

## A Gospel Welcome

by Lacey Wheeler



We did a thing.

We signed up our three-year-old for soccer, and my spouse and I have been so excited! Our son? That's another story.

Kicking the ball around the house is one thing, but going to soccer is scary to this little one. New people, new places, new experiences.

When it was time to get ready for the very first soccer practice, our very independent and adamant boy did everything in his power to stall. The King of Stalling, that one: Hiding behind the couch, running around, avoiding putting clothes on. You know—the usual.

We were already running ten minutes behind and putting cleats and clothes on was the last thing on this boy's mind.

We rolled up to our very first practice. Hope still somewhat lingering in our hearts. The minute we rolled up, piercing cries from the back of the truck.

"I don't want to go to soccer!"

When we asked if he was scared, he said yes he was scared and didn't want to go.

Through screaming, kicking, coaxing, and a lot of talking, he finally made it to the soccer field and mostly spent the practice on the side-lines with mom and dad.

It was a first step—we made it to practice! Barely!

And then, we experienced some pretty incredible humans who both cared for our son, and us, as we endured the struggle of the first practice. Kids on the field, and the coach, called out to our son from the field, inviting him to participate in the fun. Looking over, calling him by name, they invited him past his fear.

Parents who were also on the sidelines watching their incredible kids participating wonderfully in practice said to us, "Don't worry! We were there last year!" They assured us it would get better and even gave me a hug of comfort when we first arrived. My heart melted as our struggle was seen and support offered in such a brief exchange.

Ultimately, our son got on the field—because his dad went out on the field with him, and maybe next time he just might play with the other kids!

Our son was beginning an activity he had never experienced before, he was going to a place he had not played at, and with some children he didn't know. This was scary.

As his parents, we were also venturing into new territory. We didn't know how much our parenting was causing this behavior or if he was just being a kid. We questioned all night whether we were bad parents or if there was something we could have done differently. Parent guilt is real, y'all!

This experience was uncomfortable and scary for us too.

And the incredible welcome of a few parents and children made us feel like we weren't alone, that it was okay that we were there, and we weren't horrible parents. The welcoming atmosphere helped our son venture into the field bit by bit—even if it was with his dad.

These incredible people brought with them a Gospel Welcome, giving us life in the midst of anxiety, and bringing God's welcome—even to a soccer field!

So many people feel this way about church.

It is scary to try a church out for the first time. First-time guests don't know where they are supposed to park, where the nursery is, where the bathrooms are, if the people are friendly, or if they will be accepted into the community at all. This is a risky and vulnerable place to be.

And the people can make all the difference.

Research suggests that guests make up their minds about whether they will come back to a church within two minutes of entering.

Two.

And many people make up their mind by the time they enter the building!

What does this mean?

We are on the verge of a season where folks who have not been in church for a while are mustering up the courage to attend for Easter Sunday.

# A Gospel Welcome Cont...

For one day, and for various reasons, folks will put on their soccer clothes, lace up their cleats, and meagerly and tentatively sit on the sidelines or maybe kick a ball or two.

And it will be what you and I do to include them, welcome them, that will make the difference.

According to the Lewis Center for Leadership, people who are engaging in churches today are not looking for programming first, or even service opportunities, but are looking for relationship. They are looking to experience deep connection with other people who will be on their team and help them to make the transition from a not so often church goer to a regular guest at church.

In the article *Three Touchstones of Welcoming Newcomers Today* from Lewis Center for Church Leadership, three things matter to people who are connecting in churches:

- **1. Safe Place: A judgment-free place where a guest's space is respected as well as their sensitivities to physical space and even physical touch, and letting the guest lead in a handshake or otherwise.**
- **2. People Matter: People don't join institutions these days, they make friends and spend time in community with those friends. It's all about relationship and personal connection.**
- **3. Joyful Energy: People experience the joy that comes from abundant life in Christ.**

Dr. Amy Oden, a seminarian professor for more than 35 years describes hospitality, or welcome, as this:

"At its deepest, hospitality points to God...the deepest welcomes, often unexpected, profoundly shape our view of ourselves, of others, and of God...the point of gospel hospitality is to invite others to experience the living, welcoming God and to experience the living welcoming God in others...ultimately, the gospel hospitality is God's welcome into abundant life, into God's own life."

