serving Starke County for over 25 years. Much of the food distributed at the pantry traditionally has come from generous donations within the congregation.

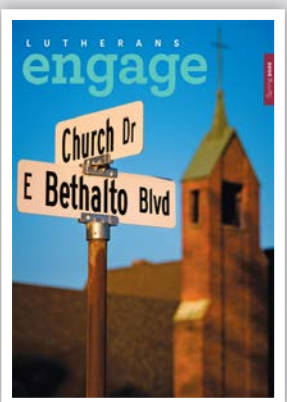
As a faith-based food pantry, Our Redeemer is committed to supplementing the needs of community members experiencing food insecurity. With the population of Starke County growing, the need for assistance has also increased. As the need to serve the community grows, so does the demand for additional donations from sources outside the church.

Food insecurity is a rising issue not only within Starke County, but across the country.

Our Redeemer is dedicated to serving the elderly living on limited income, the working poor, individuals who are unemployed and/or homeless, and others in need. The pantry offers a prepacked bag of food per household, typically enough for three to four meals.

Clients are allowed to visit once every four weeks. The pantry has an average of 98 clients per month. Hours of operation are Monday and Wednesday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Staff also invite clients to worship, as well as hand out devotional booklets.

LUTHERANS ENGAGE THE WORLD



The Spring 2026 issue of *Lutherans Engage the World* magazine gives a few examples of how God uses His people's imperfect efforts, both big and small, to draw the lost and wandering into His church.

The issue includes articles about efforts in Illinois, Florida and Texas to help children and young people grow in the faith; LCMS School Ministry's School Leadership Development (SLED) Project, which has benefited a school in Missouri; and more.

The issue started arriving in mailboxes in late March. Read it online at **engage.lcms.org**. If you aren't receiving the magazine but would like to, visit **engage.lcms.org/subscribe** to sign up for a free subscription. Both individual and bulk subscriptions (for congregations) are available.

CSL journal now produced in braille

Concordia Journal, a peer-reviewd publication of the faculty of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (CSL), is partnering with Lutheran Braille Workers (LBW), an organization dedicated to bringing the Word of God to people who are blind or visually impaired. Beginning with its Winter 2026 issue, *Concordia Journal* is now available in specialized large print and braille for free.

Concordia Journal explores ideas, themes and issues related to the past, present and future of global Christianity and today's world from a confessionally Lutheran perspective.

"The culture of our learning community is that we want to welcome and embrace all who seek to join us in our theological study and reflection," says Rev. Dr. Stephen Pietsch, CSL dean of Theological Research and Publication, and associate professor of Practical Theology. "For *Concordia Journal* to be made available in large print and braille to people who are blind or visually impaired is truly a God-given opportunity to serve more people, and we are excited to be offering these new publication formats that will enable their participation."

Concordia Journal is published four times a year. To order copies of the braille edition, call 800-925-6092 or visit **lbwloveworks.org**. Questions? Send an email to **lbw@lbwloveworks**.*org*.

Stewardship

Are you rich, or poor?

Ken Schilf
Emmanuel,
Fort Wayne

How do you measure whether or not you are rich? Let's look at some statistics. According to a recent survey, about half of the world's population lives on less than $2.50 a day.

So what's your income? If yours is higher than that, then you are rich. I'm retired and my daily income is about $213 (that doesn't include my wife's). So even in my retirement years, by the world's standards, I am rich!

So how do I survive my prosperity? By being humble. The United States has endured 10 recessions from 1948 to 2001. So do not trust money.

Trust God. After all, He has created the world and owns everything. Despite our sinful condition, He gives us everything.

Therefore, let's remember and even memorize Hebrews 13:16, "And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased."

Getty Images

Education

LCMS/Erik M. Lunsford

A CALL TO SUPPORT LUTHERAN EDUCATION:

Faith and excellence, hand-in-hand

Nathan Wingfield
District Executive
for Christian
Education

Over the past several months in this publication, I have explored the intricate relationship between faith and learning. Among the complexities of the modern educational environment, the most vital takeaway remains this: Lutheran identity and academic excellence are not at odds. In fact, they are mutually reinforcing.

A school rooted in the historic biblical teaching, delineated in the Lutheran Confessions, does not shy away from rigorous academic inquiry; rather, it pursues it more boldly because it understands all truth to be God's truth. When our students study the complexities of mathematics, the elegance of literature, or the wonders of the natural world, they do so through the lens of a biblical worldview that provides meaning and purpose to their labor. This commitment to excellence is a form of stewardship, honoring the intellectual gifts God has bestowed upon His children.

