

"The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness."

This is a really good verse that I love all by itself. It expresses a deeply held conviction that isn't conditional. God's love never ceases, period. His mercies never come to an end, period. God's mercy isn't true on some mornings, but not on others; his mercy is true for us every morning.

Now, there are mornings when we don't notice this love and mercy, when our focus is elsewhere, when we get caught up in the circumstances of our lives and our focus shifts to what's not going right, but just because our attention shifts does not mean that God's love and mercy is any less true. As an example, we don't cease to rely on the air we breath just because we're not paying attention. The need for the air is still there and so is God's provision of it. It's just better when we notice and appreciate that which is good.

But the verse I'm writing about today goes beyond that. It is taken from a book called Lamentations (traditionally ascribed to the prophet Jeremiah) that describes the siege of Jerusalem by the Babylonian armies in 587-586 B.C. Some years before, Judah had become a vassal state of Babylon, which meant that they sent regular payments to this foreign empire in exchange for being left to rule themselves. But being a vassal did not sit well with them and they rebelled. And so now the Babylonians have arrived to teach them a lesson. The other towns have already been subdued and only Jerusalem is left. But the good food has run out and so has the bad food. The people of the city are starving to death. Out of desperation some in

November 2024

the city have resorted to cannibalism. Jerusalem has become hell on earth.

It is into this reality that the author speaks. "The Steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness." How can it be true that God's love and mercy are true at the very same time as the darkest horror engulfs them? Other Biblical writers, when describing bad times, speak of God hiding his face. But Jeremiah confidently asserts God's continued love and mercy, his continued engagement with his people.

Why do I love this? Because the temptation is to think that when things go badly, when everything is falling apart, God has left, has washed his hands of us. "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" And the further temptation is to wash our hands of him, "If you are going to let me suffer like this, then I will not praise you, I will not worship you. I will find someone else to lean on." But the truth is that God does not forsake us even when hell and death have drawn near to us and suffering overwhelms us. God does not forsake us even when we have given up. Jesus experiences all of this on the cross. He suffers so badly that he cries out, "Why have you forsaken me?" But God the Father had not forsaken his son. Rather he raises him up by the power of the Spirit. The love and mercy that seemed lost on Good Friday were new on Sunday morning. Death and suffering and seeming abandonment, though they seemed the most real and powerful things, could not compete with God's love and mercy. We won't always see them. We won't always feel them. But there is nothing more true, nothing more solid, nothing more eternal.

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Emanuel St. John Lutheran Church
Council Meeting Minutes
October 9, 2024

President Jeff Ellerbrock called the meeting to order. Present were LaVerne Arndt, Rhonda Johnson, Jeff Ellerbrock, Pauline Lange, Brian Lantz, LeRoy Johnson, Pastor Ben Worley, Ron Haden and Kari Lantz.

Old Business: By-law changes little discussion was had on making changes. Fall fest shirts have been ordered and will be in soon.

President's Report: Jeff Ellerbrock reported council needed to approve Pastor's Healthcare plan. Motion by Brian Lantz, second by LaVerne Arndt, to approve Pastor's single healthcare plan. Motion passed.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Ben reported he has set up a schedule for home visits so it will be more consistent for both of them.

Worship and Music Committee: Ron Haden reported Mission Fest will be November 17th with Christy Weaver as the speaker. There will also be a Thanksgiving service like in past years.

Parish Education Committee: No report

Outreach Committee: Kari Lantz reported for Mission Fest on November 17th they will be purchasing Spiral Hams and ask the congregation to bring sides for the potluck after the service. They will also be doing a Trunk or Treat on Oct 31st from 6:00-7:30 pm in the church parking lot. All are welcome to decorate their vehicles and join in on the fun.

Property Management Committee: LeRoy reported that Brian Lantz and Randy Souder put in rubber matting to slope the water away from the church and will be adding black dirt on top and will have Wirtjers come in and finish grading it by the wall in the dining hall where we have been having a leak.

Stewardship and Finance: LaVerne Arndt present-no report

WELCA: Kari Lantz present-no report

New Business: Brian Lantz would like to move the Christmas program back to an evening service. The program will be December 15th at 5 p.m. with a soup supper and Christmas cookie exchange to follow. LeRoy Johnson would like clarification on committee terms because the by-laws and Constitution say two different things. President Jeff will look into this and report back next meeting.

Motion by LeRoy Johnson, second by Brian Lantz, to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed. Closed with the Lord's prayer.



Mission Festival celebration November 17

Mission Festival will be held on Nov. 17th at 10 AM. Our guest speaker will be Christy Hillmer Weaver who will share her experiences during her recent mission trip to minister unto the People of the First Nations in South Dakota. Christy will also speak to the children and adults during the Sunday School hour.

A potluck meal will be served following the church service with the main course of ham, drinks and table service provided. If you wish, you may add to the meal with a side dish or dessert. A special mission offering will be accepted at the meal.



