



From the Pastor's Desk

Sabbatical Worship Experiences

Thank you again for the opportunity to take a Sabbatical! It was a wonderful time of rest, rejuvenation, reconnecting, repair, and reading! One aspect that our family really enjoyed during the ten weeks of Sabbatical was the chance to go to a different church each week. It was a great experience and education! Besides, a passion that Sam and I share is exploring churches! I will never forget the time that Sam and I slipped into a historic church building only to discover that it had been turned into an Islamic mosque; but that is a story for another time.

During these past weeks we attended a wide variety of Christian churches ranging from Lutheran to Ukrainian Orthodox to non-denominational. Some were very well established, and others were new church plants. The services ranged from one hour to almost two hours, and the sermons ranged from 10 minutes to 65 minutes. Some had no liturgy, use of creeds, prayers, benediction, etc., while one had a full hour of liturgy and even the Scripture passages were chanted. For some the sermon followed the Scripture passage closely, but for others not so much. Some were extraordinarily friendly, while in others no one even spoke to us other than the official greeter at the door. Some “dropped us like a hot rock” when they found out I was a pastor and that we would not be joining!

The church plant utilized a screen to watch a pastor give a message, but the church itself did not have a preaching pastor. I wanted to go to a church plant as I have long hoped that we at Ruthfred could plant more churches in Southwestern PA. Perhaps that time is drawing near? We found that some churches utilized social media very well, while others really struggled in this area. Some had a good sense of their community and what it meant to engage their community, while others did not seem to grasp who they were trying to reach.

The worship style was varied as well. Some churches used bulletins extensively, while others did not even have bulletins, but relied entirely upon the screens. One church had no instruments and only a cantor and choir would sing, but not the congregation. Others were very much like our service at Ruthfred, and others had a worship team. In regards to the worship teams, sometimes they seemed to be more performance based, while others were intentional in leading the congregation in singing. Some churches used screens and some not, often depending upon



their architecture. A note about architecture is that it was clear how it was designed according to the theology of the church. In some, the design of the sanctuary was to emphasize the holiness of God and reverence for God, while others designed their sanctuary to emphasize the closeness and approachableness of God. Some sanctuaries were ornately decorated

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Ruthfred Lutheran Church

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with icons, paintings, stained glass windows, etc., while others were simply a plain room. A couple of the churches encouraged coffee in the sanctuary. Others did not have the aroma of coffee, but the aroma of incense surrounded us.

I was surprised by several who did not have any form of confession of sins or absolution, nor confession of faith. At some, Holy Communion was very sacred while at another it was almost an afterthought. Some were very focused on the presence of God and what it meant to worship Him, others seemed more focused on the people and whether or not they were comfortable and having a good experience.

What did I learn?

In these ten hours, we learned a lot! It was wonderful as a family to debrief in the van or sit around a bonfire that evening and discuss what we had learned and how God had ministered to us and what had been helpful as we worshiped at the different churches. This was a highlight of the sabbatical for our family! We learned about the diversity of churches and how our brothers and sisters in Christ do love the Lord and want to both worship God and to reach out to others with the Good News. This is done in a variety of ways! The body of Christ is richly diverse and beautiful as it is colored by different worship style traditions, culture, and theological understandings. At the end of EVERY Sunday, we found ourselves saying, we really miss Ruthfred and like being here the best!!!! We are so thankful for you, and it is a privilege to be your pastor!

*Grace & Peace,
Pastor Carlson*

*I was glad when they said to me,
“Let us go to the house of the Lord!”*
Psalm 122:1

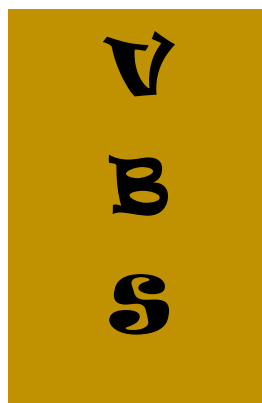
Life Quotes from Lutherans For Life



“So, pray, dear army of God, for the courage to seize opportunities to speak of God's saving glory and the peace it brings! So, pray, dear army of God, for those God has sent, in His name and ours, to herald that message where we cannot go! So, pray, dear army of God, that God would ... equip the next generation of faithful witnesses to add their voices in the chorus.”