As we prepare for Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday, may we lean into God's gospel hospitality, one that welcomes unexpectedly in ways that lead to abundant life!

Check out these Welcoming Tips to try out this week in service!

**Ten-Foot Rule:** Anytime you come within ten feet of a new guest, just say "hi"!

**Five-Minute Rule:** After the worship service, only talk to people you do not know for the first five minutes following service! Most guests leave quickly after their first time in worship and when we focus on getting to know people around us for those five minutes, we can make connections and build relationships!

**Just Ask Their Name:** See someone you don't know or recognize but don't know their name? Simply say, "Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_, I know we've met before, can you remind me of your name?"

Nobody expects anyone to remember all the names from one encounter! Give yourself some grace, and let's meet some people!

# IN THE KNOW



**United Women in Faith**

We are having a busy month this month! Mark your calendars and plan to attend the annual Mother Daughter Banquet, "Stitch Your Heart Full of Love", on April 9 at 6:00PM. We are moving the Mother Daughter Banquet to April instead of August in hopes of making it easier for more women and daughters to attend!

## Mother Daughter Banquet Info

- **Punch & Pictures at 6:00PM & Dinner at 6:30PM**
- **Menu: Coleslaw, Meat Loaf, Scalloped Potatoes, Green Beans, and Strawberry Shortcake.**
- **Reservations: Before/After Service March 23, March 30 or April 6. You can also call the Church Office.**
- **Cost: Full Portion-\$8.50, Half Portion-\$6, 4 & Under-Free**



# UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH *Sunday*

UW Faith Sunday will be April 27th.

Bobby Reed will bring us the message with several women playing a part in the service.

Last but not least, a huge "THANK YOU" to all who supported the UW Faith "Sell Your Stash" event. (Event Photos on page 06) We couldn't have done it without so many of you helping. We truly appreciate each one of you! It was fun and enjoyed by several individuals. We raised \$975.25 for our mission of supporting women, children, and youth. -UWF President, Rita McGinnis



Hope Connections 2024 Report: We received 23,379 pounds of food from the Kansas Food Bank. We paid \$10,253 for that food for an average of .44 per pound. Fair market value of that food is \$46,056. We hosted 62 events. 122 households consisting of 449 individuals were served. Thank you all for your continued support. ~Meggin DeMoss

Upcoming

# EASTER EVENTS

## Easter EGG DECORATING PARTY!

We invite everyone to join us for our 2nd Annual Easter Egg Decorating Party! Stay after worship service to eat some snacks and get creative as we use markers, paints, and dyes to design beautiful eggs! This year we will be using plastic eggs so everyone can keep them from year to year as a memory of the fun we will have!

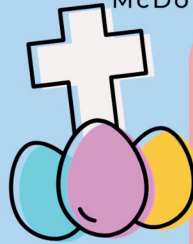
**SUNDAY, APRIL 13TH**  
Following worship service

Contact Stacie Fox  
with any questions.  
2316-210-7502



## JOIN THE SWEET CAUSE! EASTER EGG HUNT DONATIONS NEEDED!

In addition to our annual Easter Egg Hunt, this year the Children's Ministry will be making Easter baskets for the families staying at the Ronald McDonald House over the holiday weekend!



We are looking for donations of the following items to help with both events:

- Candy
- Easter trinkets
- Monetary



**PLEASE BRING DONATIONS TO THE CHURCH BY SUNDAY, APRIL 6TH.  
CONTACT STACIE FOX @ 316-210-7502 IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS!**

## EASTER *Son Rise Service*

SERVICE: 7:30AM      BREAKFAST: 7:30AM

JOIN US ON EASTER MORNING AT 7:30 AM FOR OUR SPECIAL "SONRISE" SERVICE, LED BY THE ROSE HILL UMC YOUTH GROUP.

WE WILL GATHER TOGETHER OUTDOORS AROUND THE CAMPFIRE FOR A MEANINGFUL TIME OF WORSHIP AND SCRIPTURE READINGS, CELEBRATING THE JOY OF CHRIST'S RESURRECTION.

