

The Witness

THE NEWSLETTER OF WEST SIDE BAPTIST CHURCH, TOPEKA, KS

FROM PASTOR’S PEN: “ALLELUIA IS OUR SONG!”

There are seasons in our Christian lives when our voices grow quiet - when we’re weighed down by the world, grieving in death’s shadow, and focused on repentance. Lent is such a time for us - repentance, contrition, sadness. It’s a season when we walk with Christ carrying our crosses. It’s a solemn spiritual journey, and for a while, a single word is set aside: **Alleluia** (traditionally not spoken during the season of Lent).

But then - EASTER! The stone is rolled away. The tomb is empty. And like the first light of dawn breaking across the darkness, joy returns to the people of God. The word we have held back bursts forth again: **Alleluia!** Not as a whisper, but as a shout of victory. Three times we recite this ancient hymn of praise in worship - on Easter Sunday and each week in Eastertide.

Christ is Risen, Alleluia!
Alleluia! He is risen indeed!

The Resurrection turns our sorrow into joy. As the women came to the tomb, expecting death, they were met instead with life. **“He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said” (Matthew 28:6).** Fear gave way to wonder, and wonder to proclamation. The silence of the grave could not hold the Living Word: **Alleluia** (Latin: “Praise Ye the Lord!”)

And so, **Alleluia becomes our Easter song again**—not because life is suddenly easy, but because Christ is truly risen by the power of the Holy Spirit. God the Father promised Jesus would live forever - and God keeps His promises!



APRIL 2026

- April Fool’s Day.....1
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- Good Friday3
- Kids Egg Hunt4
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- Sunrise Service. 7 AM
- Breakfast..... 8 AM
- Sunday School . 9 AM
- Worship10:30AM
- Rainbow Acres 14-18
- Secretary’s Day.....22
- ABCCR Senior Adult
- Retreat 22-23

April 2026						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

PASTOR'S PAGE

The apostles echo this joy throughout the New Testament. Saint Paul writes with bold assurance: ***“If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile... But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead” (1 Corinthians 15:17, 20)***. The Easter Resurrection is the foundation of our hope. It’s not wishful thinking or distant promise, but a living reality that reshapes everything. Because He Lives - We can Celebrate!

In another place, Peter reminds us that this resurrection is not only Christ’s victory, but ours as well: ***“By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead” (1 Peter 1:3)***. A living hope—one that breathes, grows, and sings within us.

That is why the Church cannot keep silent at Easter. Our joy must be expressed. It must be sung, as St. Augustine wrote in his *Exposition on Psalm 148*, “This is the Halleluia which we sing.” Consider the beloved hymn written by Charles Wesley (1739):

“Jesus Christ is risen today, Alleluia! Our triumphant holy day, Alleluia!
Who did once upon the cross, Alleluia! Suffer to redeem our loss, Alleluia!”

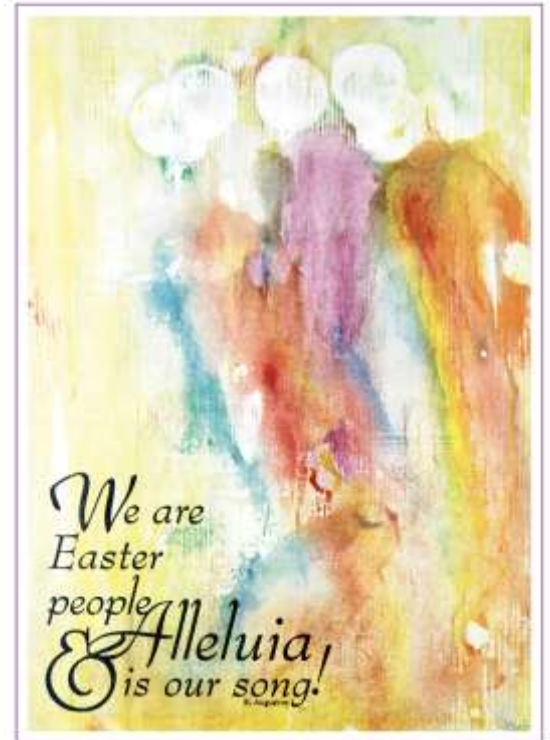
This hymn does more than recount an event—it invites us into celebration. Each Alleluia is a declaration: ***death is defeated, sin is forgiven, and new life has begun.***

This Joy of Easter is not meant for one morning only - It is a way of life. Jesus’ resurrection calls us to carry this song into the ordinary rhythms of our days—to let hope rise where despair once lingered, to let gratitude replace fear, and to let love be stronger than death in all we do. Even when life feels uncertain, even when the shadows seem long, we are an Easter people.

The tomb is still empty. Christ is still risen. And Alleluia is still our song.

So let us sing it boldly. Let us live it faithfully. Let us share it generously.

~ Easter blessings, Pastor Ivan+

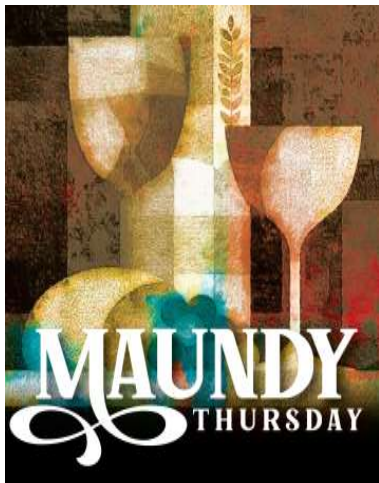


HE IS RISEN! ALLELUIA!
An Ecumenical Easter Sunrise Service

Easter Sunday, April 5 | 7:00 AM
Old Prairie Town at Ward Meade Historic Site and Botanical Garden
124 NW Fillmore St., Topeka, Kansas 66606
All Are Welcome!

This event is not affiliated with, endorsed, or sponsored by Old Prairie Town at Ward Meade Historic Site and Botanical Garden or the Shawnee County Parks + Recreation.

HOLY WEEK: YOU'RE INVITED!



MAUNDY THURSDAY HOLY COMMUNION SERVICE APRIL 1 @ 6:00 PM

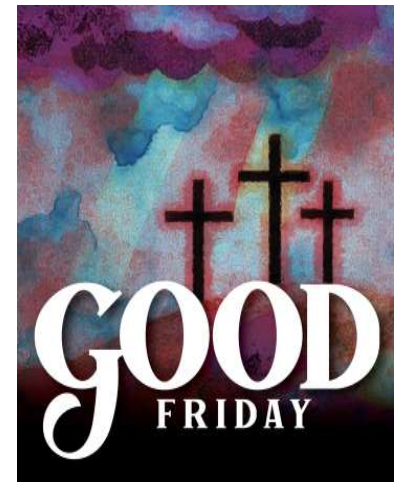
Maundy means command when Jesus commanded his disciples to wash one another's feet. Christians believe this to be the day when Jesus celebrated his final Passover ("The Last Supper") with His disciples.

We will remember Jesus' Last Supper with his disciples before his prayers in the Garden of Gethsemane, the betrayal, and his arrest. The Lord's Supper or Holy Communion will be open to all persons who love Jesus Christ.

GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE, "THE LAST WORDS OF CHRIST," on Friday, APRIL 3 @ 6:00 PM

For Christians, **GOOD FRIDAY** is one of the most important holy days of the year. On this somber day, we remember Jesus' betrayal, arrest, torture, suffering, sacrifice and crucifixion on the cross of Calvary.

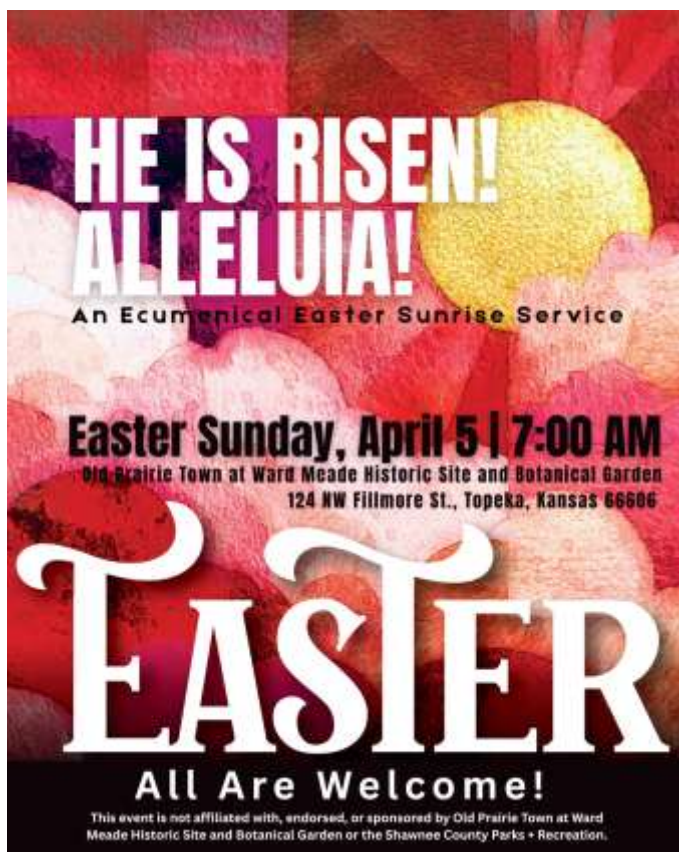
We will gather for a service of scripture reading and quiet reflection. **All are welcome. Please wear black or mourning clothes.**



EASTER SUNDAY

**JESUS IS ALIVE!
LET'S CELEBRATE!
10:30 AM**

**BELIEVERS BAPTISM
THE LORD'S SUPPER
HOLY COMMUNION
CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS
*WEAR FESTIVE CLOTHES & HATS!***



CHURCH OFFICE

 Our Staff

**BE INVOLVED!
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!
SIGN UP TODAY**

SHAREFEST 2026: Serve with your family and church friends during the annual non-denominational **Topeka ShareFest workday on Saturday, April 25, 2026 from 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM.** Free T-shirt for registered persons.



WARD MEADE HABITAT FOR HUMANITY TAYLOR STREET PROUD ALLEY CLEAN UP: Kids and Adults are welcome to join the Youth Groups and volunteers for the **Habitat for Humanity / Ward Meade Clean Up on Saturday, April 25, from 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM.** Sign Up at www.givepulse.com/event/849690



CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:

**MONDAYS: PASTOR'S DAY OFF
MONDAYS - CLOSED
TUESDAY - THURSDAYS
8:00 AM to 4:30 PM
FRIDAYS: 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM**

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**WEST SIDE BAPTIST CHURCH
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Phone: (785) 233-4241**

Church Email: office@wsbctopeka.org
Pastor Email: pastor@wsbctopeka.org
We Do Not Use Google (gmail), Yahoo, or other email address. Always Verify!



WEST SIDE BAPTIST CHURCH
ONLY ONE NUMBER TO CALL
(785) 233-4241
Call Day or Night!

Make one phone call to reach the Baby Closet, The Office, the Pastor, a Deacon, the Van Driver, Help with utilities, rent, and more. **DAY or NIGHT!**

Listen to the Prompts!

WWW.WSBCTOPEKA.ORG

CHILDREN & YOUTH MINISTRY

WWW Kids Bible Club has kicked off to a great start. The Cornerstones who are (K - 7th grade) and The Explorers (ages 8th - 12th grade) will continue to work on the "Fruit of the Spirit". The Pulse and Emerge groups will start a new series that will be a video based curriculum called 'The Story'. The curriculum will help students grasp **The Bible as one story: God's story**. Bring Your Kids and their friends to **WWW Kids Bible Club on Wednesdays for a FREE SUPPER at 5:30 PM. Need a RIDE? Call the Church at (785) 233-4241. ~ Jennifer Emery, Christian Ed Coordinator**

EASTER CANDY – We need to start collecting bags of individually wrapped easter candy to stuff easter eggs with. If you would like to donate candy, you can drop it off in the church office. If you would like to donate cash, please make sure you write on the envelope what the cash is for. If you would like to help stuff Easter Eggs on Wednesday April 1 at 6:00 pm see Tonya.

EASTER EGG HUNT
SATURDAY, APRIL 4 @ 10 AM
MEADOWS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
See Tonya for details or to volunteer.



Youth Road Trip to MPYC 2026
YMCA of the Rockies,
Estes Park, CO
Theme: "Rooted in the Word"
June 6–10, 2026

Get ready for an unforgettable experience as our youth group heads to the **Mountain and Prairie Youth Conference (MPYC)**! This high school youth conference, sponsored by the American Baptist Churches of the Rocky Mountains and ABC of Nebraska, offers a

unique opportunity for spiritual growth, fellowship, and adventure in the breathtaking Rocky Mountains.

Cost: \$375 per individual (youth and sponsors) before March 15, 2026; \$400 after March 15, 2026.

Parents are welcome too! <https://www.mpyc-abc.org/>

TREASURER'S REPORT

Our income for January and February was \$116,427.26 which is 40.33% to date of our budget \$288,680 (without the budgeted Investment income of \$33,187.00). With the investment income and budget of \$321,867, it is 36.17%. We received in January one of our two Topeka Community Foundation distributions totaling \$10,560. We also received several annual tithes from church members during these first two months. There was a \$500 donation to Baby Closet from the family of Bruno Sprengs. What a lovely gift from his family.

Our expenses for January and February were \$84,725.82 which is 22.12% to date of our budget of \$383,035. The most remarkable expense during this period was the \$28,530 to McElroys and \$5,700 to Midwest Coating for the new air conditioner for the west section of our church building. The air conditioner was removed from a closet in the northwest corner classroom to a new one installed on the roof.

The difference of income to expenses for January and February was \$31,701.44.

Our checking account balance shown on the balance sheet is \$31,563.77. This includes: -\$29,657.84 in (#1001) main account; \$5,041.02 in (#1003) Outreach funds; \$42,189.40 in (#1006) Capital Campaign; \$246.42 in (#1009) Youth Fund; and \$2,503.89 in (#1030) Benevolent Fund.

We are at a time of making adjustments to our financial record keeping after the passing of Rita Adams. We sought assistance from Vonda Brecheisen who is the accountant for ABCCR. The council voted to sign a letter of engagement asking Vonda to work with us this year on our transition. She will also do the audit review voted on at our December breakfast meeting. Our reports are updated in how they look but still provides us all the information. Lynda is doing the data entry into QuickBooks. You will see a few additional changes over the coming months and several of the air conditioner expenses will be reallocated to the Capital Campaign.

As you prepare your 2025 taxes, please let me know if you need another copy of your year-end giving statement. It is very easy for me to print you another copy.

Anyone wanting information on how to set up their annual Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) to go towards their 2026 tithe should talk with their investment advisor, attorney or have an initial conversation with Nancy Lindberg.

Let me know if you have any questions. Thanks. ~ Nancy Lindberg, Treasurer

Your generous gift to the **Easter Offering** helps support West Side Baptist Church's full work and ministry. Every dollar given empowers us to share the Good News of Jesus Christ through meaningful outreach, compassionate service, and life-changing evangelism—right here in our community and beyond. This special offering celebrates the hope of Christ's resurrection by investing in ministries that bring hope to others. Thank you for helping us love God, serve others, and share the Gospel this Easter season. Give today and be part of something eternal.

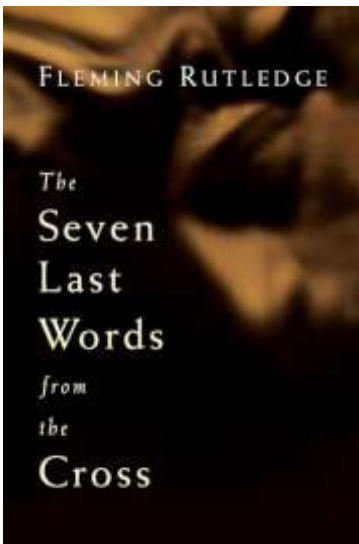


FELLOWSHIP & MEMBERSHIP

MEN'S & LADIES' NIGHT OUT – This is a fun time of building friendships in church. **Ladies' & Men's Night Out is a monthly restaurant outing on the First Tuesday of the month. We will meet on Tuesday, April 7, at 6:00 pm at El Ranchito Mexican Restaurant on 3425 S Kansas Ave.** Each person is responsible for paying for their own meal, and don't forget to bring a friend and pay for their meal. Reservations are not needed, but please SIGN UP online or on the bulletin board so we can help the restaurant prepare!

EASTER IS HAPPENING – Easter is Sunday, April 5!

- ◆ **SUNRISE SERVICE**—Gather at 6:45 AM in Ward Meade Park at Old Prairie Town for our annual Easter Sunrise Service. If it's good weather, it will be on the patio behind the mansion, or in the old church if it's inclement weather (follow signs).
- ◆ **POTLUCK BREAKFAST** at 8 AM in Fellowship Hall (downstairs Cafeteria). Bring a casserole, side dish, fruit, quick bread or other breakfast items to share. See Colleen if you have any questions.
- ◆ **SUNDAY SCHOOL** at 9:15 AM
- ◆ **EASTER CELEBRATION SERVICE** in Sanctuary at 10:30 AM.



CHRISTIAN CLASSICS BOOK CLUB: Deepen Your Faith and Gain Wisdom from Spiritual Giants. Join the Christian Classics Book Club on the following days in April:

- ◆ **FOURTH SUNDAY** at 5:30 PM (HH)
- ◆ **FOURTH WEDNESDAY** at 11:30 AM (HH).

BOOK: "THE SEVEN LAST WORDS FROM THE CROSS" BY FLEMING RUTLEDGE

Join our Christian Classics Book Club Today!

Grab a hard copy or an electronic copy of the books online at your favorite book supplier, or at the Topeka/Shawnee County Public Library (TSCPL). Find study guides, the proposed 2026 Book list and other important information online at <https://wsbctopeka.org>.

WOMEN'S MINISTRY – SECOND TUESDAY at 5:30 PM: The Women's Ministry invites all women to our monthly gathering on the **second Monday of each month** for a time of food, fellowship, and faith. In November we will have a variety of snacks. Sign up sheet is on the bulletin board outside the Church Office. These evenings are set aside to relax, share stories, laugh together, and deepen our connections as sisters in Christ. Come grow with us in love and friendship!



MISSION

Mission Spotlight: Murrow Indian Children's Home

Over 150 years ago, in 1857 in Atoka, Oklahoma, an American Baptist missionary and his wife, Rev. Joseph Samuel Murrow, went to Oklahoma to help educate Native American children. Soon after, a dormitory-style haven was built for American Indian children who needed a place away from crisis, abuse, or neglect and needed education. In 1919, this first American Baptist orphanage for Native Americans moved to the campus of Bacone College in Muskogee, Oklahoma. It is a private, non-profit residential facility with campus living style. Five cottages are on site with three cottages dedicated to family-style living intended to use Christian principles to nurture up to ten children in each cottage home. Murrow Children's Home includes a transition program for older youth and a program for pregnant teens.



Soaring Eagle Gift Shop is an on-site shop offering authentic inter-tribal arts and crafts, such as jewelry, ribbon skirts, and beadwork.

Volunteers are welcome to assist with minor maintenance, landscaping, or teaching skills in Native arts or independent living.

Murrow regularly seeks donations of consumable supplies such as laundry detergent, snacks, and hygiene products.

West Side Baptist has taken three mission trips to Murrow Children's Home in 2014, 2015, and 2017. Mowing and trimming weeds, repairing equipment and bicycles, painting living spaces and rooms for the children, assembling dressers for some bedrooms, cleaning gutters, washing windows, changing ceiling lightbulbs, fixing playground equipment, painting stripes on the basketball court, cleaning spaces, appliances, and organizing the pantry in the volunteer cottage were some of volunteering tasks. Engaging with the children in the evening with playground games and water balloon fights and ice cream was fun for everyone. The piano and Jim's guitar sounded praise and worship for our devotional times, sharing ways and places we saw Jesus' love. Mission teams from West Side passed out blessings and were blessed in the giving. Congregational financial giving to missions budgeted the trip and additional financial love gifts purchased items and materials for various projects and items on their wish list. Learn more: <https://murrowindianchildrenshome.org>



Blessed to have participated in two of the mission trips to Murrow,
~ Marty Stevenson, Missions

DOORSTEP, INC

Doorstep's annual **Appreciation Banquet & Quilt Drawing** will take place on **Tuesday April 21st** at St. John's Lutheran. Everyone is welcome to join us as we celebrate Doorstep and our volunteers and wait to see who wins quilts. A *Love Offering* will be taken, and we will hand out Volunteer of the Year awards.



DOORSTEP
Neighbors Helping Neighbors

This June marks Doorstep's 60th anniversary of helping our neighbors in need by providing a hand up! We are planning our **9th annual Neighbor Helping Neighbors Walk/5K fun Run**, AND a celebration at Lake Shawnee to kick off our 60th year, and a big announcement for future changes! So mark **Saturday, June 6th** on your calendars and plan to participate in our walk/run and stick around for some fun afterwards!

Blessings,
Lisa Cain, LBSW

AM. BAPTIST CENTRAL REGION 2026 SENIOR ADULT RETREAT APRIL 22-23, 2026 MILTON BAPTIST CHURCH 1213 N. SYCAMORE RD. MILTON, KS 67106

Full Retreat (includes program and 3 meals) per person @ \$95.00 per person

One Day only (Wednesday or Thursday) per person @ \$70.00 per person

Registration Deadline - April 8, 2026 **\$10 Late fee assessed if postmarked after April 8, 2026

Cancellation Policy: A full refund will be given if cancelled by April 15, 2026; \$25 non-refundable cancellation fee per individual after April 15, 2026.

Hotel Information – Hampton Inn by Hilton, 455 N Crowne Dr., Goddard, KS

316-453-0444. Cost is \$109 plus taxes if you use Code 503. Other hotels are available in the area but with no transportation provided.

Register Online at <https://www.abccr.org/senioradult> or Pick Up a Paper Copy in the Office

Sr. Adult Retreat

April 22-23, 2026

Milton Baptist Church

1213 N. Sycamore Rd., Milton, KS



Rev. Soozie Whitten-Ford
Keynote Speaker

Wholly Holy Hospitality

Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with the Lord's people who are in need. **Practice hospitality.** Romans 12:10-13 NIV



WORSHIP

The Revised Common Lectionary
Texts Year A

Gospel Reader

Deacon Sonia Roling

EASTER SUNDAY APRIL 5

Acts 10:34 - 43 or Jeremiah 31:1-6

Colossians 3:1-4 or Acts 10:34-43

John 20:1-18 or Matthew 28:1-10

SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

APRIL 12

Acts 2:14a, 22-32

1 Peter 1:3-9

John 20:19-31

THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

APRIL 19

Acts 2:14a, 36-41

1 Peter 1:17-23

Luke 24:13-35

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

APRIL 26

Acts 2:42-47

1 Peter 2:19-25

John 10:1-10



APRIL USHERS

Jack Janway, Charles Tanksley, Chuck Cozad, Ernie Longstaff, Steve Hood

COMMUNION SERVERS

Steve & Janelle Hood Tera Triggs, Ernie Reed, Rexanne Greuter and Jim Goodnow

SCRIPTURE READER

Nancy Lindberg

ACTIVITY PAGE

Spring Flowers Word Search

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

- azalea
- crocus
- daffodil
- daisy
- dandelion
- dianthus
- hyacinth
- iris
- lilac
- rose
- tulip
- violet

Spring Word Search

Name: _____

SpringTime



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

- Word list:
- BLOOM
 - FLOWER
 - GRASS
 - GREEN
 - GROW
 - NEST
 - PARK
 - RAIN
 - SEED
 - WARM



SunCatcherStudio.com



Help the Butterfly find the Flower!



Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

			1 NO NURSERY 10:30 am Bible Study 3:30 pm Baby Closet 5:30 pm No WWW 6:00 PM Fill Easter Eggs 7:15 pm No Choir	2 1:00 pm Baby Closet 6:00 pm Maundy Thursday	3 6:00 pm Good Friday Service	4 10:00 am Easter Egg Hunt 1:30 pm Worship Team
5 NURSERY 6:45 am Sunrise Service Ward Meade 8:00 am Breakfast 9:00 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship	6 9:00 am Baby Closet	7 6:00 pm Men's & Ladies Night Out El Ranchito 3425 S. Kansas Ave	8 NURSERY 10:30 am Bible Study 3:30 pm Baby Closet 5:30 pm WWW 6:00 pm Bible Study 7:15 pm Choir	9 1:00 pm Baby Closet	10 5:30 pm Bethel Neighborhood Ctr Light & Hope Gala Fundraiser	11 1:30 pm Worship Team
12 NURSERY 9:00 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship	13 9:00 am Baby Closet 5:30 pm Women's Ministry	14 No Council Meeting Leave for Mission Trip	15 NURSERY 10:30 am Bible Study 11:30 am Mission Meeting 3:30 pm Baby Closet 5:30 pm WWW 6:00 pm Bible Study 7:15 pm Choir	16 1:00 pm Baby Closet	17	18 1:30 pm Worship Team
19 NURSERY 9:00 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship Return from Mission Trip	20 9:00 am Baby Closet	21 5:30 pm Christian Ed Meeting 6:00 pm Fellowship Meeting	22 NURSERY 10:30 am Bible Study 11:30 am Book Club 3:30 pm Baby Closet 5:30 pm WWW 6:00 pm Bible Study 7:15 pm Choir	23 1:00 pm Baby Closet	24	25 12:00 pm Sharefest 1:30 pm Worship Team
26 NURSERY 9:00 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship 5:30 pm Book Club	27 9:00 am Baby Closet 6:00 pm DAR	28 6:30 pm Outreach Meeting	29 NURSERY 10:30 am Bible Study 3:30 pm Baby Closet 5:30 pm WWW 6:00 pm Bible Study 7:15 pm Choir	30 1:00 pm Baby Closet		