



Message from Pastor Ben

The Bible – Beginning to End – Part Four

Last month I closed my newsletter article about God's people in the time of the Judges by promising, "What comes next is a little better and a lot worse." What I was referring to is the time of the monarchy. The Old Testament devotes six books to this 500 year period when kings ruled Israel/Judah (not counting the prophets who preached and wrote during these years.) This month I only want to take a "view from 30,000 feet."

God's people ask for a king when Samuel, a good and faithful Judge, gets old. Samuel prays to the Lord about this and is told, "They have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being their king." This is the fundamental fact to know about the monarchy in the Bible. At its root, it is a rejection of God as king. They notice that their life during the time of the Judges was chaotic, corrupt, and increasingly violent, and they think that it is God who has failed them. The people, therefore, want a political entity, a king, to take care of them, to protect them. What they want is a kind of god on earth who will fight for them and be responsible for solving their problems

Now this is an interesting point to note. As Americans, we think of ourselves as people who value freedom (whether we do or not is another question.) But these ancient Israelites knew that they did NOT want freedom. In the time of the Judges there was a great deal of freedom as each household and tribe took care of its own business. They hadn't known what to do with this freedom. They knew that it had ended in failure. They wanted to be taken care of.

The irony of this situation is that this desire is not wrong or unfaithful! They are very close to a correct theological understanding of who they are and what they need. They

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DO need someone to take care of them, someone to obey and follow, someone to structure their lives and give them hope by his strength. But they will be looking to a political leader to fill this role, and no ruler has shoulders broad enough or a heart good enough to do it. And this will be the story of the monarchy. They will learn that they have foolishly placed their faith in men who will let them down (at best) and take advantage of them and lead them astray time after time.

Take David, for example. He is the gold standard for Israelite kings. He loves the Lord and often is faithful. But he steals the wife of one of his soldiers. And David murders him when he won't participate in the coverup. That's classic entitled behavior from a powerful leader. It isn't taking care of the people; it's stealing from them.

Take Solomon. He builds a glorious temple in Jerusalem for the worship of the Lord God. But he uses marriage to foreign princesses as a kingdom building tool. He strengthens his rule, but he weakens his country by introducing the idea that the king is fine with his people worshiping foreign gods. He even builds temples for them. This isn't protecting the people; it is exposing them to practices which will cause them harm.

And if you want to talk about harm, take Rehoboam, the son of Solomon. When the people of the northern tribes come to him to ask him to be less harsh to them than his father, he replies, "My father laid on you a heavy yoke; I will make it even heavier. My father scourged you with whips; I will scourge you with scorpions."

Those tribes then broke away to form an independent nation which is confusingly called, "Israel". Their first king Jeroboam doesn't want people leaving his domains to worship, fearing that this will weaken his authority, so he sets up giant calf statues and leads his people astray.

It's not long before a king and queen arrive, Ahab and Jezebel, who are actively persecuting worshipers of the Lord God and murdering priests so that they will worship the foreign gods of Jezebel's homeland.

The kings are a disaster for God's people for many reasons: primarily because they are a rejection of God and take over his role as "savior of the people," but also because they lead people to worship other gods, they steal from the people, build up a love for national glory rather than right relationship with God, they fight needless wars which cause no end of death. Perhaps it is no coincidence that it is during this time that the prophets arise to speak God's truth, to condemn what is going on, to rage against it, but also to point to God's faithfulness and his plan for a better future.

Sometime soon I will write about those prophets and the role they had to play.

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Emanuel-St John Lutheran Church Council Meeting Minutes May 11, 2022

President Dennis Booth called the meeting to order. Present were Cindy Souder, LeRoy Johnson, Rhonda Johnson, Jean Matter, Dennis Hinrichs, LaVerne Arndt, Dar Lake, Faith Worley, Nicole Meyer, Julie Haberstroh, Pastor Ben, and Pauline Lange. Pastor Ben gave devotions. Motion by LeRoy Johnson, second by Nicole Meyer to approve the agenda. Motion passed. Motion by Dar Lake, second by Dennis Hinrichs to approve the April minutes. Motion passed. Rhonda gave the Treasurers Report with a balance of \$18,074.07. Motion by Dar Lake, second by LaVerne Arndt to approve Treasurers Report. Motion passed.

Old Business: Seven children have signed up for camp for the summer. Motion by LaVerne Arndt, second by Jean Matter to have the first Sunday of each month as an outdoor service during June, July, August and September. Motion passed. Ron Haden is working on updating the survey boundaries at the North Cemetery. The north parking area of the church will be done during the middle of June so it does not interfere with Vacation Bible School. Bids will be submitted to the Property Management Committee for outdoor work on the church by next council meeting.

President's Report: No report.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Ben asked the council for their opinion on what confirmation should be and it will be discussed at a later meeting.

Worship and Music Committee: Jean Matter present. Committee talked Gala Days service. There will be no children sermons on the Sundays that we have outdoor services.

