

HI!

by Judy Williams

My name is Judy. I go to Trinity Lutheran Church. What church do you go to? Peace Lutheran? St. Peter's Lutheran? Immanuel Lutheran?

Our church has lots of things for kids. We have school starting with kindergarten and going through eighth grade. I'm in second grade. My teacher is nice, but she makes us work hard. Everyday we have devotions; we sing about God and hear stories about how He loves us. Once a week we have chapel. And, we give our offerings that go to other places so kids far away can hear that God loves and cares for them, too.

After school I go to the sac room; that's school age child care. There are other rooms there that have childcare and preschool for the little kids. I like to see the babies; they are cute. Almost every Sunday my family and I go to church. Some Sundays the handbells play. I want to do that when I get bigger. We have Children's Church during the sermon. It's fun to see the puppets. They do funny things, but always tell us about God and stuff.

Our church has Sunday school, too. We do something different every Sunday, like art or use the computers or learn new songs or make something to cook. I don't know how they do it; but every time they tell us Jesus loves us that He came to be our Savior. The other day my teacher asked what state we live in? Da! Everyone knows it's Michigan. But then our teacher told us something I didn't know. There are 380 Lutheran churches like ours. That's a lot! Then my teacher asked if we knew how many teachers we have at our school. I had to think hard. Counting the art teacher I counted 13; I like art. She told us there are 1,461 teachers at Lutheran schools, preschools and childcares. That's really a lot. Hmmm! I wonder how many Sunday school teachers

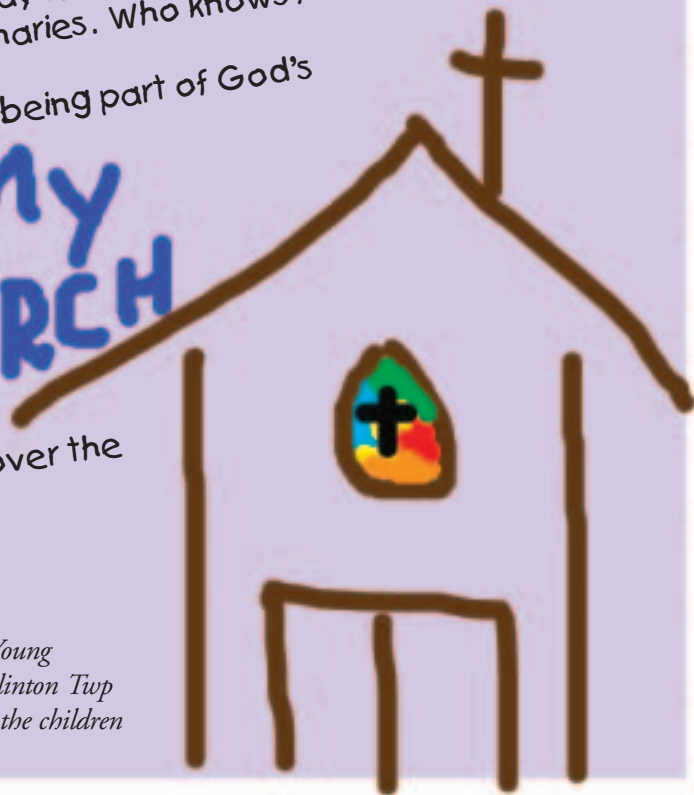
there are in Michigan. Do you think there are hundreds? I'll have to ask pastor. He'll know; he knows everything. He's really smart. Know what my dad said? He said Pastor told him that our church is part of something called the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod. Dad found out the Synod has two schools called seminaries where men go to learn how to be pastors. And, there are ten universities all around the whole Country to teach people how to be teachers in Lutheran schools, just like mine. Pretty neat, huh? I have to remember to ask my teacher where she went to school. Guess there's even one right here in Michigan, at Ann Arbor. Who knows? I might go there someday.

Hey! I just thought of something. If there are 380 Lutheran churches in Michigan and we're part of the Synod, there must be thousands of Lutheran churches in the Country. And, thousands of Lutheran schools, and thousands of Lutheran teachers and thousands and thousands of kids who go to these schools.

