



Every person is a theologian – which means that every person thinks some things, perhaps many things about God. I discovered this to my discomfort as a kid when I started noticing that the bands that I liked had songs about God. I loved Pink Floyd, but clearly Pink Floyd did not love the God.

Obviously then, every Christian is a theologian – which means that everybody in the pews interprets the Bible. Whether we read it for ourselves or hear it read on a Sunday morning, we can't help but to try to make sense of it, to put the puzzle pieces together. What is God like? What does he do? What does he expect from me? What does he think about me? Why does God seem peaceful and forgiving in one passage, but angry or frustrated in this other?

Pastors are theologians. We have more training, we've taken classes, and we have been called to certain tasks, at the heart of which is teaching lay people about God and the scriptures in which we encounter him. We have some training, some specialization, but the task is not so different from your task. It's to ask questions and seek answers; and then, of course, to tell the congregation.

What I've discovered about myself in being your pastor is that I want to be open about the process of seeking and discovering. This wasn't always my understanding. When I started as a pastor eight years ago I wanted to find the answer or the interpretation and present it persuasively to the congregation - fully formed. If I'm uncharitable to myself I might say it like this: I wanted to do all the thinking so that I could protect the congregation from mistakes.

April 2019

My calling now, as I understand it, is to struggle through the scripture with you or, sometimes, in front of you. This is how my week works for me. I read the gospel lesson at the beginning of the week at the men's group (Monday morning in the library at 7:30.) We talk about it. Sometimes there is immediately an idea, sometimes there are just questions. This is really valuable time, both because I try to explain things and because other people are saying, "This is what I see." During the week when I'm bringing communion to someone or maybe just if I've bumped into them, I'll talk about it some more. More often than not people aren't giving me their strong opinions, but they are reacting and there is something very valuable about talking about the scripture with another person. I read books about it too, especially if the lesson seems extra puzzling. And then Saturday night and Sunday morning are almost like reporting back to you about what I've found.

My hope for this is that you feel empowered to be askers of questions and seekers of answers. I want you to know that you are theologians. I want you to know that theological answers don't come from some professional who knows everything, but from a process in which we're all engaged. God calls all of us to seek him and he empowers us by the Spirit to understand his word. The more we struggle (together) with and delight (together) in this holy and day to day task the healthier our congregation will be. We are a church of theologians!

Rev. Ben Worley
Emanuel St. John, Lytton, IA
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**Emanuel-St. John
Lutheran Church
Council Meeting Minutes
March 14, 2019**

President Brian Lantz called the meeting to order. Present were Cindy Souder, Rhonda Johnson, Jeff Ellerbrock, Randy Souder, Alan Meyer, Harlan Meyer, Denise Adams, Pauline Lange and Pastor Ben. Pastor Ben gave devotions. Motion by Harlan Meyer, second by Randy Souder to approve the agenda. Motion passed. Motion by Harlan Meyer, second by Alan Meyer to approve the February minutes. Motion passed. Treasurer's report was given by Rhonda Johnson. Motion by Jeff Ellerbrock, second by Harlan Meyer to approve the treasurer's report with a balance of \$8196.18. Motion passed. A written EPIC report was given to the council.

Old Business: Jeff Ellerbrock presented a job description for the EPIC leader. Motion by Randy Souder, second by Harlan Meyer to accept the job description for EPIC leader as presented. Motion passed.

President's Report: Brian Lantz discussed ways to inform the congregation of cancellation of church worship and activities during inclement weather.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Ben had no report to give.

Worship and Music Committee: The committee is working on replacements for when Pastor Ben is on vacation and contacting people to be readers for Good Friday service.

Parish Education: No report.

Outreach Committee: Denise Adams present. The committee is looking into confirmation gifts and preparing a brunch for Palm Sunday to honor the confirmation students.

Property and Management Committee: Harlan Meyer informed the council that the water in the south end of the church was from the sump pump not working and pipes frozen. It is now working. Parking lot issues will be looked into once the weather is better.

Stewardship and Finance Committee: Jeff Ellerbrock present. Still working on project list for the year.

WELCA: No report.

New Business: None.

Motion by Alan Meyer, second by Randy Souder to adjourned. Motion passed. Lord's Prayer.



Charlie Nattress, son of Chuck and Sara Nattress, will be the only 5th grade student to attend his First Communion on Maundy Thursday, April 18th. We look forward to welcoming him with us to the Lord's Table!



On Palm Sunday, April 14th three young people of Emanuel-St. John will be confirmed. The students to be confirmed are:

Connor Kendrick Scharn

Son of Jesse Scharn and Nicole Scharn

Madison Marie Schultz

Daughter of Douglas and Theresa Schultz

Elijah Ryan Wheelock

Son of Ryan and Julie Wheelock

We pray that God will richly bless the lives of these three young people in their Christian walk with Him!





- Apr. 1 Katelyn Bruns
- Apr. 2 Cody Glasnapp
- Apr. 3 Mitchell Hinrichs, Grant Meyer
- Apr. 4 Katie Conger, Scott Greene
- Apr. 5 Doug Riley
- Apr. 6 Kim Fjerstad, Jeff Grodahl
- Apr. 8 Brian Lantz, Debra Rix
- Apr. 9 Kortney Riley
- Apr. 10 Alex Peterson, JoAnn Wilson
- Apr. 11 Mia Morgan, Sara Pibal, Chase Segebarth
- Apr. 12 **Lorene Hinrichs**
- Apr. 15 Nelda Bartels, Harlan Meyer, Tonya Ramsey, Jo Scharn
- Apr. 17 Aidan Albright, Kassara Heimdal
- Apr. 19 Ryne Cerra
- Apr. 21 Melissa Barnett, Jack Bartels, Ruth Bartels
- Apr. 22 April Diersen
- Apr. 24 Justine Nelson, Alicia Segebarth, **Hanford Voyles**
- Apr. 26 Mary Daniel, Kelly Lantz, **Marlene Meyer**
- Apr. 27 Lyn Bruns, Reef Lankford, Andrew VanHulzen, Sadie Wheelock,
- Apr. 30 Edna Rockafellow



- Apr 5, 1986 Rodney & Joleen Grodahl
- Apr 10, 1976 Jeffrey & JoAnn Ellerbrock
- Apr 11, 1965 **David & Margie Sands**
- Apr 16, 1994 Timothy & Darsi Huddleson
- Apr 26, 2008 Eric & Erin Gifford
- Apr 29, 2000 Charles & Melissa Barnett
- Apr 29, 2017 Cody & Darcy Picard

Perfect SS Attendance February 2019

Sunday School students present the 3 Sundays in February that we had SS:

- ☆ Nursery-Pre-Kindergarten: Adelaide Worley, Myla Albright, Lily Bartels and Johnny Worley;
- ☆ Kindergarten & Grade 1: Sawyer Riley and Abigail Worley;
- ☆ Grades 2 & 3: Aidan Albright, Danika Meyer, Benjamin Worley, Lilly Picard and Rhemy Picard;
- ☆ Grades 4 & 5: Sadie Wheelock and Derek Greene;
- ☆ Grades 6: Adlen Wheelock;
- ☆ Confirmation Class (Grades 7 & 8): Brock Nattress, Olivia Toms, Connor Scharn, Madison Schultz and Elijah Wheelock
- ☆ High School: Laura Greene, Taylor Greene and Kortney Riley.

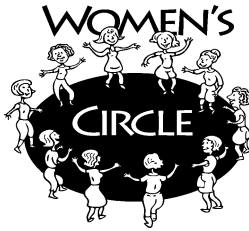
Two classes tied for best attendance this month. They were Confirmation class taught by Pastor Ben and Grades 2 & 3 taught by Doug and Barb Riley.



Condolences to the family of Diane Welsh who died Tuesday, March 5, 2019. A memorial service was held Monday, March 11th at the Hamilton Funeral Home in West Des Moines. Diane was the sister of **Peggy Dettmann**.

MAY GOD COMFORT ALL THOSE THAT MOURN!





WELCA Executive Meeting

The ESJ Women of the ELCA held their annual executive meeting on March 6, 2019 at 3:45 p.m. There were no minutes or treasury balance available.

There was no old business.

New business:

- 1) Women's gathering is on alternate years and this is not the year.
- 2) Shoes will be collected this fall.
- 3) Cards will continue as long as there are donations. There is a current need for anniversary and sympathy cards.
- 4) There are no kitchen needs at this time.
- 5) Do Days will continue through March.
- 6) We will again help with visiting residents at Park View on Mondays in June but are not allowed to take in our homemade snacks. We will invite all church friends to join in visiting.
- 7) There is about \$700 in our treasury to send to missions. We chose The Well Project, Calhoun Co. Outreach, Sac Co. Outreach, CoDR, LSI, Lotus Community Project and Voice of the Martyrs.
- 8) Kim F. graciously agreed to send gifts to college students.
- 9) We will add Personal Care Kits to those of Do Days.

Candace Booth, secretary pro tem.



Greetings Church Family!

It is Synod Assembly time again and I want to thank you all for the opportunity to attend as a voting member representing Emanuel-St. John Lutheran Church. Please visit <http://www.wisynod.org/assembly-2019.html> to learn more about what will be happening at this year's assembly. I would love to have input from you to take along with me as I think about how to cast my vote. I would like to bring attention to this years designated offering, Igumbilo Lutheran Girl's Secondary School. When I traveled to Tanzania,

our time spent at this school was a highlight of the trip. Igumbilo is an awesome place and provides opportunity for girls that they would not have otherwise. Please see the flyer and visit the website to see the good work done here and consider giving, I will do my best to lift this opportunity up during the next weeks leading up to assembly. Please reach out to me if you have questions or ideas on how we can further walk with these girls in their educational journey. Be a Blessing.

Yours in Christ,
Michelle Talbott



Church of the Damascus Road

CoDR Sponsors Storytellers

How important is it to have dads read books to their children? VERY. Ask any reading teacher. CoDR sponsors Storytellers. It is an opportunity for prisoners to produce a DVD of themselves as a father, grandfather or other approved inmate to read to his child/children. Church of the Damascus Road organizes the donated books, DVDs, and mailing envelopes. Once a month, at both the Ft. Dodge prison and the Rockwell City prison, inmates pick a children's book and record reading it into a computer. The book and DVD are sent to the child. The only expense for the inmate is the mailing postage.

Outside sources donate the books that are in good condition. I witnessed about 500 books neatly laid out on tables for inmates to select. The guys choose the book(s) that they think their child may enjoy. Looking into the computer, the inmate can add personal messages to the child as he reads the book aloud, and shows the pages for no more than 15 minutes.

I can only imagine the joy of a child seeing Daddy's face and hearing him read a book aloud. The child can listen as many times as he wants. The child can follow along in the book or read aloud with Daddy.

This Storytellers Program creates a positive connection with Dad. It also encourages the child to read which has earned the Celebrate Literacy Award through the Iowa Reading Association. The connection with Dad and promoting reading is a win-win program well worth continuing. Please pray for this inmate participation for his child.

Candace Booth
Lytton, IA



April 2019, LSI Bulletin/Newsletter Article and Story

National Child Abuse Prevention Month

According to the Iowa Department of Human Services, 8,558 Iowa children were found to be abused in 2017. The most common forms of abuse included denial of critical care, physical injury, exposure to illegal drugs and sexual abuse.

Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI) helps combat child abuse through prevention, safety, and stability services, as well as mental and behavioral health treatment.

Through regular in-home visits to families, LSI's Early Childhood Services prevent child abuse by giving parents the support, education, and resources they need to build a healthy, stable home for their children. In 2018, our Early Childhood programs provided more than 14,000 in-home visits to families.

LSI's Family Safety, Risk, and Permanency Services help children and families already involved in a crisis or abuse situation to become safer and more stable, and LSI's Bremwood and Beloit Residential Treatment Centers serve many children and youth who have experienced trauma from past abuse or neglect.

You make a direct impact on these children and families through your support of LSI. Thank you!

Our Mission: Lutheran Services in Iowa responds to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service. LSI is an affiliated social ministry partner of the Iowa congregations of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) and a member of LSA (Lutheran Services in America). We proudly serve people of all ages, abilities, religions, sexes, gender identities, national origins, ethnicities, races, and sexual orientations. Learn more at LSIowa.org and [Facebook.com/LSI.iowa](https://www.facebook.com/LSI.iowa).

A Life-Changing Service

Amanda felt helpless when her children were removed from their home. She and her husband, Nathan, struggled with substance use, and they could no longer provide a safe environment for their children.

But with help from LSI's Family Safety, Risk, and Permanency Services, Amanda has overcome

every obstacle to build a future she only dreamed possible.

LSI connected Amanda and Nathan to parenting and sobriety resources in their community, and their LSI worker, Katie, helped them schedule regular visits with their children.

Knowing Katie was there to cheer them on, even on the bad days, the couple was determined to beat their addiction. It was time to turn their lives around and fight for their family.

Amanda and Nathan recently celebrated two years of sobriety, and all three of their children have returned home. Amanda now also collaborates with the Iowa child welfare system and organizations like LSI to support more families in need of the same care she received.

"I'm grateful that Katie and LSI were a part of our lives. They weren't there to hinder, they were there to help," Amanda says. "I feel accomplished, and I feel really good about where my family is at in our lives. Now I'm just happy to help other families achieve their goals and realize they are not alone."

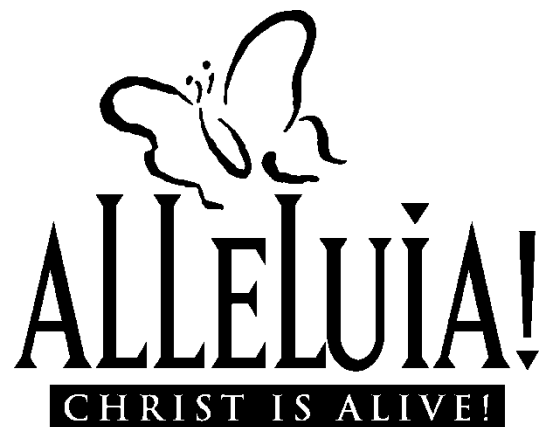


Why "Good" Friday?

When we understand that the New Testament meaning of "good" was "holy," we can understand how it is appropriate to describe our Lord's crucifixion day as "good." The word "holy" is entirely consistent with the suffering of our Lord on the Cross when we take into full account the reason for it.

Good Friday, Passion Friday or Holy Friday—which-ever—all bear the same significance—a day for us to meditate on the hours Jesus spent on the cross.

And then on the third day----





HOLY WEEK WORSHIP SCHEDULE

PALM SUNDAY, APRIL 14, 2019

10 a.m. Worship with Confirmation

MAUNDY THURSDAY, APRIL 18, 2019

7:00 p.m. Service with Holy Communion

GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 19, 2019

3:00 p.m. Good Friday Service

EASTER SERVICES, APRIL 21, 2019

6:30 a.m. Easter Sunrise Service

Breakfast to follow

10:00 a.m. Easter Service

(Holy Communion at both services)

(No Sunday School or Contemporary Service)