However, our schools cannot thrive in isolation. They are not private businesses or community centers; they are vital partners in the mission of the church. They assist both pastors and parents in handing down the faith once delivered to the saints.

As we look toward the future, there is a clear call to action for every member of our Lutheran community.

To parents: Prioritize a Christ-centered education for your children. Our Lord reminds Martha in the Gospel of Luke that there is one thing needful, and it will not be taken from those who trust in Him. Choose to have your children learn in an environment shaped by the Word of God.

To pastors: Continue to serve as spiritual shepherds for these schools, leading both staff and students in the study and confession of Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

To administrators and teachers: Continue to share the love of God in Christ Jesus with your students even as they learn and study about the world He has made, doing so with the earnestness that comes with the command of our Lord.

To church members: Pray, advocate and support the school in your community. Raise awareness of the unique opportunities we have in our state to support this work, including the tax scholarship programs administered by our own Lutheran SGO.

Let us commit ourselves anew to supporting our LCMS schools. Let us be faithful to our calling, to the Word that we have received, trusting that the Lord will prosper such work.

MESSAGE

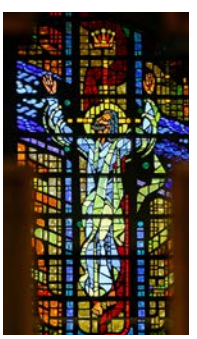
(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

that our Lord has commissioned His church and ministers to keep and follow, even to the close of the age (St. Matthew 28:18-20). To teach the faith once delivered to the saints is the way and means by which disciples are made and by which they live to the praise and glory of God in Christ Jesus. Simply put, our doctrine is the preservation and profession of the Word of Christ, which is Spirit, Truth and Life (St. John 6:63, 17:17).

And just as St. Paul received this saving doctrine — this teaching and practice of the Gospel — from the Lord, so did he hand it over to the church and entrust it to faithful bishops and pastors, who would in turn teach and train other faithful men for the office of the Holy Ministry (1 Corinthians 11:23-26, 15:1-11; Galatians 1:11-12; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Timothy 4:6-16; 2 Timothy 1:13-14, 2:2, 3:10-17, 4:1-5). Accordingly, "an overseer," that is, a bishop or pastor, must be "able to teach" (1 Timothy 3:1-2); but "if anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness, he is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing" (1 Timothy 6:3-4).

Far from being a hindrance to the mission and ministry of the church, our doctrine is the sacred treasure and trust that we have received from the Lord for the life and salvation of all who will hear and receive it in turn from us. We safeguard this doctrine, cling to it, confess it and teach it to others — young and old, as many as the Lord privileges us to care for — because we have been convinced by the Holy Spirit, and we know and believe that it is the faithful and true Word of God, the theology of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Insisting upon it, refusing to deviate from it, and spending our lives in learning to know and understand it ever more deeply is our joy and our delight, not simply as a means to some other end, but because it is the intimate knowledge and fellowship of Christian children with their dear Father in heaven, and of the holy bride with her heavenly bridegroom. For great indeed is this mystery of Godliness, whereby our Lord Jesus Christ, who was manifested in the flesh and vindicated by the Spirit, is now proclaimed among the nations and believed on in the world (1 Timothy 3:16).



Prayer List

WEEK OF MAY 3

Circuit 9 – Decatur
- Bethlehem, Ossian
- Emmanuel–Soest, Fort Wayne
- Faith, Roanoke
- Immanuel, Decatur
- New Hope, Ossian
- Peace, Berne
- Prince of Peace, Hartford City
- St. John-Bingen, Decatur
- St. John–Flatrock, Monroeville
- St. Paul–Preble, Decatur
- St. Peter, Decatur
- Zion, Decatur
- Zion–Friedheim, Decatur

RSO: Siberian Lutheran Mission Society, Fort Wayne

LCMS DISTRICT: Iowa East

WEEK OF MAY 10

Circuit 10 – Lafayette
- Grace, Lafayette
- Lutheran Church of Our Savior, Monticello
- Redeemer, W. Lafayette
- St. James, Lafayette
- St. James, Logansport
- St. James, Reynolds
- St. John, Rensselaer
- St. John, Rochester
- St. Luke, Rensselaer
- St. Matthew, Delphi
- Trinity, Goodland
- University, West Lafayette

