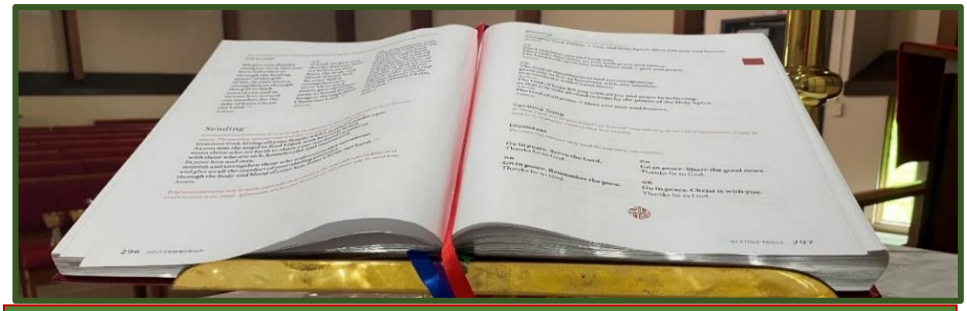
NEWS FROM ABIDING SAVIOR

October 2025



SEPTEMBER 28, 2025

OCTOBER 5, 2025

RECENT SERMONS

Missed a recent sermon? Click on the date to get it.

CLICK HERE TO GIVE YOUR OFFERING

CHURCH LET'S PRAY TOGETHER

Church of the Abiding Savior -- and Friends:
The Congregation Council is calling us to
A TIME OF PRAYER!

The prayer of a follower of God is powerful and effective *(James 5:16b)*

2 O'CLOCK ON TUESDAYS
2 MINUTES OF LISTENING *

*TO GOD'S DESIRES FOR US
PERSONALLY AND AS A CONGREGATION

2 O'CLOCK ON TUESDAYS // 2 MINUTES LISTENING TO GOD.

INTRODUCTION TO
THE PART – TIME INTERIM PASTOR

The Rev. Dr. Julius Carroll

Pastor Carroll's baptismal journey began on June 5, 1961, among the faithful at Redeemer Lutheran in Flushing, NY. He is a graduate of The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia (UNITED LUTHERAN SEMINARY) – Master of Divinity (1981) /Doctor of Ministry (2007). Ordained in 1981, Pastor Carroll has served congregations in: Philadelphia PA; Washington, D.C.; Oakland, CA and Raleigh, NC. In his retirement he has been an Interim pastor in New Orleans, LA; Greensboro, NC; Liverpool, NY; Clarence Center, NY; Buffalo, NY; Jackson, MS; Queens, NY – and beginning October 1, 2025, here at Church of the Abiding Savior in Durham.

Dr. Carroll's synodical/churchwide work has been on: the Southeastern Penna. Synod Staff (Coalition Director for twenty-eight city congregations); the Multi-Cultural Ministries Unit of the ELCA (director for African Decent Ministries) and the faculty of Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary (associate professor of Contextual Education).

Pastor Carroll's expertise as an interim pastor is in pastoral care, assisting congregations in strategic planning, and reintroducing congregations to their immediate communities.
Pastor and Geneva have six adult children and seventeen grandchildren (two sets of twins contribute to these blessed numbers!). The Carroll's children/grandchildren reside across these United States and (alas) are not close to their Raleigh home.

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

"KATIE" LUTHER: An integral participant in the Protestant REFORMATION

Tradition in the Lutheran Church records that Katharina von Bora was a daughter to a family of Saxon landed gentry. According to common belief, she was born on 29 January 1499 in Lippendorf; however, there is no evidence of this date from contemporary documents. Due to the various lineages within the family and the uncertainty about Katharina's birth name, there were and are diverging theories about her place of birth. Lately, however, a different view upon this matter has been proposed: that she was born in Hirschfeld and that her parents are supposed to have been Hans von Bora Hirschfeld and his wife Anna von Haugwitz. Neither can be historically proven. It is also possible that Katharina was the daughter of a Jan von Bora auf Lippendorf and his wife Margarete, whose family name has not been established. Both were only specifically mentioned in the year 1505.

Life as a nun It is certain that her father sent the five-year-old Katharina to the Benedictine cloister in Brehna in 1504 for education. This is documented in a letter from Laurentius Zoch to Martin Luther, written on October 30, 1531. This letter is the only evidence for Katharina von Bora's time spent within the monastery. At the age of nine she moved to the Cistercian monastery of Marienthron (Mary's Throne) in Nimbschen, near Grimma, where her maternal aunt was already a member of the community. Katharina is well documented at this monastery in a provision list of 1509/10. After several years of religious life, Katharina became interested in the growing reform movement and grew dissatisfied with her life in the monastery. Conspiring with several other nuns to flee in secrecy, she contacted Luther and begged for his assistance.

On Easter Eve, 4 April 1523, Luther sent Leonhard Köppe, a city councilman of Torgau and merchant who regularly delivered herring to the monastery. The nuns successfully escaped by hiding in Köppe's covered wagon among the

fish barrels and fled to Wittenberg. A local student wrote to a friend: “A wagon load of vestal virgins has just come to town, all more eager for marriage than for life. God grant them husbands lest worse befall."

Luther at first asked the parents and relations of the refugee nuns to admit them again into their houses, but they declined to receive them, possibly as this was participating in a crime under canon(church) law. Within two years, Luther was able to arrange homes, marriages, or employment for all of the escaped nuns—except for Katharina. She first was housed with the family of Philipp Reichenbach, the city clerk of Wittenberg. Later she went to the home of Lucas Cranach the Elder and his wife, Barbara.

Katharina had a number of suitors, including Wittenberg University alum Jerome (Hieronymus) Baumgärtner (1498–1565) of Nuremberg and a pastor, Kaspar Glatz of Orlamünde. None of the proposed matches resulted in marriage. She told Luther’s friend and fellow reformer, Nikolaus von Amsdorf, that she would be willing to marry only Luther or von Amsdorf himself.

Marriage to Luther Martin Luther, as well as many of his friends, were at first unsure of whether he should even be married. Philipp Melanchthon thought that Luther's marriage would hurt the Reformation because of potential scandal. Luther eventually concluded that "his marriage would please his father, rile the pope, cause the angels to laugh, and the devils to weep." Martin Luther married Katharina on June 13, 1525, before witnesses including Justus Jonas, Johannes Bugenhagen, and Barbara and Lucas Cranach the Elder.

There was a wedding breakfast the next morning with a small company. Two weeks later, on June 27, they held a more formal public ceremony which was presided over by Bugenhagen. Von Bora was 26 years old, Luther 41. The couple took up residence in the "Black Cloister" (Augusteum), the former dormitory and educational institution for Augustinian friars studying in Wittenberg, given as a wedding gift by the reform-minded John Frederick, Elector of Saxony, who was the son and nephew of Luther's protectors, John, Elector of Saxony and Frederick III, Elector of Saxony.

Katharina immediately took on the task of administering and managing the vast holdings of the monastery, breeding and selling cattle, and running a brewery to provide for their family and the steady stream of students who boarded with them and visitors seeking audiences with her husband. In times of widespread illness, Katharina operated a hospital on site, ministering to the sick alongside other nurses. Luther called her the "boss of Zulsdorf," after the name of the farm they owned, and the "morning star of Wittenberg" for her habit of rising at 4 a.m. to take care of her various responsibilities.

The marriage of Katharina von Bora to Martin Luther was extremely important to the development of the Protestant Church, specifically regarding its stance on marriage and the roles each spouse should concern themselves with. “Although Luther was by no means the first cleric of his time to marry, his prominence, his espousal of clerical marriage, and his prolific output of printed anti-Catholic propaganda made his marriage a natural target.” The way Luther described Katie’s actions and the names he gives her like “My Lord Katie” shows us that he really did feel strongly that she exhibited a great amount of control over her own life and decisions. It could even reasonably be argued that she maintained some influence in the actions of Martin Luther himself since he says explicitly, “You convince me of whatever you please. You have complete control. I concede to you the control of the household, providing my rights are preserved. Female government has never done any good.”

Luther also makes the statement “If I can endure conflict with the devil, sin, and a bad conscience, then I can put up with the irritations of Katy von Bora.” This exhibits his reluctance, but overall willingness to give her control and a voice in their lives and his eventual support for all women to behave in the same way.

In addition to her busy life tending to the lands and grounds of the monastery, Katharina bore six children: Hans (7 June 1526 – 27 October 1575), Elizabeth (10 December 1527 – 3 August 1528) who died at eight months, Magdalena (4 May 1529 – 20 September 1542) who died at thirteen years, Martin (9 November 1531 – 4 March 1565), Paul (28 January 1533 – 8 March 1593), and Margarete (17 December 1534 – 1570); in addition, she suffered a miscarriage on 1 November 1539. The Luthers also raised four orphan children, including Katharina's nephew, Fabian.

Anecdotal evidence indicates that Katharina von Bora's role as the wife of a critical member of the Reformation paralleled the marital teachings of Luther and the movement. Katharina depended on Luther for his incomes before the estate's profits increased, thanks to her. She respected him as a higher vessel and called him formally "Sir Doctor" throughout her life. He reciprocated such respect by occasionally consulting her on church matters. She assisted him with running the menial estate duties as he could not complete both these and those to the church and university. Katharina also directed the renovations done to accommodate the size of their operations.

After Luther's death When Martin Luther died in 1546, Katharina was left in difficult financial straits without Luther's salary as professor and pastor, even though she owned land, properties, and the Black Cloister. Martin Luther counseled her to move out of the old abbey and sell it after his death and move into much more modest quarters with the children who remained at home, but she refused. Luther had named her his sole heir in his last will. His will could not be executed because it did not conform with Saxon law.

Almost immediately thereafter, Katharina had to leave the Black Cloister (now called Lutherhaus) on her own at the outbreak of the Schmalkaldic War, from which she fled to Magdeburg. After her return, the approach of the war forced another flight in 1547, this time to Braunschweig. In July 1547, at the close of the war, she was able to return to Wittenberg.

After the war, the buildings and lands of the monastery had been torn apart and laid waste, the cattle and other farm animals were stolen or killed. If she had sold the land and the buildings, she could have had a good financial situation. Financially, they could not remain there. Katharina was able to support herself thanks to the generosity of John Frederick I, Elector of Saxony, and the princes of Anhalt.

She remained in Wittenberg in poverty until 1552, when an outbreak of the Black Plague and a harvest failure forced her to leave the city once again. She fled to Torgau where she was thrown from her cart into a watery ditch near the city gates. For three months she went in and out of consciousness, before dying in Torgau on December 20, 1552, at the age of fifty-three. She was buried at Torgau's Saint Mary's Church, far from her husband's grave in Wittenberg. She is reported to have said on her deathbed, "I will stick to Christ as a burr to cloth."

By the time of Katharina's death, the surviving Luther children were adults. After Katharina's death, the Black Cloister was sold back to the university in 1564 by his heirs. Hans studied law and became a court advisor. Martin studied theology but never had a regular pastoral call. Paul became a physician. He fathered six children and the male line of the Luther family continued through him to John Ernest Luther, ending in 1759.

Margareta Luther, born in Wittenberg on December 17, 1534, married into a noble, wealthy Prussian family, to Georg von Kunheim (Wehlau, July 1, 1523 – Mühlhausen, October 18, 1611, the son of Georg von Kunheim (1480–1543) and wife Margarethe, Truchsessin von Wetzhausen (1490–1527)) but died in Mühlhausen in 1570 at the age of thirty-six. Her descendants have continued to modern times, including German President Paul von Hindenburg (1847–1934) and the Counts zu Eulenburg and Princes Eulenburg und Hertefeld.

(Historical information taken from: Wikipedia)

So, dear family and friends of Abiding Savior , as we remember and celebrate our Lutheran reformation heritage: Word Alone/Grace Alone/Faith Alone -- let us not forget our foremother (Katie) who played a primary role in bringing the Lutheran-expression of the Protestant Reformation into being.

Pastor Carroll

OFFICE HOURS

Beginning October 21st, Pastor Carroll will have office hours every Tuesday from 10:00 am – 1:00 pm.

SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING

The fall, 2025 semi-annual congregational meeting will be held on Sunday, November 16, 2025, following the worship service. At that time, the 2026 spending plan will be presented. The finance committee will work with the congregation council to prepare the spending plan which will be shared prior to the meeting. Please add the date to your calendar.

CONGREGATION COUNCIL MEETINGS

The monthly meeting of the congregation council is normally held on the first Sunday of each month. Following the meeting, the minutes will be prepared and posted on the bulletin board in the hallway of narthex.

LUNCH BUNCH – OCTOBER 19th

The congregation council plans to host monthly Lunch Bunch sessions. Currently, we are in the budgeting process and preparing the 2026 spending plan. The October Lunch Bunch will provide an opportunity to discuss and answer questions about the budget and to get pledges.

2026 PLEDGES

The Finance Ministry is developing a spending plan for 2026. Please prayerfully consider your 2026 pledge.

Pledge cards are on the credenza in the narthex and will be collected by

October 26th

CHURCH OF THE ABIDING SAVIOR LUTHERAN
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

GROW!

FINANCIAL PLEDGE CARD

Please choose from the following options, circling the time frame as appropriate.

Because God gives abundantly,

and because I want to be a faithful steward,

I/we make the following pledge for 2026:

___ *I / We plan to GROW toward or beyond a tithe by giving*

$_____ per week / month / year in 2026

*Name*_____:

LET US TALENTS EMPLOY-ALL ARE NEEDED!

We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.
Romans 8:6-8

God gifts us by means of His Holy Spirit and equips us with gifts, capabilities and abilities. "We Are Stewards Of Our Time And Abilities". **What Gifts Can You Share?** Review the Time and Talent Form below. Prayerfully consider your gifts and talents and how you can use them. If you have not already completed the form, find areas where you might serve. Forms are in the narthex.

CHURCH OF THE ABIDING SAVIOR

TIME AND TALENT FORM

Please volunteer to serve in more than one area. Your hands and hearts are needed!

Complete and submit to the Thank you.

PROPERTY
- ❒ Maintain All Physical Property, Interior/Exterior
- ❒ Develop and execute improvement projects
- ❒ Monitor use of buildings and grounds

WORSHIP/MUSIC
- ❒ Usher
- ❒ Altar Guild
- ❒ Choir
- ❒ Worship Assistant
- ❒ Worship Reader

IN REACH-Fellowship and Stewardship
- ❒ Dinners/Receptions
- ❒ Setup, serve, cleanup
- ❒ Coordinate retreats/picnics
- ❒ Coordinate Time/Talent
- ❒ Serve on Stewardship Comm.

FINANCE
- ❒ Count money /prepare deposits
- ❒ Serve on Finance Committee
- ❒ Serve on Audit Committee

FAITH FORMATION and YOUTH
- ❒ Sunday school teacher
- ❒ VBS volunteer/teacher
- ❒ Youth education programs
- ❒ Order necessary curriculum
- ❒ Special youth activities and events

OUT REACH-Social Concerns and Evangelism
- ❒ Meals at Urban Ministries
- ❒ Provide other services to the community
- ❒ Work with other churches on community programs
- ❒ Greet and welcome non-members
- ❒ Develop and maintain a recruitment program for new members

RECORDS
- ❒ Quarterly/Annual Reports
- ❒ News releases/ articles
- ❒ Church Directory
- ❒ Maintenance of Archives

********** OTHER **********
- ❒ Manage audiovisual equipment
- ❒ Martin Luther King Celebration
- ❒ Black History Month Celebration
- ❒ Church Anniversary (February)
- ❒ _____
  _____
  _____

Name_____

Date_____

REFORMATION SUNDAY OCTOBER 26th

On this day we celebrate the heart of our faith: the Gospel of Christ, the Good News, that makes us free! We have the assurance that humans may reach salvation by their faith and not by their deeds.

Martin Luther posted his "Ninety-Five Theses" in Wittenberg on Oct. 31, 1517, and the resulting debate about Christian teaching and practice led to changes that have shaped the course of Western Christianity. At the heart of these wide-reaching changes was a deep conviction that God's mercy or grace in Jesus is given freely to all. When Luther and others learned to trust God's mercy with "a living, daring confidence," they discovered in that faith, the freedom to give themselves generously and lovingly in all of life's undertakings with everyone they met.

The changes began with a critical look at confession and forgiveness, preaching and the sacraments — what Luther called the "means of grace." The sale of indulgences, the practice of penance, the content of preaching, the administration of Baptism and the Lord's Supper — all the restrictions that impeded the message of God's mercy from being heard and received fully for all.

WELCA / MEN'S GROUP MEETINGS NOVEMBER 15th

The bi-monthly meeting of Abiding Savior's Women of the ELCA (WELCA) and the Abiding Savior Men will be held on Saturday, November 15th. There will be breakfast for all before the breakout meetings.

NOVEMBER MEAL AT THE SHELTER

On November 30, 2025, which is a 5th Sunday, Abiding Savior will provide dinner for our siblings at Urban Ministries Of Durham. Our Outreach Ministry will plan the meal and provide us with additional information.

CHOIR

If you enjoy singing, please consider joining the choir. Voices are needed. Upcoming rehearsals will be held on Saturday, October 25th . November 8 and November 22

THRIVENT OPPORTUNITIES

Thrivent Choice Dollars:

Members of Thrivent Financial can recommend where some of Thrivent Financial's charitable outreach funds go by directing Choice Dollars. If you are a member, please consider directing your Choice Dollars to Abiding Savior. These Dollars accumulate in your account and are not automatically allocated. Your Choice Dollars can be designated online. If you need help or have questions, please contact Veronica Johnson.

Thrivent Action Grants:

Think about an unmet need in the community and how you can help. Each Thrivent member is eligible to receive up to two $250 Thrivent Action Team Grants per year. Grant applications must be made prior to December 31st. Because Thrivent members have taken action, Abiding Savior has provided assistance and addressed needs of neighbors throughout the Durham community.

NO BIBLE STUDY ON OCTOBER 15th

Pastor Carroll will join other NC Synod rostered ministers, SAMs, and professional church staff **October 13–15** (Monday–Wednesday) at Lutheridge for the annual Fall Convocation. Therefore, Bible Study will not be held on October 15th but will return on October 22nd.

INSTALLATION FOR BISHOP EMILY HARTNER

You are invited to the North Carolina Synod Bishop's Installation and worship on Saturday, November 15, at 2 p.m. at Christ Lutheran Church in Charlotte.

Join the livestream: https://bit.ly/Bishop-Hartner-Installation

DID YOU MISS THE BISHOP'S INSTALLATION

The ELCA installed the Rev. Yehiel Curry as its first Black presiding bishop Saturday, a landmark moment for the predominantly white denomination. "It hasn't really hit me yet," Curry told The Associated Press a week before his installation. "The fact that you're a first." Curry succeeds the Rev. Elizabeth Eaton, who served for 12 years and was the first woman to lead the ELCA. If you did not watch the installation, it is available on youtube **watch it here.**

BISHOP'S REFLECTIONS

Transitions: A Sign of God's Call

Dear friends,

I am writing this reflection from Minneapolis, having just attended the installation of our new ELCA Presiding Bishop, the Rev. Yehiel Curry. I hope that some of you were able to watch the service online. If you missed it, I encourage you to **watch it here.** It was quite an impressive service, filled with the joyful proclamation of the Gospel, moving music, and the witness of the Church to the way God calls us to serve. Though this service marked the specific call of Presiding Bishop Curry, the preacher, the Rev. Dr. Kevin Vandiver, extended that call to all of us. Preaching on Luke 4 and the moment Jesus gets pushed to the edge of a cliff after preaching his first sermon, Dr. Vandiver reminded us all that the cliff, or the threat of being pushed off of it, does not negate God's call to any single one of us, clergy and lay alike. The world can feel divisive and dangerous, *and* we can still be called to proclaim the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

God's call to God's people is often marked by moments of transition. If God weren't calling us to new ventures, there would be no transition; everything would stay the same. Clearly, that is not what's happening right now. At the ELCA churchwide level, we have a new presiding bishop, secretary (our own Pastor CeCee!), and approximately half of the church council.

And at the synodical level, we have just as much transition—a new bishop, vice president, secretary, and a good portion of the synod council.

And, as you might expect, we have had some transitions on our synod staff.

Pastor CeCee's departure for the ELCA Secretary position left a position to be filled. I am pleased to announce that the NC Synod Council has called Deacon Wendy Roberts to fill that role. No stranger, Deacon Wendy was already on synod staff, overseeing candidacy, advanced lay ministry, and our Lilly Endowment Inc. project for children's ministry. Moving into the role of assistant to the bishop, she will now oversee candidacy, advanced lay ministry, and the call process. She comes with 14 years of experience in various roles and settings and will be a great gift to our call process.

Pastor CeCee was also doing the interim work of the director for evangelical mission (DEM). With her departure, we have contracted with the Rev. Dr. Wolfgang Herz-Lane to do the interim DEM work on a half-time basis. We are, however, conducting final interviews with candidates for the DEM position and hope to fill that role by December 1.

I truly believe that times of transition reveal the truth that God continues to call us and that the Holy Spirit continues to stir us lest we become stagnant. Transition is often a sign of renewal. I am grateful for that sense of renewal, both for me personally and for this church.

Please reach out if you have any specific questions regarding the synod office, and rest assured that, as God abides with us, we at the synod office also seek to abide with you.

Together in Christ

Emily K. Hartner

NC Synod Bishop

A LETTER FROM BISHOPS OF THE ELCA TO THE CHURCH

Beloved in Christ,
Grace and peace to you in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

As bishops of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), we write to you in this moment of national and global tension with clarity and conviction. Our faith compels us to stand where Jesus stands—with and for those whom society often seeks to exclude, erase, or diminish. Our shared confession that every person is created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27) grounds us in the conviction that all people possess inherent dignity. The incarnation of Jesus Christ reveals God's profound solidarity with humanity—especially with those who are marginalized or oppressed. The gospel we proclaim insists that our neighbor's need is the occasion for our love and that our public life is shaped by justice, mercy, and a commitment to the common good. Further, we have a shared tradition in our social teachings which grounds us. The ELCA's Social Message on Immigration reminds us:
"We are to respond to newcomers as we would to Christ—welcoming them, meeting their immediate needs, and advocating for justice in our laws and policies." Likewise, our recently adopted Social Statement Faith and Civic Life affirms that Christians are called to be "a public witness, holding leaders accountable when they fail to protect the vulnerable."

We are living through a time when vulnerable communities are being scapegoated and attacked. Immigrants and refugees are vilified, though Scripture commands us to welcome the stranger. People of color continue to bear the devastating weight of racism woven into the fabric of our society. Transgender people, beloved by God, are being targeted with laws and rhetoric that deny their dignity and even their right to exist. These assaults on our siblings are not political abstractions—they are deep wounds in the body of Christ.
In this time of division and fear, we, as people grounded in our faith, insist on love. This commitment flows from our faith in Christ crucified and risen—the One whose love breaks down barriers, confronts hatred, and transforms hearts.
Love insists on the dignity of every human being.
Love insists on justice for the marginalized and oppressed.
Love insists that the church must reflect God's diverse, life-giving community.
Love insists that we listen, speak, and act with respect, even in disagreement.
Love insists on hope, trusting that God's kingdom of justice and peace will prevail.
This love also compels us to speak clearly against Christian Nationalism, which our Churchwide Assembly named as a distortion of the Christian faith and an unhealthy form of patriotism. Christian Nationalism confuses the Gospel with political power, turns God into a mascot for the state, and privileges some people over others based on race, religion, or birthplace. This is not the way of Jesus. The kingdom of God is not a nation, not a culture, not a political ideology—it is God's reign of love, justice, and mercy for all people.

Therefore, as bishops of this church, we declare that the ELCA cannot be silent. Our call is clear:
• To proclaim the God-given dignity of every human being.
• To resist systems and ideologies, including Christian Nationalism, that oppress, dehumanize, or erase.
• To stand shoulder to shoulder with those who are targeted or harmed.
• To bear public witness that the love of Christ is stronger than fear, stronger than hatred, and stronger than death.

We call on all members of the ELCA to join us in prayer, advocacy, and action:
• Pray for those who are vulnerable and for all who work for justice.
• Advocate in your communities, legislatures, and Congress for laws that protect migrants, advance racial justice, and safeguard LGBTQIA+ people.
• Engage in the holy work of hospitality, creating spaces of safety, affirmation, and belonging for all God's children.
• Model respectful dialogue in a polarized world, seeking understanding rooted in love.
• Hold fast to hope, trusting that the Spirit is still at work renewing creation and reconciling the world to God.

In baptism, we are marked with the cross of Christ forever. That cross is not only a sign of our hope—it is also a summons to follow Jesus into solidarity with those who suffer.
In the power of the Spirit, let us be bold. Let us be faithful.

Let us Insist on Love—in our words, our actions, our public witness, and our life together.

A TIME FOR FELLOWSHIP

At their bimonthly meeting. Abiding Savior's WELCA created handmade cards to share with sick and shut in brothers and sisters.

We gathered for fellowship and good food with friends and family