Rev. Dr. Rich Gurgel, president of Martin Luther College

A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org



As director, I would like to thank all the church members, staff, and volunteers that made this year's event possible. It really is a mission of the church, and I was happy to coordinate and administer this mission. This year we had 130 kids attending. Our mission was to support the Ukrainian missionaries (Chimmel Family). Our final total for this was \$2,039! Our final day Bible point was "God is Surprising" which is based on Psalm 66:5 "Come and see what our God has done, what awesome miracles he performs for people". I was certainly surprised by this total as \$1,000 was donated Friday alone. Each day we challenged the boys and girls to out do each other. This year the boys won but only by \$7, so it was a very competitive race. There was a lot of fun along the way, and we may have raised the roof of the sanctuary a few times with the songs. Looking forward to next year. God Bless – Jason and Donna Weighley



Member Profile:

by Mettelise Ziegler

Mason Mitchell

Last month, I wrote about a recent high school graduate who joined our congregation after becoming an active member of our youth program. I decided to include another young man this month. Mason Mitchell shared his testimony with me candidly. Several times I questioned whether I had permission to disclose certain details, but he assured me that he intended to tell his story so that others would be drawn to the Gospel.

Mason's family is Catholic. He was raised by both parents and has an older sister, and a younger brother (who now attends SWAP at the church). But, in high school, Mason had been an atheist who was depressed, at the end of his rope, and considered ending his life. We often hear about teens burdened by our culture. They live life on fast tracks seeking recognition and achievement, often without positive peer relationships, and sadly, without purpose.

When our member Ray Urksa invited Mason to the youth's TNT program, Mason scoffed. He told Ray that he didn't want to "join your ___ cult." After several attempts, because of Ray's friendly urging, Mason gave in. Instead of indifference and contempt, Mason found kindness and acceptance, so he kept attending TNT. Yet, it was two years before Mason allowed God to change his resistant heart. The turning point occurred at Colorado's Free Lutheran Youth (FLY) convention. He looked up at the mountains, awed and emotionally moved by their beauty. He reasoned that there had to be something otherworldly within human beings capable of appreciating mountain splendor.

Mason is a deep thinker. Like St. Augustine, C.S. Lewis, and other apologists, Mason read widely to discern and weigh arguments in support of Jesus. He had deep conversations with Christians including our former youth director, Brandon Fouks. Slowly, he began to see evidence for everything the Bible teaches. When that happened, Mason became a new person.

Over the summer, Mason has been working at Aladdin's Eatery in McMurray where he has made friends with several Muslims. His friendships are genuine, so when the subject of God surfaces, conversations between them are congenial.

Mason is interning with Regan Johnson, our current youth director. In August, Mason will return for his second year at the Association Free Lutheran Bible College. He is not entirely sure where the Lord will lead him, but he is committed to spending life in service to Him. Mason is eager to share how God revealed Himself through the love of true friends and the trustworthy words of the Bible.



2022 Morning Journey Thru the Word Fall Session

It's hard to believe that fall is nearly upon us! I'm excited for our study of 1 Corinthians. This book has so much to say to us today. Corinthian culture and society that surrounded these new Christians was similar to what we deal with today. It was sexually charged with little respect for marriage, materialistic, and pleasure driven. Since the Corinthian Christians had all come out of that environment, they struggled to put off the only behaviors they had ever known. \ Paul doesn't mince words with them, but teaches them how to live a Christ-honoring life in a way that still instructs us today. Chapter twelve deals with the Holy Spirit, spiritual gifts, and the body of Christ. It also contains the beautiful discourse on love in chapter thirteen, the foundation of our existence because God first loved us, Jesus died because of love for us, and we love one another because of Him. Then there's chapter fifteen, a chapter filled with resurrection victory and the declaration of the unbreakable bond we have in Christ. Nothing in this world or the next can sever that bond or separate us from Him. What a Savior! This is a powerful study you will not want to miss.

Everyone is welcome! We have study groups for both women and men and an online discussion group. Please fill out a registration form and put it in the basket outside the sanctuary across from the elevator. Check the church website (www.ruthfred.org) to also register online.