RSO: The Lutheran Foundation, Fort Wayne

LCMS DISTRICT: Kansas

WEEK OF MAY 17

Circuit 11 – Kokomo
- Christ, Anderson
- Emanuel, Arcadia
- Emanuel, Tipton
- Good Shepherd, Kokomo
- Grace, Muncie
- Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer, Kokomo
- St. James, Marion
- St. John's, Peru
- St. Peter, Huntington
- Zion, Wabash

RSO: The Lutheran Scholarship Granting Organization, Fort Wayne

LCMS DISTRICT: Michigan

WEEK OF MAY 24

Circuit 12 – Indianapolis Northeast
- Christ, Noblesville
- Cornerstone, Carmel
- Epiphany, Westfield
- Holy Cross, Indianapolis
- Journey, Fishers
- Lord of Life, Westfield
- Trinity, Indianapolis
- Zion, New Palestine

RSO: The Lutheran Schools Partnership, Fort Wayne

LCMS DISTRICT: Mid-South

WEEK OF MAY 31

Circuit 13 – Indianapolis Center
- Ascension, Beech Grove
- Calvary, Indianapolis
- Concordia, Greenwood
- Emmaus, Indianapolis
- Faith, Greenfield
- First Timothy, Indianapolis
- Our Savior. Indianapolis
- St. John, Indianapolis
- St. Mark, Shelbyville
- St. Paul's, Indianapolis
- St. Peter's, Indianapolis

RSO: The Shepherd's Hand, Fort Wayne

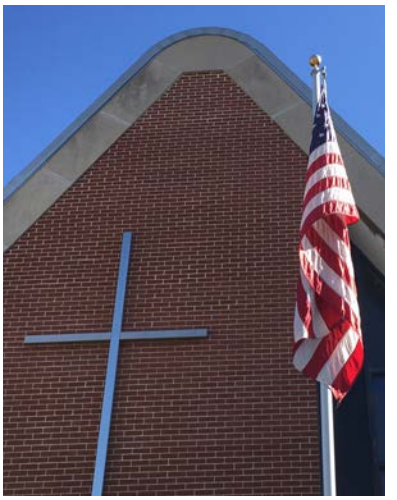
LCMS DISTRICT: Minnesota North

NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER

Join fellow Christians for the Allen County observance of the 2026 National Day of Prayer from noon to 1 p.m. on May 7 at Allen County Public Library, 900 Library Plaza in Fort Wayne.

All are welcome to gather for a prayer for our national and local leaders, asking that God grant them divine wisdom. The gathering will be held in "The Theater" on the ground floor.

For two and a half centuries, God has faithfully watched over our nation, granting America His wisdom, grace, mercy, and steadfast love. We are grateful for those who founded this country, and for all throughout our history who have sought God's guidance in diligent prayer. We remember with gratitude the men and women who answered God's call to uphold justice and safeguard freedom; who protected and served their neighbors; who preached and taught; who created and communicated; and who learned, worked, worshiped and helped shape the laws that govern us.



Anniversaries *(50 and over)*

Calvary, Indianapolis
Richard and Cathy Truitt, 52, May 18

Christ, Woodburn
Steve and Mary Bottoms, 52, May 4

Cornerstone, Carmel
Jon and Barb Ludwig, 60, May 1
Rev. Paul and Judy Borg, 60, May 22
Carroll and Jean Scheer, 68, May 31

Emmanuel, Fort Wayne
David and Charlene Hess, 55, May 1
Kurt and Linda Kleinrichert, 51, May 3
Steve and Nan Gotsch, 58, May 4
Rev. Herb and Joyce Schumm, 54, May 6
LeRoy and Kay Meyer, 51, May 17
Bob and Jeanne Dietrich, 52, May 18
Rev. Tim and Cindy Anderson, 51, May 18
Barry and Jean Light, 51, May 24
Rev. Dennis and Jeanette McFaddden, 52, May 25

Emmanuel, Tell City
Dwight and Mary Knepper, 52, May 19

Epiphany, Westfield
Keith and Bonnie Brauer, 56, May 30

Grace, New Albany
Joe and Pam Daugherty, 53, May 18
Mike and Brenda Snyder, 59, May 20
Rod and Nancy Swearingen, 58, May 25
Paul and Phyllis Scare, 61, May 29

Heritage, Valparaiso
John and Sandy Peters, 55, May 29
Dale and Gayle Sandquist, 51, May 31

Immanuel, Seymour
Steven and Peggy Stark, 53, May 19
Chester and Linda Rust, 71, May 22