Do you know Pastor Steve? He talked at chapel one time. He told us how he helps poor people in downtown Detroit and how happy they are to hear God loves and cares for them. Do you know Mrs. Buss? She teaches 8th grade. Last summer she took some people and they went to Guatemala. They helped poor people and told them about Jesus, too. Do you know Pastor Rahn? He came and talked to us, too. He said that he has people who change the Bible into other languages so people far away learn that Jesus loves them and is their Savior. I think they're missionaries. Who knows? I might do that someday.

I guess it's pretty special being part of God's family, a Lutheran church, and going to a Lutheran school and living in Michigan and part of the Synod that shares God's love with people all over the whole wide world.

My CHURCH



Judy Williams is Minister to families with Young Children at Trinity Lutheran Church in Clinton Twp MI. She shares the story of God's love with the children in the Early Childhood Center and church.

THE BIGGER PICTURE

by Kayla Luehmann

Romans 15:5-6
May the God who gives
endurance and encouragement
give you a spirit of unity among
yourselves as you follow Christ,
Jesus, so that with one heart
and mouth you may glorify the
God and Father of our Lord
Jesus Christ.

Living in Michigan, you are probably familiar with lakes. Maybe you have even had an experience much like this...Picture yourself getting into a canoe in a quiet body of water. You start canoeing towards what seems to be the edge of the lake only to find a bend in the shoreline. You paddle around the bend only to see a HUGE body of water open up before your eyes.

At first the lake seemed small. But as you went exploring, you found that, what seemed to be a small lake, was actually a small part of the enormous lake!

In much the same way, your church is bigger than it may first appear. When you think of your church you probably picture the people you see when you go to worship. But your individual congregation is part of a bigger church called the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, or the LCMS for short. Michigan has over 380 LCMS churches just by itself. That's a lot! If you were to count the number of LCMS churches across the whole country you'd count over 6,100 different congregations where people gather to worship the same true God.

Just like a big lake shares the same water and probably has the same kind of fish and animals living in it, all the LCMS churches around the nation share a common faith. We believe in the Triune God. We confess that Jesus, true God & true man, came to die for our sins and was raised again so that we could go to heaven to live with Him forever!

As you are out vacationing this summer, maybe even as you are out exploring a lake, remember the thousands of LCMS churches across the nation that share a common faith with your congregation at home. Maybe in your summer adventures, you'll even get to visit one of those churches!

Kayla Luehmann is a 2005 graduate of Concordia University, Seward, Nebraska. She has taught fourth grade for the past two years at Living Word Lutheran School in Rochester.



The Very First Church

by Eileen Ritter

You worship God in a church in your community. You may have visited churches in your grandparents' home town or in a city you visited on your vacation. But do you know about the very first Christian church? In what ways was it like your church? In what ways was it different?

By the power of the Holy Spirit, Luke wrote an account of the very first church in the book of Acts. Let's pretend we can read the journals of three of the people God used in the work of early church in Jerusalem.

Peter's Journal

What an exciting day this has been! John and I went to the temple this afternoon with the other disciples. The crippled beggar at the Beautiful Gate expected us to give him money. Instead, I took his hand and healed him in the name of Jesus. Immediately he walked and jumped and praised God. I turned to the crowd that had gathered, and I began to preach to them about Jesus, whom they had crucified. I told them that God wanted them to be sorry for their sins and believe in Jesus, whom God had raised from the dead.

While I was still preaching, the temple priests and guards came to arrest John and me and put us in jail. Tomorrow we will be tried before the Sanhedrin. But many people believed what I said, and the number of men in our church grew to about 5,000.

John and I remember the birthday of our church. It had been only seven weeks since Jesus rose from the dead. We had gathered with Jesus' other followers – about 120 people in all – to wait for the Holy Spirit Jesus had promised. Suddenly a mighty wind roared through the room, and tongues of fire appeared on everyone's heads. I went out to speak to the crowd outside our room, people from all over the world who had come to Jerusalem for the festival. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, I told them that Jesus, whom they had crucified, had risen from the dead. The Spirit filled the hearts of many people who heard me preach, and three thousand were baptized and became part of our church that day.

Peter

Jerusalem Jail

Stephen's Journal

Our church in Jerusalem has grown very fast through the work of the Holy Spirit. We meet together every day to listen to the apostles tell us the Good News about Jesus, to celebrate His holy meal, and to pray. All of us sold everything we owned, and we use our combined resources to take care of those in need.