Due to retirements of longtime small group leaders and changes in health we currently do not have the number of small group leaders we need to maintain the smaller groups we have always enjoyed. We know there are folks out there who can serve in this way. You do not need to be a Bible scholar and are guided through each lesson and how to teach it to your class. Don't wait to be asked — we may not know who God is calling. We are praying for you to step forward and respond to the Holy Spirit's tug on your heart!

Another need we have is for two people to serve our smallest participants in the nursery, giving their moms (or dads) an opportunity to attend Journey. I was talking to one of our members a few weeks ago who relayed to me that being able to have her children cared for turned into a life-changing experience. She'd not studied the Bible before and didn't know Jesus as her Savior. Thanks to the loving service of our nursery workers, her small group leader, and other Journey members who took her under their wing, she met her Lord and Savior, transforming her life and the life of her family.

Journey through the Word is a ministry that is making a difference in people's lives. We grow deeper spiritually, learn to better love, serve, and worship our Lord and God, and build each other up in faith. As you can see, there are so many ways to participate. Choose one and come journey with us!

Questions? Need more information? Contact Pat Moore, 412-833-3034 (patmoore9@msn.com) or Sue Swan, 412-708-3535 (writingcygnet@gmail.com)

Submitted by Sue Swan

2022 Evening Journey Thru the Word

Unique among all books ever written, the Bible accurately foretells specific events-in detail-many years, some times centuries, before they occur. Several thousand prophecies appear in the pages of the Bible, many have already have been fulfilled to the letter — no errors. The remaining prophecies reach into the future and may be seen unfolding as days go by. We are most likely familiar with terms like “The End Times, The Apocalypse, The Day of Judgment”. Terms such as these can be both fascinating and frightening for any student of God’s Word. They point to key questions people have wrestled with for centuries, including:

- What does the Bible tell us about the future?
- How much can we understand about biblical prophecy and its application in our lives?
- What signs and signals will precede the end of everything as we know it?
- Which of those signs and signals have already come to pass, which are we experiencing now, and which are still to come?

While the end times may be near and we may have many questions, we as Christians, can still be at peace and secure in our future and our salvation. While we live in a chaotic world, Christians seeking to navigate the uncertainties of the present and the future can be confident and at peace because of God’s word and the prophecies of future events. Jesus spoke to his disciples about the signs of his return in Matthew 24. While we do not know the time of his return, we know there will be signs and as Christians we must be ready.

Now learn the parable from the fig tree: as soon as its branch has become tender and sprouts its leaves, you know that summer is near; ³³so you too, when you see all these things, ^[v]recognize that ^[z]He is near, *right* at the ^[aa]door. ³⁴Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. ³⁵Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.

TIMING - But about that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. ³⁷For ^[ab]the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. ³⁸For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, ³⁹and they did not ^[ac]understand until the flood came and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be.

Evening Journey Thru the Word (JTTW) will be studying end time prophesy using Dr. David Jeremiah’s *Signs* series. Together we can grow in our knowledge and comprehension of one of the most misunderstood subjects of Scripture over the next several years. Dr. Jeremiah’s, “The Book of Signs” contains 31 Undeniable Prophecies of the Apocalypse. This year we will use the first of three study guides that will examine the international and cultural signs of the times and the role they play in end-time events. As

Continued on next page ...

you complete this study, you will see the steadfast faithfulness of God through the events of the past, allowing you to become confident and expectant about His future second coming. By understanding what God's Word says about the end of this world as we know it, there can be peace and hope in our hearts.



2022 Evening Journey Thru the Word Registration is Open

Join us October 19, 2022 to begin a twelve-week study of end time prophecies at Ruthfred Lutheran Church from 6:45PM to 8:00PM. This year's study guide will cover 11 of the 31 signs in this series on the end times. In an effort to make joining together to study God's Word easier for families coming from work and other events and to spend time together as the family of God, the church will be offering Forkless Dinners to registered families just prior to JTTW and to all other families attending Wednesday evening events, from 6:00 to 6:30PM. Come and join in fellowship during this time with our church family.

Please go to our website on www.ruthfred.org to register for Evening JTTW online.

For information or questions contact Jodie or Mark Riley, 412.401.9137.