Redeemer, Seymour
Jim and Kimmila Elliott, 52, May 18
Mike and Shirley Hawkins, 64, May 19
Mark and Deborah Lundquist, 51, May 24

St. James, Lafayette
Ronald and Grace Gillespie, 51, May 10
Jack and Janet Myer, 65, May 14
Rodney and Joan Tietz, 52, May 25
John and Barbara Westfall, 54, May 27

St. John–Bingen, Decatur
Ron and Cynthia Holt, 50, May 8
Keith and Joan Bultemeier, 51, May 23
Michael and Patricia Scheumann, 53, May 18
Arthur and June Krauss, 57, May 24
Roger and Fay Koenemann, 69, May 19

St. John's–Farmers Retreat, Dillsboro
Willard and Mariette Niederbaumer, 66, May 16

St. John's, Lanesville
Gaylord and Bernice Sonner, 61, May 1
John and Cindy Pierce, 52, May 18

St. Paul's, Bremen
James and Melonia Russell, 54, May 27

St. Paul's, Fort Wayne
Richard and Carol Maassel, 66, May 21
Daniel and Debra Kruse, 50, May 29

St. Paul, Munster
Leonard and Barbara Holajter, 51, May 1
Bill and Diane Targatz, 57, May 18
Geoff and Ann Grant, 50, May 24
Gene and Karen Ostergren, 58, May 27

St. Peter's, Brownstown
Randy and Brenda Darlage, 52, May 4
Charles and Magdalene Mock, 55, May 7
Bob and Loretta Crowley, 65, May 13
Steve and Connie Langlais, 54, May 20
Richard and Nina Hackman, 63, May 26

St. Peter, Fuelling, Decatur
Fred and Becky Fuelling, 59, May 27
Dale and Leanne Busick, 66, May 28

The Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer, Evansville
Steve and Joyce Waters, 55, May 8

Trinity, Crown Point
Dorothy and Patrick Lilley, 53, May 12
Nancy and Mark Speichert, 51, May 23
Dorothy and Gary Schmidtke, 56, May 31

Trinity–Darmstadt, Evansville
John and Linda Brock, 55, May 1
Don and Mevelyn Feagley, 69, May 25
Ed and Wilma McCoy Sr, 63, May 25
Alan and Paula Reininga, 52, May 25

Trinity, Fort Wayne
Ronald and Rose Cooper, 56, May 16

Zion, Woodburn
Tom and Sherry Schaper, 59, May 20

Birthdays *(90 and over)*

Calvary, Bedford
Selma Kluender, 90, Dec. 22

Calvary, Indianapolis
Helen Stebbe, 97, May 16
Janet Laut, 91, May 31

Cornerstone, Carmel
Micki Clark, 97, May 10
Jerry Thompson, 90, May 24
Lois Beal, 96, May 30
Bill Shaffer, 91, May 31

Grace, New Albany
Lorraine Hecht, 90 , May 8
Gertrude Wehrenberg, 95 , May 16

Heritage, Valparaiso
Rev. Dave Graeff, 99, May 27
Ed Gutt, 95 , May 3

Immanuel, Seymour
Ester Becker, 92, May 10

Redeemer, Seymour
Lora Mae Naffe, 95, May 22

St. John's–Farmers Retreat, Dillsboro
Joseph Smith, 94, May 14
Eva Pruss, 94, May 26

St. John's, Lanesville
Gene Stewart, 94, May 13

St. John's, Vincennes
Oma Like, 92, May 14

St. Peter's, Brownstown
Catherine Turmail, 93, May 22

St. Peter, North Judson
Judith Weitgenant, 91, May 28

The Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer, Evansville
Ron Kline, 90, May 3
Margaret Knox, 96, May 4
Erwin Kranawetter, 90, May 7
Barbara Hurst, 93, May 12
Frances Roth, 90, May 15
Ken Dennis, 91, May 23
Betty Meyer, 94, May 28