Soon our church grew too large for the apostles to handle everything. They chose seven men to serve as deacons. I was honored to be one of those chosen. Now the seven of us take care of the daily needs of the people, and the apostles can spend their time preaching the Good News.

Stephen

Philip's Journal

I, too, was chosen by the apostles to be a deacon in the Jerusalem church. When the Jewish priests stoned Stephen and persecuted the other Christians, I fled to Samaria to tell the people there about Jesus, their Savior. The Holy Spirit blessed my work, and many people believed.

One day the Holy Spirit sent me on a mission along the Jerusalem – Gaza Road. Here I found a man in a chariot reading from the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. The man was an important Ethiopian, the treasurer of the queen. He asked me to explain what he was reading, and I used the prophecies of Isaiah to tell him the Good News about Jesus. The Holy Spirit worked in the Ethiopian's heart, and he asked to be baptized. When he returns to his home, he will tell others about Jesus, and a new church in Africa will be born.

Philip

Eileen Ritter is Director of Music at St. John's Lutheran Church and a retired teacher. She has written Sunday school, day school, weekday school, and VBS curriculum and devotional materials for Concordia Publishing House and is the author of several books for teens and teachers.



BIBLE WORD SEARCH

F H P D S U S E J D E P O K D
 I E O A E J A O E M L P L Y A
 R T S L S G H S B A P T I Z E
 S K B G Y N H W Z D M U S J Y
 T J E R U S A L E M E F A G T
 C L G L U D P I F N T I I U I
 H B G O K L K I T E D R A A N
 U V A Y M U D D R S O S H R U
 R D R G M K O O M I I G D D M
 C R A Q D E I R G H T R K S M
 H Z Z A P O S T L E S S H J O
 A C T S T N E V E S B J N C C

Acts	First Church	Jerusalem
Apostles	Gaza	Jesus
Baptize	God	John
Beggar	Guards	Luke
Christians	Holy Spirit	Seven
Community	Isaiah	Temple

PENTECOST PICNIC

Hey Kids! Want to do something special with a small group of families? Pick a park, lake, or other picnic setting and invite each family to bring one of the following along (enough to feed everyone): Table settings, bread, sandwich fixings, chips, drinks, and dessert. Set picnic tables for dinner, pray together, and enjoy the feast. Then read Acts 2. Spend a few minutes describing what it would have been like to have been part of the very first church. Use your senses to describe different things. What might the weather have felt like? What food would you have possibly tasted? What would you have seen that day? Would there have been a certain smell? What would *tongues of fire* look like? What sounds would you have heard? Then sing a favorite church song. Pray together again. Play!



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You Can BEE a Super Saver!

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Hey Kids! Want to help build churches and schools so other boys and girls can learn about Jesus? Want to save your money for something special like a bike, a new Bible or a mission trip? When you become a Super Saver, you can do both!





JOIN THE CLUB!

You can join the Super Savers Club at Sunday school or in your church's day school.* You'll receive a membership card and your very own Super Savers Stamp book. With every quarter you save, you'll get a Savings Stamp to paste into your book. When the book is filled with stamps, it means you have saved \$25.

BEE SMART

It only takes a little to start saving. Pennies, nickels and dimes soon add up to dollars. And you won't be tempted to use your money on things that don't last, like candy or trinkets.

BEE THRIFTY

Try to save part of your allowance each week or earn extra cash by doing chores around the house. Maybe Mom and Dad would give the family's "penny jar" to add to your savings! After all, every cent you save will be hard at work building churches and schools. This is called stewardship and is an important part of living for Jesus.



BEE HELPFUL

Saving enough to build a church or school all by yourself would be hard. But because you and thousands of other kids are all saving together, it's easy and fun. And Jesus is so pleased when we work together to help others!

BEE BLESSED

God tells us to be wise about how we spend our money and to share our gifts with others. When we do what He asks, we are always blessed!

And that's exactly what happens when you put your money to work with Saving Stamps.

For more saving fun, visit our special Kids Page at: www.mi-cef.org/kids
We have lots of fun stories and activities there for you.

**If your church does not have a Saving Stamp program, write to us. We will work with your church to get a program going for you and your friends. Don't forget to tell us your name, address, phone number and the name of your church.*



FIND YOUR DELIGHT
IN THE LORD.
THEN HE WILL GIVE YOU
EVERYTHING YOUR HEART
REALLY WANTS."

Psalms 37:4



Church Extension Fund

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