



Scripture is made up of thousands of small pieces: verses, chapters, and books obviously, but also themes and ideas. For many of us, reading or hearing scripture is kind of like opening up a 10,000 piece puzzle. We know that it's supposed to fit together, but where do we start? It's no easy process and it's easy to lose heart and leave it to someone else. That's what I do at Christmas time when my mom and brother-in-law start putting together a puzzle. For them, though, they take a look at the picture on the cover of the box. They sort out the pieces with straight edges (the border!) and they patiently begin.

What I am finding, the more confirmation kids I have and the more I write sermons and posts for Lytton Bible Readers, is that scripture makes more and more sense. Jesus, for example, repeats ideas over and over. He takes a single idea, but he tells the people about it in ten different ways and shows it to them with another ten actions. In other words, scripture is full of repetition so that its truth has many different ways to get into our ears and hearts. With this in mind, I want to look at a scripture lesson from late September and one from late October and talk about how they are tied together.

In Luke 16:1-13 Jesus tells the parable of the Dishonest Manager. His master discovers that he "was squandering his property" and tells him that he "cannot be [his] manager anymore." This dishonest manager is desperate and comes up with a plan to provide for himself without his job. The scheme is this: he quickly begins to cancel portions of debt that are owed to his master by other people figuring that they will show him grace later on. The surprise of the parable is that when the master finds out he commends the dishonest manager. It seems that canceling the debts owed to him was the kind of stewardship that he was looking for. The message of this parable is that God does not want us to be stingy with his graciousness to other people. This would be poor stewardship. Rather, we are to be debt-cancelers. We are to declare to those who are in debt to God that Jesus has paid it all, that their debt is canceled and that they are free from it.

November 2019

That brings us to the gospel lesson for Reformation Sunday. Here Jesus is speaking to a group of Jews who had believed in him and he says, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." Their response? "We are descendants of Abraham and have never been slaves to anyone." Jesus continues by saying that "anyone who sins is a slave to sin. The slave does not have a permanent place in the household; the son has a place there forever. So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed."

Let's simplify this. Everyone is a slave because everyone sins. But if the Son (Jesus) frees a slave (you and me), then that slave becomes free by the word He has spoken to them. You hear that word on Sunday morning after we confess our sins. You hear it again at Holy Communion. Hopefully you hear it at other times as well. Slave, the Son's word has been spoken to you and you are free.

So then, how do these two different scriptures, Luke 16 and John 8, relate? In both of them Jesus is presenting to us the declaration of freedom for sinners/slaves. This is a theme that Jesus returns to over and over. And in it we need to hear two things.

1. We ourselves were slaves to sin and we have been declared free by the word of Jesus the Son. Our debt is canceled.
2. We are God's managers. He desires that we cancel the debt of others. This means that he wants us to speak to others the word of freedom that Jesus has spoken to us.

The message of both scriptures is the same: receiving freedom from God, giving that freedom to others. This is a MAJOR theme of scripture.

P.S. When Jesus finds fault with people in the gospels, it is almost always because they are stingy stewards of this freedom. He criticizes the Pharisees repeatedly because instead of receiving the freedom that Jesus gives, and becoming "managers" of that grace, they are working hard to free themselves instead. In other words, they're trying to pay off their own debt and they have nothing left with which to cancel the debts of others. They have completely misunderstood the kingdom of God. --
Rev. Ben Worley
Emanuel-St. John, Lytton, IA (712) 541-4785

Emanuel-St John Lutheran Church Council Meeting Minutes October 10, 2019

President Brian Lantz called the meeting to order. Present were Pastor Ben, Cindy Souder, Jeff Ellerbrock, Rhonda Johnson, Kari Lantz, Colleen Arndt, Pauline Lange, Jo Grodahl, Karen Cerra, Harlan Meyer, Dar Lake, and Ron Haden. Pastor Ben gave devotions. Motion by Harlan Meyer, second by Jeff Ellerbrock to approve the agenda. Motion passed. Motion by Dar Lake, second by Karen Cerra to approve the September minutes. Motion passed. Rhonda Johnson presented the September Treasurer's report with a balance of \$5007.06. Motion Jo Grodahl, second by Dar Lake to approve the treasurer's report. Motion passed.

Old Business: Motion by Jeff Ellerbrock, second by Ron Haden to have the Mission Festival offering be given 1/2 to Global Health Mission and 1/2 to local Mission support (ELCA, Church of Damascus Road, etc.). Motion passed. Motion by Jeff Ellerbrock, second by Dar Lake to have the local mission Sunday, normally the 4th Sunday of the month, be for local expenses this month only. Motion passed.

President's Report: Brian Lantz is going to get a drone and fly over the roof of the church to see if there are any holes that bats can get in. Ron Haden reported that the bat exterminator was here and put a trap on the north side of church roof, a plug in the bell tower, and screen over a drain pipe.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Ben informed the council that Matt Toms and his finance would like to use the church for their wedding in June of next year. Council agreed to allow the use of the church. Pastor has started his Greek classes. He called Amy Hammen about youth group ideas. The youth group will be doing the Operation Christmas Child boxes in November.

Worship and Music Committee: Dar Lake present. Pastor will be gone on November 10th, they are looking for speaker and Faith will do Saturday night services. Thanksgiving services will be on Sunday evening November 24th. Jo Grodahl volunteered to organize the food.

Parish Ed Committee: Kari Lantz present. December 15th will be the children's Sunday School Christmas program during the 10:00 service. They will be hosting a town night on February 20th. The Sunday School newsletter will be every other month publication. The Sunday School children's mission this month is purchasing a kayak for the Ingham Okoboji Bible Camp.

Outreach Committee: Colleen Arndt and Karen Cerra present. The committee is giving cookies to the Lytton Fire Department. The committee is working on the December gift giving this year. It will be donations to get winter coats, mittens etc. for local school children in need.

Property and Management Committee: Ron Haden present. A bid was presented for Pastor's office project. The bid included material and labor for removing wallpaper and painting walls and ceiling, redo some woodwork. Bid is for 1800.00. Carpet replacement will be approximately \$700.00. Jeff Ellerbrock, representing Endowment Committee, said there are funds that may be used to cover the cost of the project. Ron reported that the bill for the elevator doors not working properly was \$896.00. If a new computer board or a repair to the board needs to be done it would cost more. Ron said that there is a Preventative Maintenance Contract for \$90.00 per month which includes elevator inspection. Motion by Jo Grodahl, second by Dar Lake to approve the Preventative Maintenance Contract for three years with Schumacher's out of Denver, Iowa for the elevator. Motion passed. Ron presented three bids for a new furnace for the church and a new water heater. Motion by Jo Grodahl, second by Jeff Ellerbrock to approve MGM's bid for a new furnace and water heater for \$9,975.61. Motion passed. Motion by passed. Ron pointed out that there are Thrivent Funds and undesignated memorials that may be used to help with the cost.

Stewardship and Finance Committee: Jeff Ellerbrock present. Jeff presented the health benefits package from Portico for Pastor Ben. Motion by Dar Lake, second by Ron Haden to accept the Bronze Plus A plan from Portico. Motion passed.

WELCA: Karen Cerra reported that they are collecting nonperishables for the county outreach program.

New Business: Lytton Betterment has donated money towards the Operation Christmas Child Boxes that the Youth will be doing in November.

Motion by Jeff Ellerbrock, second by Dar Lake to adjourned. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned with the Lord's Prayer.



Outreach Collection



During November and December we would like to share our bounty with others locally. We will have a box in the entry for the collection of non-perishable food items, paper products, etc. to be taken to the Calhoun County and Sac County Outreach Centers. The need is great, please give generously! Thank you.

Give Generously

November Birthdays

- 1) Carson Pibal
- 2) Kade Smith
- 3) Greg Williams
- 4) Clayton Garcia, Wyatt Glasnapp,
Johanna Haffner, Holly Hammen
- 5) Cooper Nattress
- 7) Katlyn Ackerson
- 9) Ayden Dart
- 10) Wesly Maulsby
- 11) Jerry Jacobs, Melissa Leer,
Brock Nattress
- 12) Sandra Gibson, Donavon Lake,
Alan Nuehring, Alanna Schuur
- 13) Nancy Bruns, Michele Hauptert,
Mary Ann Lashinski, Carol Meyer,
Tisha Murphy
- 14) Melissa Souder, Joshua Van Hulzen
- 16) James Toms
- 17) Gloria Johnson
- 18) Karla Dettman
- 19) Lexie Berry, Jasper Heimdal,
Nicole Meyer, Kierstynn Prenger
- 20) Amy Purdie, Lynn Ramsey
- 21) Baylee Ellerbrock, Payden Roberson
- 22) Marilyn Schmitt
- 23) Nick Albright, Dennis Hedin
- 24) Mark Riley
- 27) Angela Olerich, Jessica Prenger,
Bonnie Walker
- 28) Treajan Diersen, Devin Riley
- 29) Kellen Meyer, Alexander Taylor



Nov. 7, 1970 Dennis & Barbara Hedin
 Nov. 13, 2004 Charles & Sara Nattress
 Nov. 26, 1966 **Dale & JoAnn Scharn**



These Sunday School students were present all Sundays in September 2019—

- Nursery: Jack Bartels, Myla Albright, Adelaide Worley & Lily Bartels,
- Kindergarten & Grade 1: Baylee Ellerbrock, Johnny Worley & Sawyer Riley;
- Grades 2 & 3: Lille Greene, Elodie Mentzer, Abby Worley & Marcus Mentzer;
- Grade 4: Aidan Albright, Cooper Nattress & Benjamin Worley;
- Grades 5 & 6: Jossa Hauptert, Sadie Wheelock & Derek Greene;
- Grade 7 & 8: Onna Hauptert, Jewel Talbott, Adlen Wheelock & Olivia Toms;
- High School: Laura Greene, Taylor Greene & Kortney Riley.

Class winner for best attendance was the Nursery & Pre-Kindergarten class taught by Alison Greene, Kari Musselman and Sam Musselman.



Hurray
for our
Sunday
School
Teachers!

Sunday School News

The following Sunday School teachers were installed at the 10 am worship service Sunday, September 8th.

Nursery-Pre-K: Alison Greene and Kari Musselman;

Kindergarten-Grade 1: Kari

Lantz

Grades 2 & 3: Doug and Barb Riley;

Grades 4: Theresa Schultz and Julie Wheelock

Grades 5 & 6: Faith Worley

Grades 7 & 8 (Confirmation Class): Rev. Ben C. Worley

High School: Nate and Shelley Hauptert

We can all assist our volunteer teachers by remembering them in prayer daily. Thank you.





Kacen Meyer Waller, son of Cory and Jamie Waller, was baptized Sunday, September 29, 2019. His baptismal sponsors were Nicole Meyer and Jenna Waller.

We pray that God will guide Kacen's footsteps throughout his life!



Allysha Vibbard and Nolan Huddleson were married by Rev. Ben C. Worley in Manning on Saturday, September 28, 2019.

We pray that God will bless this couple with much happiness.



THANK YOU

Thank you to all who prayed for us, fed us, sent cards or visited us after the car accident. All of the attention has helped our healing. We thank God for such wonderful friends and family.

Dennis and Candace Booth



Condolences to the family and friends of Eleanor Tamm. Eleanor died Friday, September 27, 2019 at Pocahontas. Eleanor was the mother of **Marilyn Schmitt**.



Calling All Nativities

Due to the positive comments about Christmas nativities last Advent, please bring them for the window ledges again. First Sunday of Advent is December 1st this year. Thank you in advance for sharing them with your church family!!!



CoDR Annual Gathering

Every congregation has its annual meeting, and so does CoDR, but in our tradition it is more like a reunion of people who support and participate in this vital ministry to "the least of these brothers of mine" (*Jesus, in Matthew 25.*)

Not only do members of the Outside Church Council gather, along with representatives of supporting congregations and individual supporters, but it is a reunion of outsiders with former insiders whom you met when you visited prison and who have now reentered the outside world as contributing, productive citizens who are anxious to see you again.

Make plans now to attend the Annual Gathering, November 10, 2019 in St. Paul Lutheran Church in Rockwell City. We can accept reservations up to November 7th so we know how many will be there. Registration will begin at 2:30 p.m. Reentry from 3-5 pm, Meal (free will) about 5:15 pm with meeting and sharing by former inmates following meal. Come for all or part of this event!

Chaplains and Fires

Interesting times in this prison ministry stuff! Friday, August 30th about 2:05 pm at FDCF, the alarm sounded. Three connected buildings: Dolliver Unit, the Education Building, and Emmet Unit were on fire. Flames were shooting 2 or more feet above the flat roofs. The buildings were evacuated and the inmates were brought to the gym and the visiting room. Black smoke was billowing high into the air. The town fire department was nearby and brought through the several gates necessary to get to the fire. The fire was extinguished within 10 minutes of water being applied. The fire apparently was started where outside contractors were working on those roofs. No injuries, no incidents, and no damages to the buildings' interiors. Praise God! The residents of those units actually got to sleep in their own beds that night.

Different subject: a position posting for a Chaplain to serve both FDCF and NCCF resulted in interviews of 8 candidates, including me. Neither I nor other good candidates I know were chosen, I am told the person selected is the daughter of the former Treatment Director at FDCF who retired in 2009, the year I became pastor of CoDR. Please pray for a smooth beginning and enhanced religious services to our inmates.

-----Pastor Paul Stone
from the Church of the Damascus Road Flash



Praise and Thanksgiving



November is National Adoption Month, a time to honor families who have opened their hearts and homes to children in need. For LSI, it is a time to celebrate the families we support through Foster Care and Adoption, and to raise awareness for the hundreds of Iowa children in need of a safe, loving home.

In 30 counties across western Iowa, LSI Foster Care and Adoption recruits, licenses, and supports foster and adoptive families to ensure every Iowa child grows up in a safe, stable environment.

But more work needs to be done. According to the most recent federal data, more than 100,000 children in the U.S. are waiting to be adopted from foster care, and thousands of teens age out of foster care every year

without a permanent family. To learn more about supporting Iowa children in foster care, visit LSIowa.org/Foster, or contact Deb Whitford, LSI director of philanthropy and church relations, at 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 www.LSIowa.org and www.facebook.com/LSI.iowa.

A Growing Family

Lindsey and Andrea were no strangers to foster parenting. Their older brother fostered children for 10 years, and they were inspired by his drive and passion for supporting vulnerable children. Until recently, they hadn't seen themselves as foster parents. But something in their hearts told them they were needed.

"It's been on our hearts for a lot of years, and we have the room and love," Andrea says. "It's something we knew we could do and it's needed."

The two sisters decided to become licensed foster parents earlier this year through LSI Foster Care and Adoption. Now, they are caring for children in foster care at the same time. Lindsey and Andrea regularly meet up to support one another and ensure the children can connect and feel less alone during the most vulnerable time in their young lives.

"It's been so important to have a connection to another foster family," Lindsey says. "The kids can see they're not different. There are other children in their same situation."

Meanwhile, they are busy building a strong bond with the children's birth families. Lindsey says foster parenting is a way for them to give a child stability while also nurturing their whole family.

Lindsey and Andrea have also found support from other local foster families. They are there for each other, offering a shoulder to lean on when anyone needs an extra boost on the difficult days.

"There is a need for foster families in Iowa, and there is so much good that comes out of fostering," Andrea says.



Sunday, November 3, 2019