Trinity, Crown Point
Dorothy Morande, 93, May 29

Trinity–Darmstadt, Evansville
Ronald Korff, 90, May 18

Trinity, Henderson, Ky.
Margaret Knox, 96, May 4

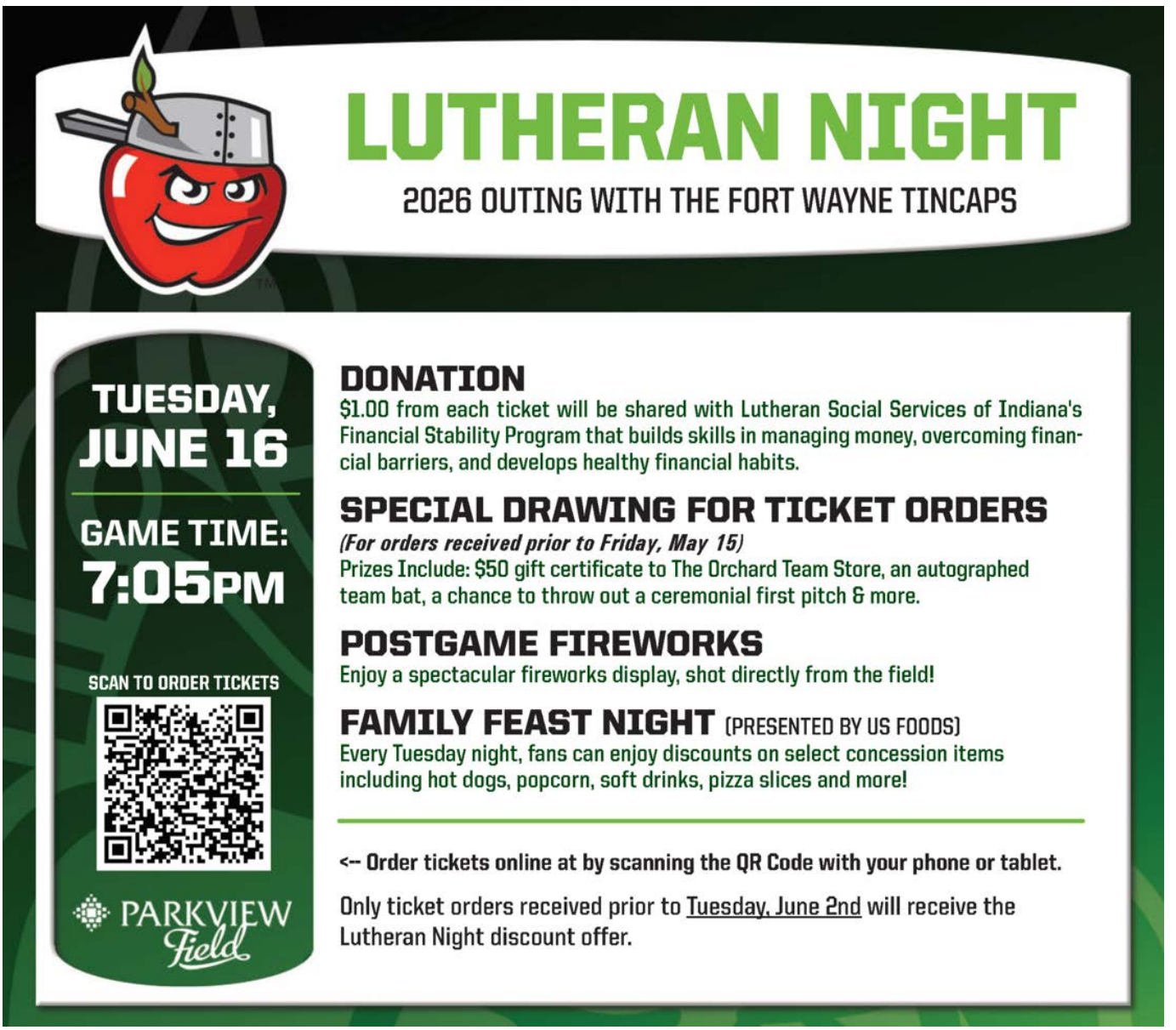
Zion–Friedheim, Decatur
Ann Crosby, 92, May 12

CTSFW has Christ Academy for students and families

Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne (CTSFW), will hold Christ Academy Family Institute (CAFI) June 11–13. The event leads into the week of Christ Academy High School.

CAFI focuses on providing resources to parents, families and youth-focused church workers who are interested in passing on the faith to future generations and growing in their care and love for one another. This year, CAFI will focus on "Faith in the Home," featuring sessions on family devotions, hymn singing, Christian hospitality and more.

For more information and to register, visit **ctsfw.edu/events**. Scroll down to the event and click.

Christ Academy High School (CAHS) will be held June 14–27. Designed especially for high school students considering church work (but open to anyone with an interest), CAHS gives young men insights into pastoral ministry in Timothy School, while young women learn more about diaconal service in Phoebe School. Students will take theology classes taught by CTSFW professors, worship, serve the community, engage in fun social activities and more.

Also visit **ctsfw.edu/events** for more information and to register.