



LITTLE ELK CREEK / NEW HOPE LUTHERAN CHURCH

S.A.M. Alison Westphal

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16th Sunday after Pentecost Sunday, September 13, 2026

SUNDAY SCHOOL RALLY SUNDAY

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please stand.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Most merciful God,

we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.

Amen.

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

Amen.

GATHERING

Jesus Loves the Little Children

31

C. H. Woolston

Adapt. Dorothy N. Schultz

George F. Root

1. Je - sus loves the lit - tle chil - dren, All the chil-dren of the
2. Je - sus died for all the chil - dren, All the chil-dren of the
3. Je - sus rose for all the chil - dren, All the chil-dren of the
4. Je - sus cares for all the chil - dren, All the chil-dren of the

world. Ev - 'ry child in ev - 'ry land, Je - sus holds them in His
world. Ev - 'ry child in ev - 'ry land, Je - sus holds them in His
world. Ev - 'ry child in ev - 'ry land, Je - sus holds them in His
world. Ev - 'ry child in ev - 'ry land, Je - sus holds them in His

hand. Je - sus loves the lit - tle chil - dren of the world.
hand. Je - sus died for all the chil - dren of the world.
hand. Je - sus rose for all the chil - dren of the world.
hand. Je - sus cares for all the chil - dren of the world.

The musical score is written for a four-part vocal ensemble (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) in G major, 4/4 time. It features a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature of 4/4. The score is divided into three systems. The first system contains the first four lines of the song, with lyrics for four different verses. The second system contains the next four lines, also with lyrics for four different verses. The third system contains the final four lines, with lyrics for four different verses. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and bar lines. Chord symbols (G, D7, G, D, G, D, C, Am7, D7, G) are placed above the staff to indicate the harmonic structure. The lyrics are written below the staff, with each line of music corresponding to a line of text. The score is designed to be sung by a four-part vocal ensemble.

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

CANTICLE OF PRAISE

Refrain

Assisting minister



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le-lu-ia.

All



1 Wor-thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us



free to be peo-ple of God. Pow-er and rich-es and wis-dom and



strength, and hon-or and bless-ing and glo-ry are his.

Refrain



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le-lu-ia.



2 Sing with all the peo-ple of God and join in the



hymn of all cre-a-tion: Bless-ing and hon-or and glo-ry and



might be to God and the Lamb for-ev-er. A-men.

Final refrain



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God, for the Lamb who was slain



has be-gun his reign. Al-le-lu-ia. Al-le-lu-ia.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Please be seated.

All Teachers and Children please come forward with your backpacks.

COMMISSIONING OF TEACHERS & BLESSING OF BACKPACKS

NH: Jeni Gruber, Brittany Gerth, Megan Hines, and Jane Hulett

LEC: Dottie Hayden, Peggy Husby, Kelsey Anderson, Bonnie Rivard, Lisa Christianson, Shelby Tischmann, and Lynne Quilling
Helpers; Kinsey Anderson, Sapphira Husby and Draven Schutts

A reading from First Corinthians. Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. (1 Cor. 12:4-7)

Brothers and sisters, you have volunteered your time, your energy, and your gifts to the children, youth, and family ministries of this congregation. Will you offer your giftedness to this ministry in the confidence that it comes from God and carry out this ministry centered in Christ's call, striving to trust God as your guide and inspiration?

People of New Hope/Little Elk Creek: Will you claim these gifted people as those called by God to help carry out our congregation's ministry to children, youth, and families and the young people they accompany in faith? Will you pray for them, support them and enthusiastically celebrate them as they journey together in faith?

We will, and we ask God to help us.

Let us now join together in reflecting our commitment in a prayer of blessing over these teachers and young members of the Body of Christ.

Backpack blessing

(leader reads plain font / congregation reads bold)

Creator God, **cultivate in these children and teachers the fruit of your Spirit as they begin another school year.**

Fill them with love for learning and for their classmates and students.