Summer Reading Program Coming to a Close

The “CPH Reads” summer reading program offered by Concordia Publishing House is coming to its 2022 conclusion. CPH is entering readers who reach 1,000 points into a prize give-away. Ruthfred will also be awarding cool prizes as well, including a drawing for a grand prize! To be eligible for the prizes, please be sure to return your track tracking cards to the fellowship hall bookshelf by August 14th.



Save the Date and Join the Fun!

Annual Church Picnic

Saturday, August 20, 2022

3:00-7:00pm Church Grounds



Food, Fun, Fellowship, and Worship!

Look for more info in bulletins and recent mailing.

Ponderable Quote:

In the book of life the answers are not in the back.

Charlie Brown

Song of the Month

By Tom Glasser

My Country, 'Tis of Thee

Lyrics: Samuel Francis Smith

Music: Henry Carey

Samuel Francis Smith was born in 1808 in Boston, Massachusetts. At an early age he became fascinated with learning foreign languages, eventually mastering fifteen of them! While attending Andover Theological Seminary in his twenties, he became involved in a project with composer and music educator Lowell Mason to translate some German songs into English. One Lutheran hymn with a patriotic theme particularly caught his attention. The melody was originally from England, but had floated around Europe for a long time. It seems the identity of the composer is shrouded in some uncertainty, although some attribute it to 18th century composer Henry Carey. Smith decided he wanted to come up with original English lyrics for an American patriotic song. Bobbie Wolgemuth records the story as follows:

"Samuel began to hear words rushing into his head that matched the spirited tune. He wanted to write down the song quickly so he wouldn't forget the words he was hearing. But there was nothing to write on. Picking up a scrap of paper from the trash can, he took his pen and wrote as quickly as he could. Within thirty minutes, Samuel had squeezed all the verses onto a piece of paper less than three inches wide and five inches long, barely the size of a photograph. The song "My Country, 'Tis of Thee", scribbled on a bit of paper, has become one of our great national hymns." (Hymns for a Kid's Heart)

*My country, 'tis of thee,
Sweet land of liberty,
Of thee I sing;
Land where my fathers died,
Land of the pilgrims' pride,
From every mountainside
Let freedom ring!*



While the English used this melody to sing "God Save the King" and "God Save the Queen", Smith believed that America was different in that we recognized only God as our King. Hence the last stanza:

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*Our Fathers' God, to thee,
Author of liberty,
To thee we sing.
Long may our land be bright,
With freedom's holy light,
Protect us by Thy might,
Great God our King.*



With "The Star Spangled Banner" not being adopted as our official national anthem until 1931, "My Country, 'Tis of Thee" went on to become one of the most popular de facto American national anthems until then. Though not an official anthem, its popularity has not diminished. When I first decided to write about this song, I realized of course that it was more patriotic than sacred. I even doubted whether it was in our hymnal, but I was wrong. There it was – hymn #360 -- with "God Save the Queen" as #361 for our British Commonwealth brothers and sisters!

Sources: Hymns for a Kid's Heart; allabouthistory.org; study.com; Wikipedia

90+ Birthday Club



Fritz Motzer

August 2nd

91

Official Acts -- July 2022

Baptisms:

* Averie James Stocker 7/17/22

Funerals:

* John R. Koehnke 7/09/22

Ronald W. Lockwood 7/23/22 (Interment only)

* Margaret M. Jacobson 7/26/22

* Indicates member

RUTHFRED LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS July 11th, 2022

The Parish Assistant reported that many people are helping with visitation and are eager to help with visitation, cards and phone calls. Melissa is now working out of Pat's old office.

Pastor McMinn let council know that everyone who was on the visitation list last month had some type of contact from someone at Ruthfred. That hasn't happened in two years. It has been incredible to reach so many. If we continue this level of outreach, we could see our church grow.

The Ruthfred youth just got back from Nashville. Thirty-five people worked along with Youthworks with the homeless, community centers, kids clubs and a thrift shop. The kids are full of drive and energy and talked in Sunday school about opportunities to go out and serve in our community.

Five of the youth and Regan will be going to Fly Beyond the week of the 18th. It is a convention focused on leadership. The kids going lead SWAP. Please pray for God to develop leaders in the church, SWAP and TNT.