FOLLOWING THE SERVICE, WE INVITE EVERYONE TO STAY FOR A HEARTFELT POTLUCK BREAKFAST AT 8:00 AM. PLEASE BRING A DISH TO SHARE AS WE ENJOY FELLOWSHIP AND CELEBRATE THE SEASON TOGETHER.



OUR REGULAR SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES WILL BEGIN AT 9:00 AM, SO THERE'S PLENTY OF TIME TO CONNECT AND REFLECT ON THE DAY'S BLESSINGS.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO CELEBRATING THIS SPECIAL DAY WITH YOU!



### *Lenten Series*

*Sundays March 9th - April 15th*

**From the Ashes: God Remembers**

*Palm Sunday*

*April 15th - 10:00 AM*

*Good Friday*

*April 18th - 6:50 PM*

*Easter Sunday*

*April 20th*

7:30 AM - YOUTH SUNRISE SERVICE WITH FOOD AFTER!

9:00 AM - SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR ALL AGES

10:00 AM - EASTER WORSHIP CELEBRATION & EASTER EGG HUNT!

*We are a family friendly church--all are welcome here!*

ROSE HILL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
CONNECT. LOVE. SERVE.



# Ash Wednesday

March 5th, Drive Thru/Traditional Service

Blair Beard  
1d · 📍

Happy Ash Wednesday friends! But it serves as an outward sign of an inward truth: we have sinned, we have mourned our choices and repented, and in the cross of Christ, we are forgiven. By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.  
Genesis 3:19, NIV



Louise Leis created a beautiful centerpiece for our Wednesday Night Ash Service



A Team from RHUMC met at 7:00AM in the Wee Rockets Parking Lot to offer our community a Drive-Thru Ash Wed experience...along with donuts and coffee donated from Casey's!

(Pictured from left to right: Greg Bird, Alicia Bird, Annabeth Bextel, Meggin DeMoss, Lacey Wheeler, Evan Black, Mark Davis, Kreg Anderson, and Shannon Murphy.)

## March 2nd Special Guest Singer Joins RHUMC Choir



JONATAS MATHIAS

Photo By: Gwen Ward



SELL YOUR STASH  
FOR CASH  
WAS A SUCCESS!

UWF  
THANKS  
YOU!



WALK AROUND

# The Pond

Small Group

Led by Meggin DeMoss



RHUMC'S

# children



# YOUTH ACTIVITIES

## Spring Break Top Golf Outing



Packing Laundry Soap for Hope Connections

Sock Drive was a Success!

Making College Care Packages





# FEATURED YOUTH



## KAILENN WYSSMAN



Kailenn is an outgoing young lady that likes to stay busy! She is deeply involved in Scouts of America and enjoys camping. She plays HS Volleyball and Softball and she is in the FFA program in Oxford HS. Kailenn is involved with the Youth Program at church and enjoys helping in any way, especially in the nursery.

-AMBER WYSSMAN (MOM)



## NOTE FROM THE YOUTH DIRECTOR

Kailenn is awesome to have in youth group! Going to school in Oxford when she invites friends it's youth that probably would not otherwise wind up at Rose Hill UMC so she's spreading out mission to a greater area! -EVAN BLACK

## STRING THEORY REDUX

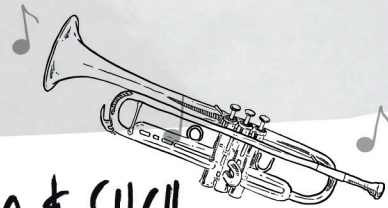
But for a moment in time  
Our soul wobbles in pain  
And the possessions purchased  
And the Earth things gained  
Return diminished all in vain

Light years are distance  
Dawn and Dusk mean nothing  
His time is not our time  
The wisdom of this sublime  
New pain old thoughts returning

Conclusions are pointless  
As the string spools out  
Never ending never repeating  
Always seeking always seeking  
Always counting superficial doubt



-ALAN LAZARUS (POET)



## BIO & SUCH

"I have always enjoyed talk, language and writing. (save us, oh Great Scribe, from texting). The transition to poetry is simple, in a way. Enter music. There is rhythm, rhyme, contrast, balance, smoothness, directness, obfuscation and harshness. As a trumpet player, I've played a lot of notes over the years and some were not exceptionally accurate. Sound familiar?"



# COLORING CONTEST

March 2025

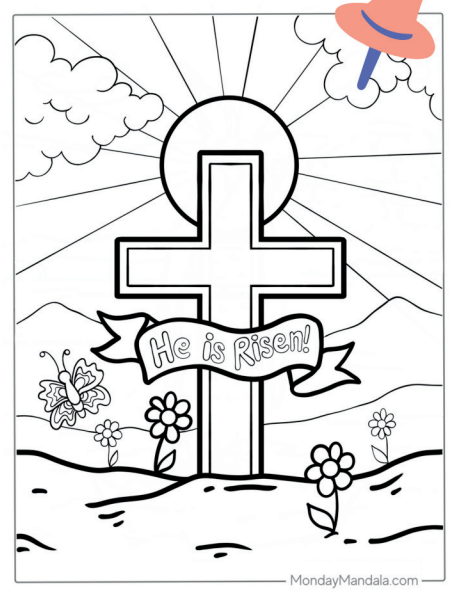
## Winner

LITTLE MISS  
*Quinn*  
*Hall*



## APRIL COLORING CONTEST

🎨🌟 Calling all young artists! Our new Monthly Coloring Contest is here! Each month, pick up a fresh coloring page from the greeters' table in the lobby, let your creativity shine, and turn in your masterpiece to the same spot. Every entry will be proudly displayed on our hallway board! Be sure to fill out your name, age, and grade at the bottom, and have a parent/guardian add their name and contact info on the back. The winning artwork will earn a special prize and be featured in next month's newsletter! Let's get coloring!



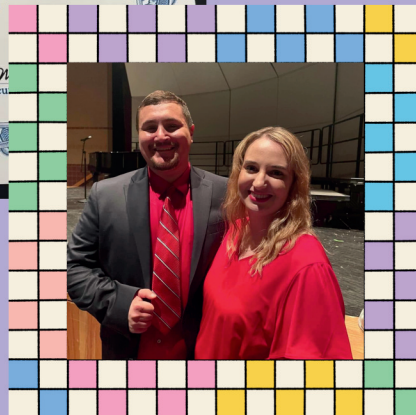
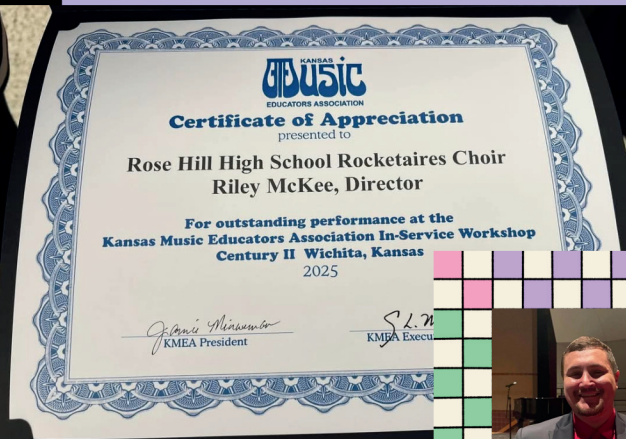
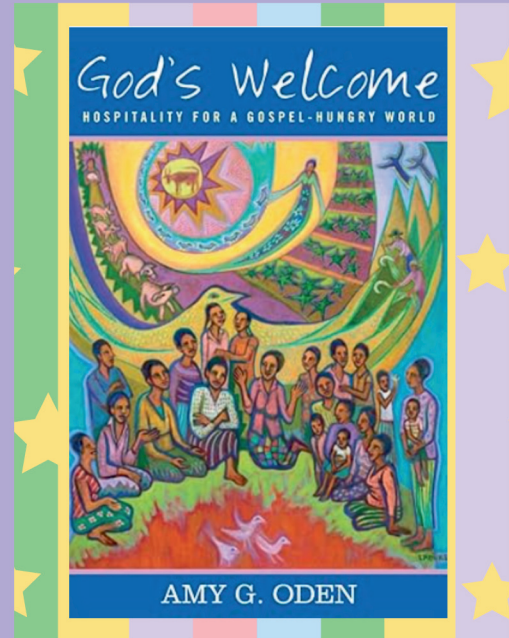
# BOOK REC

BY LACEY WHEELER

## God's Welcome: Hospitality for a Gospel-Hungry World

Dr. Oden has studied hospitality throughout scripture and the ways that this tradition is baked into the Hebrew Bible and into the Gospel story of God. As we look forward to welcoming guests on Easter Sunday, this is an incredible read as we connect the good news of God's welcome to our welcome of each other!

**Happy Reading!**



## CELEBRATING RILEY

Congrats to our Choir Director, Riley, on receiving the Kansas Music Educators Association's Certificate of Appreciation! Of course, we already knew you were outstanding! We are so proud to call you one of our own!



## TOWN HALL MEETING

**Tuesday, May 13th, 7:00PM in The Sanctuary**

Check out the exciting things happening here at RHUMC! At our Town Hall Meetings we love to celebrate the great ministries happening here, the incredible people, and the God-sized mission for our community. We create space to look over our current outcomes for RHUMC as well as make space for any questions or wonderings folks may have! We are looking forward to sharing space with each of you as we celebrate together and stay connected with one another! See you there! ~Lacey Wheeler

# celebrations

I want to extend a grateful and heartfelt thank you to each of you and the ways you made my birthday a celebration! This congregation is a place that cares well for one another and I do not take that for granted, and am so grateful to be a part of this community. Thank you for surrounding me with love, cards, and all the goodies!

With Deepest Appreciation,

*Lacey Wheeler*



# OFFICE CLOSED

*Monday April 21st*

## Anniversaries

APRIL 20TH

Richard & Diane Mann



## Birthdays

APRIL 1ST

Rhonda Davis

Linda McBride

Roger Miller

APRIL 4TH

Brittany Jensen

APRIL 8TH

Joel Koehn

APRIL 10TH

Maddox Bextel

APRIL 13TH

Kayla Anderson

APRIL 15TH

Tim Nelson

APRIL 16TH

Curtis Nickel

APRIL 22ND

Darby Vanhoutan

APRIL 27TH

Sandra Futhey

Jack Wilks





**ROSE HILL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**  
 PO BOX 189 | 19551 SW BUTLER RD  
 ROSE HILL, KS 67133

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

PAGE 12



**Please notify the church office when your request can be taken off the list. Thank you!**

Please keep these in your prayers: Our church; our country; our troops; people of the world; our government leaders; law enforcement officers (safety); our community; students; teachers; Americans overseas; those suffering with mental illness; Nursing home/rehab residents; Loss of life/lives; Loss of Beloved Pets.

**2/2:** Carol Huckins; Neighbor, Don Patterson (health issues)

**2/9:** Amber Wyssman; Raymond Smith (Amber's Dad) had quadruple bypass 2/11; Dale & Kay McNery; Jamie L is home and slow road in healing; Kimberly Konecny; Co-worker Adam's sister Melanie had surgery 2/3 for a brain tumor. Now, please pray for vision in her right eye.

**2/23:** Greg & Priscilla Rinehart: For Greg as he continues radiation treatments; Christine & Riley McKee; Christine's father, Harry's surgery went well. Prayers for healing and recovery.

**3/2:** Greg & Priscilla Rinehart: Greg is done with radiation. Next CT scan is March 24th; Kimberly Konecny; Co-Worker, Adam's sis-Melanie, brain tumor surgery successful- Adam thanks us for praying. Melanie's sight is better & she is doing OK, but Adam would appreciate us to continue praying.; Beverly Grunder; Allen is having heart valve replacement on Wednesday, March 5th

**3/9:** Amber Wyssman: Raymond Smith (Amber's Dad) had quadruple bypass surgery. He is doing amazingly great!! He will start physical therapy soon. His wounds from surgery are all healed- his sternum still has more time to heal but his visible wounds are healed.