Parish Education Committee: Nicole Meyer reported that this Sunday (May 15th) will be the last Sunday School until fall. The committee will be doing the dinner for the Gala Day Church service. Vacation Bible School will have a list posted for people to bring supplies and volunteering.

Outreach Committee: Julie Haberstroh present. The Break the Cycle riders will be coming through Lytton June 24th, the committee is working on providing bars and water.

Property Management: LaVerne Arndt, LeRoy Johnson and Dennis Hinrichs present. Projects at the parsonage were updated to the Council. Sump pump in elevator needs to be looked at.

Stewardship and Finances: Dar Lake present. No report.

WELCA: No report.

New Business: "God's Work, Our Hands" is September 11th. Motion by Dar Lake and Nicole Meyer to adjourn meeting. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned with Lord's Prayer.



Western Iowa Synod Assembly

Dennis and I were ESJ delegates at the 2022 Western Iowa Synod Assembly. We attended the two day face to face portion which started 6:30 p.m. on Friday, April 22. After opening worship, Bishop Halaas presided over the business meeting including treasury reports, eight resolutions and election of new council officers. The resolutions didn't involve anything overly controversial and you can view them on the synod website.

New this year was the formation and implementation of Learning and Service Groups. Fifteen different groups traveled to different areas in or around Sioux City to use our hands to help others. Dennis and I, along with eight others, went to Camp High Hope to help with some outdoor clean up. The camp is for special needs children of which none of us knew about prior to the clean up. The staff really appreciated our help.

All the activities, reports, worship, and devotions revolved around the theme "Gods Work, Our Hands- Some Assembly Required". Thank you for the opportunity to represent our congregation.

Candace and Dennis Booth

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

- 1) Alan Meyer
- 3) Rob Fry, Derek Greene
- 4) Tony Dettmann, Jason Grodahl,
- 5) Vanessa Althiser
- 6) Rick Dettmann, Joleen Grodahl,
Trista Murray
- 9) Case Picard
- 11) Randy Souder
- 12) Carrissa DeRuyter, Peyton Riley
- 14) Kiersten Purdie, Zayda Winey
- 15) Troy Arndt, Mindy Foote, Lille Greene,
Deb Kennebeck, Melissa Stell
- 17) Nate Hauptert, Chad Lankford
- 18) Koralyn Waller
- 23) Denise Lake
- 27) Catherine Diersen, Nevaeh Purdie,
Jason Wattonville
- 28) Don Ringgenberg
- 30) Hazel Bartels, Chase Pibal



- June 2, 2014 Donald & Emily Bailey
June 2, 1962 **LeRoy & Rhonda Johnson**
June 3, 2016 Austin & Nancy Aden
June 5, 1982 Brian & Kari Lantz
June 11, 1976 Ronald & Cheryl Haden
June 11, 2016 Cory & Jamie Waller
June 12, 2011 John III & Katie Conger
June 14, 1997 Kirby & Denise Ramsey
June 16, 1978 David & Carla Hutchens
June 16, 2007 Jason & Shelby Pudenz
June 17, 1959 **Ellis & Nelma Byriel**
June 18, 1994 Jason & Tisha Murphy
June 19, 1999 Dean & Teresa Lanning
June 22, 1991 Kurt & Teresa VanHulzen
June 22, 1996 Douglas & Christy Kral
June 23, 1973 Randall & Cynthia Souder
June 25, 2011 Nick & Krista Albright
June 27, 1970 **Darwin & Denise Lake**
June 30, 1968 **Darold & Jean Matter**

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

Sunday School Perfect Attendance for April, 2022:

Students present at Sunday School all Sundays in April were:

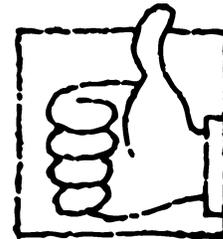
- ☆ Nursery-Pre-Kindergarten: Earl Bartels, Jack Bartels;
- ☆ Kindergarten & Grade 1: Myla Albright, Adelaide Worley & Lily Bartels;
- ☆ Grades 2 & 3: Baylee Ellerbrock, John Worley, Dillian Graeve, Chase Hejtmanek, Sawyer Riley & Wesley Twyman;
- ☆ Grades 4 & 5: Lille Greene, Abby Lankford, Elodie Mentzer, & Abby Worley;
- ☆ Grades 6: Benjamin Worley;
- ☆ Confirmation (Grades 7 & 8): No one

Class winner with the best attendance was Grades 2 & 3 taught by Doug and Barb Riley.

And for May, 2022

- ☆ Nursery-Pre-Kindergarten-Earl Bartels, Jack Bartels & Cannon Albright;
- ☆ Kindergarten-Grade 1-Adelaide Worley & Lily Bartels;
- ☆ Grades 2 & 3-John Worley & Sawyer Riley;
- ☆ Grades 4 & 5-Lille Greene & Abigail Worley;
- ☆ Grade 6-Benjamin Worley;

Class winners for best attendance in May was Nursery & Pre-K taught by Jo Grodahl and Kari Musselman and Kindergarten & Grade 1 taught by Kari Lantz.



Jack Bartels, Earl Bartels and Lily Bartels had perfect attendance at Sunday School this term. That's AWESOME!!

The youth will not have Sunday School during the summer months but the Adult Bible Class will continue to meet each Sunday morning at 9:00 a.m. Everyone is welcome!



Scholarship recipients selected

Endowment committee members met on April 26 to select the recipients of the first annual Orval and Linda Baum Memorial Scholarship. The recipients were selected after submitting an application that met the requirements of the scholarship. The 2022 recipients of \$1,000 scholarships are Laura Greene, Taylor Greene, Sally Musselman, Carson Pibal and Kortney Riley. What a wonderful legacy Orval and Linda have left to members of our congregation and we thank their children for honoring their wishes.

These five scholarships were made possible from the Baum Scholarship funds as well as Endowment funds. The Endowment committee would like to encourage ESJ members and others to consider gifts and donations to the Fund to be used for continued scholarship opportunities. If you have questions regarding the many ways you can donate to the Fund to be earmarked for scholarships, please contact Jeff Ellerbrock, committee treasurer.

Ahoy, Mateys! Get ready for Vacation Bible School!

When: June 27th-30th

- 9am-Noon for ages 3-5
- 9am-2pm for 1st-5th grades

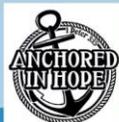
Lunch and snacks will be provided for everyone daily



Ahoy, Mateys! Get ready for Vacation Bible School!

All hands on deck! Volunteers needed to:

- help with the kids
- help in the kitchen
- house camp counselors
- donate lunches and snacks
- donate toward VBS



Dorcus Cluster Spring Gathering

After a three year hiatus, the Dorcus Cluster of WELCA held their spring meeting at Augustana, Manson on April 29, 2022. Our ESJ ladies were responsible for the devotions. Kari Lantz and Jean Matter focused on John 15: 1-17, "Are You a Friend of Jesus?" They went above and beyond to present a thought-provoking message.

The speaker was Teresa Van Hulzen. She shared many experiences as a missionary in Nicaragua. Teresa's power point of pictures and her personal inspiring stories expressed how God worked in the lives of her, her family and friends, and the people of Nicaragua with whom they worked.

The meeting also included hymns of praise, a message from Pam Jondle of the Western Iowa Synod board and election of officers. Co-coordinators will be Judy Lang and Bonnie Carlson. A secretary is still needed. The offering was split between Western Iowa Synodical Women's Organization and the House of Protection Girls Home in Nicaragua.

Those attending felt this organization was reviving to fulfill the purpose.

Purpose Statement of the Women of the ELCA

As a community of women, created in the image of God; called to discipleship in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves to grow in faith, affirm our gifts, support one another in our callings, engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness in the church, our society and the world

Reporter, Candace Booth.

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Ahoy, Mateys! Get ready for Vacation Bible School!

If you can help, watch for sign-up sheets in May and June, or talk to Nicole Meyer, Sara Nattress, or Faith Worley.

Thanks for being awesome!





June 2022, LSI Bulletin/Newsletter Article and Story

Happy Father's Day!

At Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI), we strive to build up and empower Iowa kids and families. For us, Father's Day is a time to celebrate all the fathers and male role models we see every day.

Through our Early Childhood Services, young men are learning to become dads. They're becoming confident and active in their child's life, and they are creating loving, bright futures for their families.

Many Iowa children entering foster care need a positive male role model in their lives. And through LSI Foster Care and Adoption, our licensed foster dads are there to help guide them.

This is only possible through your support of LSI! If you would like to make a gift, please contact Deb Whitford, LSI director of philanthropy and church relations, at Deborah.Whitford@LSIowa.org or 563-676-2065.

Thank you for responding to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service!

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.

Therapy Provides a Solid Foundation

Dana and Jack have lots to look forward to. They are planning their wedding, Jack is hard at work finishing his college degree, and they share a growing baby boy, Levi.

But while they wanted to keep their sights set on the future, Jack struggled to cope with some of his past.

As an Army veteran, Jack found himself struggling with addiction after he returned home, and he found it difficult to process some of the emotions that came with it. He wanted to break free from those struggles and get help. Dana had been meeting with her LSI therapist, Andrea, for several years already and wanted her to connect with Jack too.

Now, after meeting with Andrea, Jack has learned to cope with his past in healthy ways. He has since been able to break his addiction and he now feels clear-headed whenever he needs to cope through the challenging days.

Jack and Dana also attend couples counseling with Andrea and through their sessions, they are able to ensure they have a happy, healthy home for Levi.

The couple says Andrea and LSI have been a "breath of fresh air," and they feel more empowered and in control of their life.

Ahoy, Mateys! Get ready for Vacation Bible School!

All hands on deck! Volunteers needed to:

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