The Christian Education Committee is reviewing the Sunday school curriculum to make sure it is in line with what we teach at Ruthfred.

The Trustees discussed a proposal for landscaping on the Patterson Road side of the church. Zach Dupree will remove two tree stumps on that side of the church.

A motion was passed to move forward with the youth committee recommendation to extend an offer to Coltin Cox for the Youth Director position. Please pray for God's wisdom and Coltin's decision.

The preschool is looking for 2 assistants. The job was posted on Indeed which only generated one resume. Please be in prayer over the situation.

Mark suggested that council pray for needs of the church every month and asked for suggestions. Regan asked for prayers for the youth and for VBS.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kris Wentz



Worship Team Members for August 2022

Acolytes: (8:30 and 11:00 respectively)

8/7 Isaiah Compel & Elias Manzo
8/14 Noah McMinn & Elias Manzo
8/21 Jonathan Tarrant & Josh Cimarolli
8/28 Isaiah Compel & Elias Manzo

Altar Guild:

Mari Donlin

Coffee Hour:

Chris & Ron Stout

Ushers:

8:30 a.m. Bernard Paterra & John Ruzicka
11:00 a.m. Nathan & Jonathan Stutzman

Counters:

8:30 a.m. Neil Wagner & Frank Fife
11:00 a.m. Will Charlton & Eric Wentz

CL



~Psalm 84:10
(KJV)~

For a day in thy courts
is better than a thousand.
I had rather be a
doorkeeper in the
house of my God, than
to dwell in the tents
of wickedness.

CL



2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Elders' Meeting 7:00	2 Worship Team 7:00 HAPPY 91 st BIRTHDAY Fritz Motzer 	3 JTTW Summer Session 10:00 ("Reckoning")	4	5 Men's Prayer Group 7:00 a.m. (Fireside Lounge)	6 The Transfiguration
7  Holy Communion 8:30 Sunday School 9:45 Holy Communion 11:00 Holy Communion 6:00 CITY MISSION FOOD SUNDAY	8 Elders' Prayer Time 7:00 Council Meeting 7:30	9 Worship Team 7:00	10 JTTW Summer Session 10:00 ("Beyond Mountains") Esther Noon	11 Knit Wits 10:00	12 Men's Prayer Group 7:00 a.m. (Fireside Lounge)	13 Mary Bible Study 9:30 (Fireside Lounge)
14 Worship Service 8:30 Sunday School 9:45 Worship Service 11:00 Farewell Reception for Regan after 11:00 service 	15 St. Mary, Mother of Our Lord	16 Worship Team 7:00	17 Regan's last day 	18	19 Men's Prayer Group 7:00 a.m. (Fireside Lounge)	20 Church Picnic with Praise Team 3-7 p.m. 
21 Worship Service 8:30 Sunday School 9:45 Worship Service 11:00 Young Adult Bible Study 6:30 (A & C Vogels')	22	23 Worship Team 7:00	24 St. Bartholomew, Apostle	25 Knit Wits 10:00	26 Men's Prayer Group 7:00 a.m. (Fireside Lounge)	27
28 Worship Service 8:30 Sunday School 9:45 Worship Service 11:00 Herald deadline	29 Beheading of St. John the Baptist	30 Worship Team 7:00	31			