Make them ready to offer a wide welcome to all who are part of the school community.

Fill them with joy on early mornings and long bus rides, during reading and recess, **in arithmetic and art, in study and at play.**

Fill them with peace as they start new routines and transition out of summer's ease into school's demands. **Remind them to pause throughout their day for deep breaths and whispered prayers.**

Fill them with patience as they practice new skills, share with others, **stumble over unfamiliar words and learn from their mistakes.**

Fill them with kindness for the kids who are new to the community, who dress weird, who eat alone, who look different but desire genuine friendship.

Teach them to make space for everyone at the table.

Fill them with goodness as they make choices each day that speak to their character and integrity. **May the things they do when no one is looking give you glory and make their parents proud.**

Fill them with faithfulness as they carry their baptismal promises with them into the classroom. **Remind them of their identity as children of God, beloved and precious, even when the test scores are low and the homework is turned in late.**

Fill them with gentleness in the words they choose and the actions they take. **Help them think before they speak so their words build up others around them.**

Fill them with self-control as they share space with others, as they make room for all learning styles. **As they move about in learning and play may their bodies be an example of your care for all creation.**

Let us pray, **we entrust these kids and teachers to your care, O Lord, at the start of this new school year. Keep them safe and ready to succeed in all the opportunities that await them. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

Teachers can be seated.

CHILDREN'S SERMON

FIRST READING: Genesis 50:15-21

¹⁵ Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" ¹⁶ So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, ¹⁷ 'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and

the wrong they did in harming you.’ Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father.” Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸ Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, “We are here as your slaves.” ¹⁹ But Joseph said to them, “Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? ²⁰ Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. ²¹ So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones.” In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 103:1-13

- ¹ Bless the LORD, O my soul,
 and all that is within me, bless God’s holy name.
- ² Bless the LORD, O my soul,
 and forget not all God’s benefits—
- ³ who forgives all your sins
 and heals all your diseases;
- ⁴ who redeems your life from the grave
 and crowns you with steadfast love and mercy;
- ⁵ who satisfies your desires with good things
 so that your youth is renewed like an eagle’s.
- ⁶ O LORD, you provide vindication
 and justice for all who are oppressed.
- ⁷ You made known your ways to Moses
 and your works to the children of Israel.
- ⁸ LORD, you are full of compassion and mercy,
 slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love;
- ⁹ you will not always accuse us,
 nor will you keep your anger forever.
- ¹⁰ You have not dealt with us according to our sins,
 nor repaid us according to our iniquities.
- ¹¹ For as the heavens are high above the earth,
 so great is your steadfast love for those who fear you.
- ¹² As far as the east is from the west,
 so far have you removed our transgressions from us.
- ¹³ As a father has compassion for his children,
 so you have compassion for those who fear you, O LORD.

SECOND READING: Romans 14:1-12

¹ Welcome those who are weak in faith but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. ² Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. ³ Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat, for God has welcomed them. ⁴ Who are you to pass judgment on slaves of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

⁵ Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. ⁶ Those who observe the day, observe it for the Lord. Also those who eat, eat for the Lord, since they give thanks to God, while those who abstain, abstain for the Lord and give thanks to God.

⁷ For we do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. ⁸ If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. ⁹ For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

¹⁰ Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. ¹¹ For it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God." ¹² So then, each one of us will be held accountable.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Please stand.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



GOSPEL: Matthew 18:21-35

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

²¹ Peter came and said to [Jesus,] "Lord, if my brother or sister sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" ²² Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

²³ “For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴ When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him, ²⁵ and, as he could not pay, the lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions and payment to be made. ²⁶ So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ ²⁷ And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸ But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him by the throat he said, ‘Pay what you owe.’ ²⁹ Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ ³⁰ But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. ³¹ When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³² Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³ Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ ³⁴ And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. ³⁵ So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”
The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Please be seated.

SERMON

Jesus Loves Me!



1 Je - sus loves me! this I know, for the Bi - ble tells me so;
 2 Je - sus loves me! he who died heav - en's gates to o - pen wide;
 3 Je - sus loves me! he will stay close be - side me all the way;



lit - tle ones to him be - long, they are weak, but he is strong.
 he will wash a - way my sin, let his lit - tle child come in.
 when at last I come to die, he will take me home on high.

Refrain

Yes, Je - sus loves me, yes, Je - sus loves me,



yes, Je - sus loves me, the Bi - ble tells me so.

Please stand.

APOSTLES' CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
 creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
 who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
 born of the virgin Mary,
 suffered under Pontius Pilate,
 was crucified, died, and was buried;
 he descended to the dead.
 On the third day he rose again;
 he ascended into heaven,
 he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
 and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
 the holy catholic church,
 the communion of saints,
 the forgiveness of sins,
 the resurrection of the body,
 and the life everlasting. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Reminded of God's gracious and abundant love, we offer our prayers, confident that God hears us.

Move your church throughout the world away from judging and despising others. Lead us to embody the forgiveness you have given us in Jesus. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

The endless beauty of your creation reminds us of your mercy. Protect those who care for farms and ranches. Guide those who lead us to wonder at your creation. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Raise up leaders to hold all in authority accountable for any misuse of the power entrusted to them. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Calm the fears of all in need with your promises. Compassionately free the lives of any who feel bound by their failures. Remember your children in need especially; Judy Clark, Chris Bechtel, Margaret Perri and Chad Halverson. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Ground this congregation in the welcome you show us in forgiving our sin. Inspire each of us to welcome others for your honor and glory. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

With you is found the joy and promise of eternal life. Keep us in that joy as we remember all those who have gone before us. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Grant the prayers we have offered, what we have forgotten to ask, and whatever else you see that we need. We ask this in Jesus' name.

Amen.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you. (LEC Please share the Peace)

LEC please be seated.

NH remain standing.

OFFERING

LEC Please stand.

Create in Me a Clean Heart

Offering Song



OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

God of all creation, all you have made is good, and your love endures forever. You bring forth bread from the earth and fruit from the vine. Nourish us with these gifts, that we might be for the world signs of your gracious presence in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

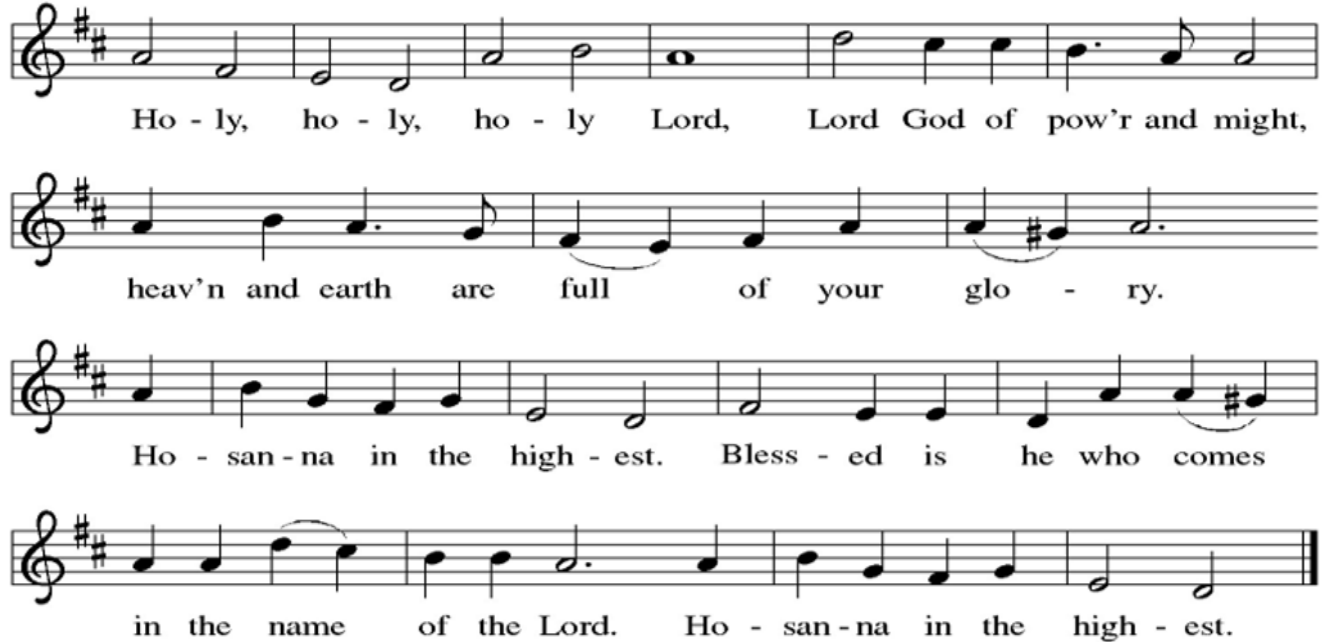
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ;
who on this day overcame death and the grave,
and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life.
And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord,
and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food,
the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord;
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,
be all honor and glory, now and forever.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

Please be seated.

COMMUNION

The body of Christ, given for you.
The blood of Christ, shed for you.
Amen.

COMMUNION SONG

Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on
us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the
sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

SONG DURING COMMUNION

THIS LITTLE LIGHT OF MINE

1. This lit - tle light of mine, Yes!
2. Hide it un - der a bush - el? No! I'm gon - na let it shine;
3. Won't let Sa - tan blow it out,
4. Let it shine to Je - sus comes,

This lit - tle light of mine, Yes!
Hide it un - der a bush - el? No! I'm gon - na let it shine;
Won't let Sa - tan blow it out,
Let it shine till Je - sus comes,

Let it shine, let it shine, all the time.

Please stand.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

Gracious God, in this meal you have drawn us to your heart, and nourished us at your table with food and drink, the body and blood of Christ. Now send us forth to be your people in the world, and to proclaim your truth this day and evermore, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

Amen.

SENDING SONG

ELW #543

Go, My Children, with My Blessing



1 "Go, my chil - dren, with my bless - ing, nev - er a - lone.
2 "Go, my chil - dren, sins for - giv - en, at peace and pure.
3 "Go, my chil - dren, fed and nour - ished, clos - er to me.



Wak - ing, sleep - ing, I am with you, you are my own.
Here you learned how much I love you, what I can cure.
Grow in love and love by serv - ing, joy - ful and free.



In my love's bap - tis - mal riv - er I have made you mine for - ev - er.
Here you heard my dear Son's sto - ry, here you touched him, saw his glo - ry.
Here my Spir - it's pow - er filled you, here my ten - der com - fort stilled you.



Go, my chil - dren, with my bless - ing, you are my own."
Go, my chil - dren, sins for - giv - en, at peace and pure."
Go, my chil - dren, fed and nour - ished, joy - ful and free."

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

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WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS

Music: LEC: Dottie Hayden NH: Kittrick Singerhouse
Lector: LEC: Dick Quilling NH: Jeff Pickerign
Acolyte: LEC: Izzy Bowen NH: Rowen Binkowski
Videographer: NH: Dianne Jacobson
LEC Communion Glass washers: *Lynne Quilling, Jenny Doane, Julie Miller,
Darlene Harnish
LEC Ushers: *Chad Cook, Clasen Cook, Carter Lee, Cashton Lee, Todd Quilling

OPPORTUNITIES & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sun: **RALLY SUNDAY**
9:00am – Worship – LEC
10:00 LEC Sunday School Brunch
10:30am Worship – NH
11:30 NH Sunday School Activities and Refreshments
Mon: Office Closed
Tues: *Office Open 8:00-5pm*
9am Lydia Bible Study - LEC
Wed: *Office Open 8:00-3:30*
9am Quilting – LEC
10am Dorcas Circle
6:30pm Confirmation meeting & food for 7th 8th and 9th graders, parents & mentors-NH
Thurs: *Office Open 8:00-3:30*
10am St. James Circle
Fri: *Office Closed*
Sun: 8:00-8:45am LEC Sunday School - LEC
9:00am – Worship - LEC
10:30am - Worship – NH - Children's time w/ Jeni Gruber

Attention Confirmation Families!

We will have a confirmation information meeting from 6:30pm to 8:00pm at New Hope on September 16th. This is for our incoming 7th grade, 8th graders as well as our 9th graders who will be confirmed on Reformation Sunday-Oct. 25th

We would like all students, mentors, parents or anyone wanting to be part of the confirmation experience to join us for food, fellowship & information. Please contact the church office (715-664-8568 or nhleccsec@wwt.net) or Pastor Alison (1-414-429-3638 or nhleccpr@wwt.net) if you plan to attend or if this date will not work for you. More details will be announced closer to the 16th.

Little Elk Creek Lutheran Church School Kit Project

“Jesus loves the little children, all the children of the world. Red and yellow, black and white, they are precious in his sight, Jesus loves the little children of the world!”

Children around the world are preparing to go back to school. Worldwide catastrophic natural disasters and civil unrest have created a great need. Lutheran World Relief reports, “Requests for School Kits are coming faster than we can keep up”.

Considering global needs, our goal is 100+ kits! Thank you for your past donations! Any donation (including monetary) greatly helps.

Each School Kit Contains:	
four 70-count, wide-ruled notebooks one pencil sharpener five unsharpened pencils with erasers one 12-inch/30 cm. ruler	five blue-ink or black-ink pens (non-gel) one box of 24-count crayons one blunt-nose scissors one 2 1/2-inch eraser
One sturdy drawstring backpack	

These are fun and easy to sew! The Lutheran World Relief website [\[www.http://lwr.org/schoolkits\]](http://lwr.org/schoolkits) has fabulous sewing directions if you are interested in “sewing up” a few school bags. We can provide you with appropriate fabric. Contact Christine Ness (715-235-4503) with questions.

We will collect through September 30th. You may place your donations of love in the box near the coffee area of church. God’s blessings to you all!

LEC QUILTING will resume weekly on Wednesdays beginning September 9 due to roadwork the previous week. We will begin at 9 a.m. or when it is convenient for you. The first few weeks we will take advantage of the Farmer's Market for lunch, or you may bring your own. We have a nice stack of tops & bottoms ready to be quilted, plus we will assemble school kits when ready. Consider joining us for fun and fellowship, our quilting is not complicated!

LEC QUILTS will be displayed on the church pews on Sunday, Sept. 27th through Oct. 4th. They may be purchased for \$40 with the proceeds designated to shipping costs.

New Hope quilters will be back at it starting September 8th - 9am at New Hope Church. They meet the 2nd and 4th Tuesday during Sept. thru April months.

Please feel free to join them - all are invited!

The quilts they have done will be displayed on the church pews Sept. 27th and Oct. 4th. Quilts can be purchase for \$40.00 each.

The remaining Quilts are distributed to local needs, organizations and benefits.



'Team Jesus!

Sunday School Rally Sunday!

Calling all Sunday Schoolers and church families!
Come be part of Team Jesus as we learn, worship, and grow together in the next year.

Rally Sunday, September 13, 2026

Worship: Little Elk Creek worship at 9:00.

-Tim Rivard is preparing brunch featuring:
pancakes and the fixings PLUS we'll enjoy
Kim Foslid's homemade cinnamon rolls
following worship.

New Hope worship at 10:30.

-Treat and activities following worship

-Bring your backpack to be blessed during
church worship.

-Wear a team shirt if you like.

Regular Sunday School begins, Sunday September 20th:

-LEC: 8:00-8:45 a.m. Worship: 9:00

-New Hope: Children's Time during 10:30 Worship

Faithfully yours,
Jane Hulett
Alison Westphal
Lynne Quilling

TEAM
JESUS