

Mt. Hebron Lutheran Church

May 2025

A note from the Pastor's desk:

Several times during the year, we observe holidays in worship that aren't directly related to the church calendar. One of those holidays is this month: Memorial Day. During our Memorial Day service, we recognize all the deceased veterans of Mt. Hebron. We give thanks for their service, and we place flags on their graves after worship.

What place does such a secular observance have in a sanctuary which is dedicated to the worship of God and God alone? After all, in this day and age, there are large segments of the population which have dangerously mixed the worship of God with the worship of our nation. What does this look like? Such "Christian nationalists" will try to tell you...

- * that the United States was or is a Christian nation – when in fact, the freedom of religion is enshrined in the 1st Amendment to the Constitution. (Which says that the government shall not establish a religion, or prevent anyone from observing whatever religion they choose.)
- * that we need to return to a time in the past when the church held more influence over current affairs, and held more sway over people's lives – rather than looking ahead to the future, and the opportunities we have to show God's love to others in word and deed.
- * that we need to make our country look more Christian by passing laws to legislate Christian morals, installing signs of the Christian faith in public spaces (like the Ten Commandments in classrooms), and in general making life harder for non-Christians and immigrants – rather than embracing our nation's diversity and celebrating the fact that people of all races and creeds can find a home in this great country of ours.

When we recognize our veterans in worship, and celebrate their military service to our country, are we not at risk of mixing our worship of God with love for our country?

Not necessarily. When we celebrate the promise that our country holds for those in need and those wishing to start a better life... when we can appreciate the good in other countries, instead of automatically declaring them to be inferior to our own... when we can accept that there are times our country needs to improve, instead of arguing that any protests or criticisms are unacceptable... then we can safely commemorate our veterans without falling prey to the idolatry that is Christian nationalism.

In wrapping up this note, I will share with you the prayer that we've used the past few years during our Memorial Day worship service.

O God, we give you thanks for all the brave men and women who have protected our country in times of war. Inspire us by their example to selfless acts and service to others. Guide our leaders to seek peace, and lead us to the day when all war, conflict, and violence shall cease. Amen.

-Pastor Christopher

HAPPY MOTHERS' DAY!



We are so excited to be celebrating all of the mothers in our congregation! We pray you all enjoy this month and feel extra loved!

Praise the Lord for faithful mothers!

Mt. Hebron Lutheran Church

ANNOUNCEMENTS

LOOK AT OUR YOUTH!



Congratulations to Garrett Barr and Matthew Leaphart! These two participated in Solo and Ensemble last weekend and received a superior rating! Matthew also received two additional superiors for another ensemble as well as a solo. Well done, boys! We are so proud of you!

SUPPORT ELCA RELIEF PROGRAMS

In 2024, ELCA World Hunger celebrated its 50th anniversary! Together with Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR), these organizations raised over \$37 million during this milestone year. Donations support those in need both near and far. Last year, LDR helped with recovery and relief efforts in North Carolina after Hurricane Helene left a path of destruction. World Hunger and LDR are also hard at work in the Gaza Strip, working to maintain access to medical and educational services for those in need. In these and many other places across the globe, World Hunger and LDR are there. To find out more or make a donation, please visit www.elca.org, click on "Our Work," and then click "ELCA World Hunger" or "Lutheran Disaster Response."

Catechism class will meet **May 4th and 18th** at 9:00am in the music room.

Church council will not meet in May. The next scheduled meeting will take place **Sunday, June 8th at 8:30am.**

Graduate Recognition Sunday will be **Sunday, May 18th**! Join us during worship as celebrate our 2025 graduates, Avery Derrick and Ethan Barr. The congregation is invited to a reception in their honor, in the fellowship hall following worship.

WELCA will meet **Thursday, May 22nd** at 6:00pm. All women are welcome!

Veterans Recognition Sunday will be **May 25th**. We will have a special time during worship to recognize veterans of Mt. Hebron. Flags will be placed on the graves of those veterans buried in the cemetery.

Youth group will meet **Wednesday, May 28th** at 5:00pm. We will have snacks, conversation, a brief, devotion, and a game! Bring a friend!

Youth Committee will meet **Sunday, June 1st at 8:30am.**

THANK YOU!

The members of Mt. Hebron recently collected items for two causes: the Blessing Bag ministry, which supports our members with low mobility, and the Lexington School District 3 supply closet, which supports students in the district. So many items were collected! Thank you so much for your generosity!



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Ethan Barr was born into Mt. Hebron and has belonged to the church his whole life. He helps with VBS and also reads in worship on occasion.

(He always seems to get a long reading with difficult-to-pronounce names!) Ethan has fond memories of “trunk or treats” in the church parking lot, going on a scavenger hunt inside the church, and playing with Hot Wheels under the pew, along with Garrett and Matthew, whenever they were young kids. He enjoys listening to the stories in the Bible.