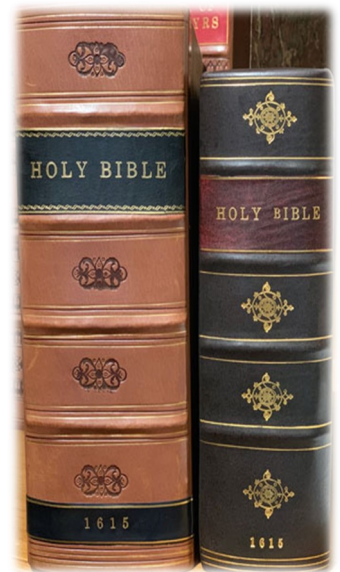
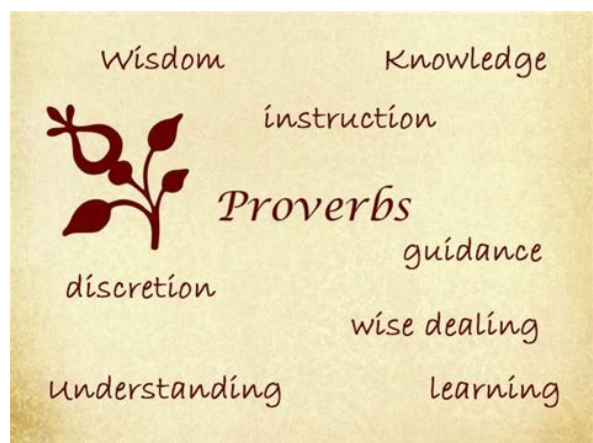
2022 Youth Ministry Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 TNT @ Isaac Cox's house 7-9	3	4	5	6
7 Sunday School 9:45 SWAP @ Church 6-7:30	8	9 TNT @ Caleb Cox's house 7-9	10	11	12	13 Hazelbaker's Canoe Trip 11 a.m.—6 p.m. CANOE TRIP
14 Sunday School 9:45 SWAP @ Church 6-7:30	15	16 TNT @ the Griffiths' house 7-9	17 Regan's last day 	18	19	20
21 Sunday School 9:45 SWAP @ Church 6-7:30	22	23 TNT @ the Huwes' house 7-9	24	25	26	27
28 Sunday School 9:45 SWAP @ Church 6-7:30	29	30 TNT @ the Cloustons' house 7-9	31 			

Reading Through the Bible 2022

Schedule for August

1st Job 17 Job 18 Job 19 Job 20
 2nd Job 21 Job 22 Job 23
 3rd Job 24 Job 25 Job 26 Job 27 Job 28
 4th Job 29 Job 30 Job 31
 5th Job 32 Job 33 Job 34
 6th Job 35 Job 36 Job 37
 7th Job 38 Job 39
 8th Job 40 Job 41 Job 42
 9th Proverbs 1 Proverbs 2 Proverbs 3
 10th Proverbs 4 Proverbs 5 Proverbs 6
 11th Proverbs 7 Proverbs 8 Proverbs 9
 12th Proverbs 10 Proverbs 11 Proverbs 12
 13th Proverbs 13 Proverbs 14 Proverbs 15
 14th Proverbs 16 Proverbs 17 Proverbs 18
 15th Proverbs 19 Proverbs 20 Proverbs 21
 16th Proverbs 22 Proverbs 23
 17th Proverbs 24 Proverbs 25 Proverbs 26
 18th Proverbs 27 Proverbs 28 Proverbs 29
 19th Proverbs 30 Proverbs 31
 20th Ruth 1 Ruth 2 Ruth 3 Ruth 4
 21st Song of Songs 1 Song of Songs 2 Song of Songs 3 Song of Songs 4
 Song of Songs 5 Song of Songs 6 Song of Songs 7 Song of Songs 8
 22nd Ecclesiastes 1 Ecclesiastes 2 Ecclesiastes 3 Ecclesiastes 4
 23rd Ecclesiastes 5 Ecclesiastes 6 Ecclesiastes 7 Ecclesiastes 8
 24th Ecclesiastes 9 Ecclesiastes 10 Ecclesiastes 11 Ecclesiastes 12
 25th Lamentations 1 Lamentations 2
 26th Lamentations 3 Lamentations 4 Lamentations 5
 27th Esther 1 Esther 2 Esther 3 Esther 4 Esther 5
 28th Esther 6 Esther 7 Esther 8 Esther 9 Esther 10
 29th Daniel 1 Daniel 2 Daniel 3
 30th Daniel 4 Daniel 5 Daniel 6
 31st Daniel 7 Daniel 8 Daniel 9



A joyful heart is good medicine.

Proverbs 17:22a

Riddle Time

1. What is blue and smells like red paint?

2. Why should you always knock on your refrigerator door before opening it?

3. What has 18 legs and catches flies?

4. What did the three-legged dog say when he walked into the town saloon?

5. Black Eyed Peas can sing us a song.
What can Chick Peas do?



4. I'm looking for the man who shot my paw!
5. They can only hummus one

1. Blue paint
2. In case there's salad dressing
3. A baseball team

Answers: