

## *A Message from Pastor Ben*

May 2021

When I was a teenager, I occasionally failed to do something that was required of me, like mowing the lawn. When accused of my failure, I would mount a defense, seeking to justify why I had only mown just a portion of it, leaving our property with an “unfinished” look. Hearing this, my dad would accuse me of being a lawyer. He recognized that I was trying to justify myself instead of being honest. I was trying to provide a plausible sounding reason for why I hadn’t done what I was supposed to do, something that sounded better than, “Mowing the lawn is so boring and I would rather be reading a book. But I would appreciate if you would still pay me.”

As much as I would like to say that I have left my teenage self behind, I think there’s still plenty of lawyer in me. There is still an impulse to explain my actions in a way that will cause others to judge me favorably.

I am reminded of this by present circumstances. Faith and I tested positive for COVID yesterday and I was trying to write about the experience for this very newsletter. And I caught my inner lawyer at work, trying to frame the issue nicely for you all to read. My inner self wants desperately to hear the approval of other people. “Good job, pastor! It was so good that you got yourself tested right away and didn’t come to church on Sunday!” Well, sure. But my inner self knows perfectly well that I went to church on Saturday. “On the other hand,” my inner lawyer chimes in, “You had tested negative on Tuesday. AND, you maintained appropriate distance!” Well, yeah, but that was mainly by accident. Plus, I went grocery shopping.

The gist of this is that I want to be justified by the world. I want people to look at my life and approve

of it. It’s why I try to show my good side and it’s why I try to hide the things of which I’m ashamed.

Years ago, I read a book about this very thing by a guy named Oswald Bayer. He talked about how people seek the justification of the world. We show what is to our advantage and hide what would reflect poorly on us. What’s more, he writes about how we do this same thing with God. We present ourselves to him as, hopefully, good enough to be worth saving.

All of this is dishonest and exhausting. And it’s doomed to failure. Nobody is going to believe the overly handsome picture I paint of myself. If someone does, it’s still no good, because I’ll know it and I’ll fear that they know it too. When I didn’t finish mowing the lawn, my dad didn’t always say something, but I always felt like he was thinking it. And I felt condemned. There is no freedom in this.

I think the biggest human fear is to be seen as who we truly are, no makeup or soft-lighting, no spin or self-justification, just the brutal truth. We’re afraid that if we were truly seen, we would be rejected.

At the same time, I think our biggest human need is to be seen as who we truly are.... And to be loved. (This is what marriage is like at its best.)

The gospel, the good news of Jesus Christ for sinners, is that God has seen us, has seen YOU, at your unloveliest. There is no dark, hidden corner of yourself that he has not seen, no lawyerly lie you have told that he has not seen past. He has seen the worst possible you, the naked you. And that is the you that he died for, that he loves and forgives and restores.

Rev. Ben Worley  
Emanuel St. John, Lytton, IA  
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**Emanuel-St John Lutheran Church  
Council Meeting Minutes  
April 8, 2021**

President Brian Lantz called the meeting to order. Present were Pastor Ben, Cindy Souder, Jeff Ellerbrock, Rhonda Johnson, Pauline Lange, Nicole Meyer, Jean Matter, LaVerne Arndt, Colleen Arndt, Randy Souder and Dennis Booth. Pastor Ben gave devotions. Motion by Dennis Booth, second by Nicole Meyer, to approve the agenda. Motion passed. Motion by LaVerne Arndt, second by Nicole Meyer, to approve the February minutes. Motion passed. Rhonda gave the Treasurers Report with a balance of \$9570.47. Motion by Jean Matter, second by Colleen Arndt, to approve the report. Motion passed. Motion by Dennis Booth, second by Colleen Arndt, to approve the Lenten offerings to be divided equally among the Sac County Outreach, Calhoun County Outreach, Western Iowa Synod pledge and the Prison Ministry Pledge. Motion passed. Motion by LaVerne Arndt, second by Randy Souder, to approve payment of \$800.00 to Tim Huddleson for snow removal for the past winter season. Motion passed. A bill for snow removal for the sidewalk by the Worley children will be presented to be paid at \$20.00 per hour at next meeting.

**Old Business:** Jeff Ellerbrock talked about sound system for Gala Days. Motion by Jean Matter, second by Colleen Arndt, to hire Leroy Schintle for doing the sound for the church services during Gala Days. Motion passed. Jeff went over the Ragbrai activities that will be held in Lytton. Church council gave permission for use of church kitchen to cut pies the day-night before, use of old tables and chairs, use of old camera, and allowing some camping on church parking lot.

**President Report:** Some of the ceiling panels in the Narthex are water stained and need replacing. Property Management will look into the matter.

**Pastor Report:** Pastor Ben will be on vacation from May 3 thru the 14<sup>th</sup>. He talked to the council about having Wednesday night as a Family Church Night with a youth program and moving the Saturday night service to that time. Council discussed the idea. Pastor Ben will get more information to council. The Council discussed moving monthly meeting to Wednesday night, since that is considered Church Night for school activities. Motion by LaVerne Arndt, second by Colleen Arndt, to approve Council Monthly Meeting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month--6:30 p.m. will be Committee Meetings and 7:00 p.m. will be Council Meeting. Motion passed.

**Worship and Music Committee:** Jean Matter informed the council that the greeters for church will resume when the offering plate starts to be passed again. Outdoor Worship will start May 16<sup>th</sup> thru Rally Sunday. The

committee is working on special speaker for Gala Days Service.

**Parish Education Committee:** Nicole Meyer reported that 67 people served and 5 to go Easter Breakfasts were served. May 2<sup>nd</sup> will be the last day of Sunday School along with Teacher Appreciation Day. VBS will be the week of June 21-24, donations and volunteers are needed.

**Outreach Committee:** Colleen Arndt talked about Confirmation and Graduation gifts. The Okoboji 200 Bike ride will be June 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Property Management:** LaVerne reported several lights changed, still looking at cross lights, replacing ceiling tile and mowing. He is looking into hiring Mike Villhauer for mowing this year. Payment is \$60.00 per time. LaVerne discussed the PP Loan of \$12,800. The money needs to be used to pay for salaries.

**Stewardship and Finance:** Randy Souder nothing new to report.

**WELCA:** No report.

**New Business:** Council discussed cleaning the north side of the outside of church building. Church Facebook page was discussed. Booths will be attending the WIS meeting virtually. Motion by Colleen Arndt, second by Randy Souder to adjourn.

Closed with the Lord's Prayer



**Worship Schedule  
Information**

Beginning Sunday, May 16 we will begin worshipping outside, as the weather permits, until Fall. We will continue to live stream services on Facebook and on radio at 98.3 FM. Bring your lawn chairs and

worship with us!



**Community Vacation Bible School**  
is June 21-25 at Emanuel-St.

John. VBS Days will run from 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM with meals and snacks provided. Preschool through kindergartners will go from 9:00 AM - 12:00 noon. All kids that are preschool (3-4 years old) through those entering 6th grade are welcome to come.

Anyone who is entering 7th grade through adulthood is welcome and strongly encouraged to come as volunteer helpers! This year's theme is "Brand New Auto Shop." Guaranteed to have a "wheelie" good time as you "roll" through the day. So "start your engines" and mark your calendars to come and experience a brand new life through Jesus!!

## MAY BIRTHDAYS

- 1) Rhonda Johnson, Nikkie Vreeland
- 3) Martin Anderson, Matthew Toms
- 4) David Glasnapp
- 6) Collin Hillmer
- 7) Eva Hagen, Brady Ross, Tammy Williams
- 9) Dan Dettmann
- 10) Kari Musselman
- 11) Douglas Bartels, Eric Scharn
- 12) Adlen Wheelock
- 14) Peyton Ellerbrock, Jona Grodahl,  
Brent Scharn, Ashley Riley
- 15) Adam Loux, Ben Worley
- 16) Abigail Lankford, Shelby Purdie,  
Barbara Riley, Olivia Toms
- 17) Margaret Harms, Brendan Henkelman,  
Kyle Hout
- 19) Leah Henkelman, Charlie Nattress,  
Brinley Riley
- 21) Eric Foote, Gavin Holt
- 22) William Horton
- 23) Kari Grodahl
- 24) Jamie Andreasen
- 25) Brantley Diersen
- 29) Ben Albright, Charles Nattress
- 31) Tonya Lankford



- May 17, 1959 **Ronald & Marlene Meyer**  
 May 19, 2001 Ryan & Julie Wheelock  
 May 19, 2018 Dustin & Kelly Clecker  
 May 20, 1989 Larry & Chris Pierce  
 May 21, 2005 Jay & Sarah Cerra  
 May 23, 2009 Ben & Faith Worley  
 May 25, 1985 Clayton & Kim Fjerstad  
 May 31, 1997 Tony & Amy Hammen

### May Anniversaries



Students present at Sunday School each Sunday during the month of March were:

**Nursery-Pre-Kindergarten:** Cannon Albright, Jack Bartels and Adelaide Worley;

**Kindergarten & 1<sup>st</sup> Grade-**Lily Bartels, Elin Albright, Baylee Ellerbrock and Johnny Worley;

**Grades 2 & 3-**Lille Greene, Dillian Graeve and Abby Worley;

**Grades 4 & 5-**Benjamin Worley;

**Grade 6-**Sadie Wheelock;

**Confirmation Class (Grades 7 & 8)-**Derek Greene, Jayci Graeve and Adlen Wheelock;

**Grades 9, 10, 11 & 12-**No one.

Class winner for best attendance in March was the Kindergarten & 1<sup>st</sup> Grade class taught by Kari Lantz.



### Baptisms



**Welcome to Our Family**

Hudsen James DeLance and Maren Jean DeLance were baptized on Easter Sunday. They are the children of Travis and Melissa DeLance. Drew McDonough and Terra Barrett are sponsors for Hudsen and Maren.

**We pray that God will be with and guide Hudsen and Maren forever.**



The following young people joined us at the Lord's Table for the first time Maundy Thursday, April 1<sup>st</sup>: Jossa Hauptert, Kelsie Hejzmanek, Reef Lankford, Kellen Meyer, Devin Riley, Owen Scharn, Sadie Wheelock, Aidan Albright, Peyton Ellerbrock, Danika Meyer, Cooper Nattress, Lilly Picard, Rhemy Picard, Benjamin Worley and Abigail Worley.



First Communion



These young people will graduate from area schools this May--Camie Clark, Laura Greene, Taylor Greene, Hallee Maulsby, Sally Musselman, Carson Pibal, Shelby Purdie, Kortney Riley and Ayden Toms.

Congratulations to each of our graduates. May God lead you forward as you venture out into the world!



**Hanford Voyles** age 98 of Lytton, IA passed away on Easter Sunday, April 4, 2021, at Park View Rehabilitation Center in Sac City, IA. Hanford Gerald Voyles was born on April 24, 1922, in Coon Valley Township, Sac County, IA to parents Vernon and Carrie (Witten) Voyles. Hanford was the oldest of six children. His father died when he was eight years old and he was then raised in the home of Sam and Martha Morrison. Hanford attended country school through the eighth grade at Coon Valley #3 and graduated from Sac City High School with the class of 1941. After graduation Hanford enlisted to serve his country with the U.S. Army from 1945 to 1946. He was stationed at Northern Luzon, just north of the Philippine Islands.

On November 21, 1948, Hanford was united in marriage to Celia Meyer at the Emanuel-St. John Lutheran Church in Lytton, IA. The couple farmed south of Sac City in Section 6 of Coon Valley Township. To their union, they were blessed with two sons, Maurice and David. In 1981 Hanford and Celia moved to Celia's home farm north of Lytton in Garfield Township where they continued to farm. Celia passed away on March 24, 1995. Their son, Maurice, passed away on October 27, 1996.

For many years Hanford enjoyed living the farm life where he raised hogs, farmed the ground, and spent lots of time outside gardening and mowing. He was a farmer at heart. He enjoyed watching all sports and loved cheering on the Iowa State Cyclones. Hanford's faith in God was very important to him. He was a lifelong member of the Emanuel-St. John Lutheran Church in Lytton, where in his later years he enjoyed tying quilts for the missionaries during Do-Days. He helped mow the

north church cemetery where Celia was buried. Hanford cherished his time spent with his grandchildren and great-grandchildren attending sporting events, church and school programs, and watching them show their livestock projects. In the fall of 2014 Hanford was a proud member of the Military Veteran Honor Flight flying from Fort Dodge, IA to Washington, DC where he was met by his son David to spend the day. In later years Hanford received two Quilts of Valor which were a source of pride for his service to our country.

Survivors are his son David Voyles and wife Mary of Marinette, WI, daughter-in-law Sandra (Loren) Wuebker of Rockwell City, IA, grandchildren: Sara (Tim) Fischer of Sherwood, OR, Reggie (Sarah) Voyles of Sac City, IA, Ryan (Leann) Voyles of Delta, IA, and great-grandchildren: Gabe, Lainey, Grant, and Caroline Fischer, William, Landon, and Millie Voyles, Colten, Levi, and Reagan Voyles, sister Audrey Reilly of Walnut Creek, CA, many nieces, nephews, friends, and special friend Lorene Hinrichs.

Hanford was preceded in death by his wife Celia, son Maurice, parents, step-father Glenn Crilly, and siblings Shirley Lovstad, Norma Engstrom, Rex Voyles, and Vernon Voyles.

Condolences also to the family of Randy Hedin, brother of **Dennis Hedin**, who died Thursday, April 15th.

**May God comfort all that mourn.**



**Worship Leaders for May 2021**

**May 2**

Worship Attendants: Darold & Jean matter  
Reader: Laurie Glasnapp

**May 9**

Worship Attendant: Scott Greene  
Reader: Sara Nattress

**May 16**

Worship Attendant: Candace Booth  
Reader: Keaton Hammen

**May 23**

Worship Attendants: Ben & Susan Albright  
Reader: Cheryl Haden

**May 30 Gala Day Worship**

Worship Attendants: All Worship Committee  
Members

**We continue to follow CDC COVID-19 guidelines of social distancing and wearing masks. Worship will be outside beginning May 16 through fall as weather allows. No Saturday evening services but hope to begin a Family Church Night on Wednesday evenings. Watch for further information!**

## GALA DAYS

### Ecumenical Outdoor Worship Service

May 30, 2021 10:30 a.m.

### Luncheon to follow

Meat, drink and paper products provided

ESJ members whose last name starts with A-M are asked to provide a side dish, N-Z are asked to provide desserts. Hosts will be Sunrise Circle and Friends



### 2021 Synod Assembly

Dennis and Candace Booth and Pr Ben were ESJ delegates to the WIS ELCA 2021 Synod Assembly on April 10. This year the assembly was held via ZOOM technology.

Bishop Lorna Halaas addressed the theme "Currents of Grace" with several Biblical stories involving water and how the water interacted with Christ. Pr. Halaas then presided over the business of the synod. The ELCA Churchwide representative noted that WIS out-performed expectations with missions.

Ordination anniversaries included Pr. Ben Worley, 10 years, Pr Ron Yarnell, 25 years, and Pr Paul Stone, 30 years. Bishop Halaas reported that the synod office will move from the current location to St. Mark's Church in Storm Lake. She also challenged congregations to increase mission support by 1.5%.

The WIS will have yard signs available that proclaim "Every gender, every race; All are covered by God's Grace".

Elections for positions were voted and resolutions adopted. Complete details on business and reports can be found on the synod website. Many participants referred to the past year's challenge of the pandemic but found God's grace everywhere.

Dennis and Candace missed the usual mass worship services and connecting with fellow synod acquaintances. The technology was definitely a challenge, but ESJ was represented.

Next year the Assembly is planned for April 22-23 in Sioux City.



This year we received Easter Lilies from:

**Dorothy Wilson and girls** in memory of Don Wilson.

**Rick and Marilyn Dettmann** in memory of their parents.

**Dar and Denise Lake** in memory of Laverne and Marge Dettmann, Miriah Murphy and Marc and Laurie Dettmann

**Edna and Dyle Rockafellow** in memory of Ed and Nelma Rix, Jr., Valerie Rockafellow, and David Purdie

**Pauline Lange and family** in memory of Arthur and other family members that have gone to be with our Lord.

and from the **Arndt family** in memory of family and friends.

Thank you for their beauty that graced our chancel this Easter season.



### *Lutheran Services in Iowa*

May 2021, LSI Bulletin/Newsletter Article and Story

### Happy Mother's Day!

Mother's Day is a time to celebrate the strong, loving women in your life. At Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI), we see thousands of Iowa moms through their journey to build the brightest future for their children.

We see moms turning to LSI Behavioral Health Intervention Services to ensure their child is receiving the coping skills and behavioral supports they need to thrive. In our Early Childhood Services, we see first-time moms who are eager to join our parenting education classes and support groups. In 2020, LSI's Early Childhood programs provided support to more than 1,097 families of young children. We are so inspired to hear their stories and see their hard work pay off as they raise our next generation.

As you celebrate Mother's Day this year, remember how many Iowa moms are being empowered because of your support. If you are looking for a way to honor your mother this year, please consider making a gift in her name to LSI. For more information, please contact Deb Whitford, LSI director of philanthropy and church relations, at [Deborah.Whitford@LSIowa.org](mailto:Deborah.Whitford@LSIowa.org) or 563-676-2065.

*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](http://LSIowa.org) and [Facebook.com/LSI.iowa](https://Facebook.com/LSI.iowa).*

### **Wrapping Care Around Iowa Children**

Martha and Marti first became foster parents in September of 2018, after their biological children expressed that they wanted to provide foster care as a family. They decided to become licensed through LSI Foster Care and Adoption and soon after, they welcomed a sibling group of three into their home.

"Our kids really wanted to look into foster care as a way to be able to help others as a family," Martha says. "Everybody had to sacrifice and pour in, and everybody was needed and brought something to the table."

The siblings stayed with the family for almost two years, until the opportunity came for them to find a forever home through adoption. Over the years, the siblings had become bonded to Martha and Marti, as well as their extended family and friends. The siblings are currently in the process of officially being adopted by a family close to Martha and Marti, so they can continue to stay connected to the important relationships they built in foster care.

The family has found a passion they can all share, and it's making a difference in the lives of Iowa children.

"We always explain fostering as 'good' and 'hard.' You never want to take one away from the other, because it's both. It's the hardest thing we've ever done, but it's the best thing we've done," Martha says. "We've had the privilege of having the kids in our home and you have the responsibility and the privilege to take care of them in their time of need."