Ethan is a senior at Batesburg-Leesville HS, and just a few weeks away from graduation! This fall, he will begin classes at Midlands Tech, studying Machine Tools and Entrepreneurship. (He has already become an OSHA-certified welder – way to go, Ethan!) For his first year, he simply hopes to finish his classes with good grades and come closer to realizing his goal of owning his own business one day.

In his free time, Ethan enjoys hunting, fishing, welding, and woodworking. He also recently attained the rank of Eagle Scout! We are very excited to see what Ethan does next, and we pray that the Holy Spirit will continue to be at work in his life!

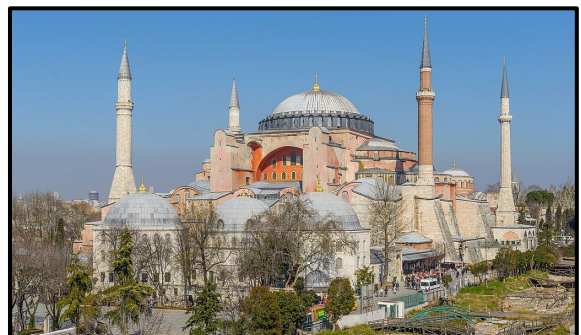
CHURCH HISTORY FROM A TO Z

E is for Eastern Orthodox Church, the third largest division of the church in the world, behind Catholicism and Protestantism. Over the course of the first 1000 years of church history, churches in Western Europe (centered in Rome) and churches in Eastern Europe (centered in Constantinople) gradually grew apart. They accumulated significant differences and disagreements. In 1054, the two groups officially split. The church in the West is known as the Catholic Church, and the church in the East is known as the Eastern Orthodox Church.

E is for Episcopal, a denomination OR a particular church polity. With a capital E, Episcopal refers to the American branch of the Anglican Church. This denomination started when King Henry VIII of England broke away from the Catholic Church in 1534. The Episcopal Church occupies a middle ground between Catholicism and Protestantism. With a lowercase e, episcopal refers to denominations organized around bishops.

E is for Ecumenical Council, one of several churchwide meetings from the earliest years of Christianity. These councils were convened in order for church leaders to discuss and decide on matters of church doctrine and administration. One of the most significant councils was the first, which took place in Nicaea in 325. There, Jesus's equality with God was affirmed. (Hence the phrase from the Nicene Creed, “Of one being with the Father.”)

E is for Evangelicalism, a broad movement within Christianity which goes back to the 1700s. Historically, evangelicals have emphasized being “born again” (accepting Jesus) and having high moral standards. The Lutheran use of the word (the E in ELCA), comes from the Greek word *euangelion*, which simply means “good news.” Evangelicals have good news to share!



The Hagia Sophia in Istanbul (formerly Constantinople), the seat of Eastern Orthodox Christianity for 900 years

Mt. Hebron Lutheran Church

Memory Verse of the Month

Let's memorize scripture together!
Take time this month to memorize
the following verse:

*"Do not oppress the widow, the orphan,
the alien, or the poor;
and do not devise evil in your hearts
against one another."*

-Zechariah 7:10

PRAYER REQUESTS

Pray for all mothers throughout the world, that they would feel loved and appreciated this month. Pray that they would be encouraged to continue raising their children in the ways they should go.

Pray for Charles Moore and Billie Harman as they recover from recent hospital stays, and Jenny Brantley as she recovers from a recent medical procedure.

Pray for the family of Kristen Antley (former pastor Barry Antley's daughter-in-law).

Pray for our teachers and students, that the Lord would give them energy and encourage them to press forward as they finish out the school year.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

5/1 - Gwen Wooley

5/3 - Marie Moore

5/3 - Jean Ruff

5/5 - Glenn Harman

5/10 - Brittnay Kaminer

5/10 - AnnaGrace Shealy

5/16 - Joey Ruff

5/17 - Laiken Brock

5/31 - Cathy Lindler

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

5/18 - Matthew and Megan Kneee

MAY HELPERS

Greeters / Ushers

Wade Oxner and Wade Oxner, II

Lectors

5/4 - Carlin Shealy

5/11 - Avery Derrick

5/18 - Ethan Barr

5/25 - Janine McCarthy

Tabulators

Amy Harman and Carlin Shealy

Alternate: Adam Shealy

Altar Guild

Cathy Lindler and Family

Acolytes

5/4 - Kellen Shealy

5/11 - Matthew Leaphart

5/18 - Garrett Barr

5/25 - Kellen Shealy

Crucifers

5/4 - Garrett Barr

Torchbearers

5/4 - Atley Derrick and Matthew Leaphart

Flowers

5/4 - Jean Ruff

5/11 - Christopher and Sarah Shealy

5/18 - Billy and Beth Derrick

5/25 - OPEN

Nursery

5/4 - Farrah Leaphart and Sarah Shealy

5/11 - Benji Leaphart and Heather Worthly

5/18 - Amy Harman and Carlin Shealy

5/25 - Denise Derrick and Kristen Derrick

Contact Pastor Christopher!

If you have a prayer request, questions,
or would like to speak with our pastor,
you can reach him at:

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