Pastor Appreciation

Although Pastor Appreciation Month (October) is over, there will be an opportunity to let Pastor Ben know how much we appreciate him and his family. The Worley family is going through a rough time right now with the recent diagnosis of Stage 4 colon cancer for Faith's mom, Marjorie. Faith has been in Minnesota for the past several weeks caring for her mom and helping to navigate this process. Pastor and the kids are keeping the "home fires burning" and trying to get to Minnesota regularly to see Faith and her parents.

Envelopes with Pastor Ben's name on them will be located in the back of the sanctuary if you would like to show them some extra love and care by perhaps giving a cash donation to help with travel expenses, gas gift cards, etc. to support them at this time. Please consider sharing the bounty of this harvest season and letting Pastor know how much he is appreciated. The envelopes will be given to Pastor after each church service through November.



November Birthdays

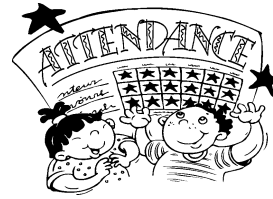
- 1) Carson Pibal
- 2) Kade Smith
- 3) Greg Williams
- 4) Clayton Garcia, Wyatt Glasnapp,
Holly Hammen
- 5) Cooper Nattress
- 7) Katlyn Ackerson
- 9) Ayden Dart
- 10) Wesly Maulsby
- 11) Jerry Jacobs, Melissa Leer,
Brock Nattress
- 12) Sandra Gibson, Donavon Lake,
Alan Nuehring, Alanna Schuur
- 13) Nancy 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 McDonough, Jasper Heimdal,
Nicole Meyer, Kierstynn Prenger
- 20) Amy Purdie
- 21) Baylee Ellerbrock, Payden Roberson
- 22) Marilyn Schmitt
- 23) Nick Albright
- 24) Mark Riley
- 27) Angela Olerich, Jessica Prenger,
Bonnie Walker
- 28) Treajan Diersen, Devin Riley
- 29) Kellen Meyer, Alexander Taylor



Nov. 13, 2004 Charles & Sara Nattress
Nov. 26, 1966 **Dale & JoAnn Scharn**



UPDATE ON T-SHIRTS. Yes they are being processed. A glitch on my side not replying on a key email has delayed it! Sorry about that! But they are on the way! (Something else to be "thankful" for in November... yeah about 3 weeks) Brian Lantz



These Sunday School students were present all Sundays in September 2024—

- Nursery-Preschool: Hazel Bartels and Austin Farley
- Kindergarten & Grades 1 and 2: Earl Bartels
- Grades 3 & 4: Jack Bartels and Adelaide Worley
- Grades 5 & 6: Johnny Worley

Class winners for best attendance in September were Nursery & Pre-Kindergarten taught by Julie Wheelock and Super Subs-Adlen Wheelock and Sadie Wheelock and Grades 3 & 4 taught by Doug and Barb Riley.



Community Thanksgiving Service

Our Community Thanksgiving Service will again be held the Sunday evening before Thanksgiving, **November 24**, at 6:00 pm in the dining hall. We will have an informal time of worship with Holy Communion and a light meal of soup, crackers, bread, and relish. There will be a signup sheet in the entryway for anyone wanting to bring any of the food items. We are so blessed to be able to gather together and give thanks to our Lord for all the blessings He has given us. Please invite anyone you wish to come with you and your family to share in this special gathering.



A BIG THANK YOU to the entire congregation for all the ways you helped out and participated in the first ever **LYTTON FALL FEST!** There was answered prayer as we had excellent weather for the occasion! Thanks to those who prayed for that! There was great singing in God's outdoor stadium! And the meal was great! Thanks to all the great cooks for the food prep, serving and cleaning up! There was zero complaints and just like feeding the 5000, there was food enough and a little left over! Just about the only grass that wasn't crunched down was the grass under the bags boards. (Thank you Albrights for the Gala Days bag boards) You could see exactly where the volleyball net was. The inflatable obstacle course

had the kids bouncing off the walls! Thanks for the barrel trailer rides Ron Haden. Balloons showed up for the event! The parade had high quality and probably was the shortest parade in Lytton history... but it sure was worth it! Congratulations to Leroy Johnson, and Shirley Sage for being grand marshals. Izaiah Van Hulzen held the Junior grand marshal title. Thanks to Doug Riley LLC company and Andrew Van Hulzen for announcing the Gala Games! The water balloons were a big hit... until one landed on the sound system (note to self: have the balloons located somewhere else!) We were on schedule...done before 2pm! It looked like all enjoyed it. (we learned where we can tighten up the schedule.

A very big blessing came in the “Farmers Share” or Farmers market! We had set out two tables, then Jane and Daryl came in with their “semi” and filled the tables! We had to get another one. I took a “beating” from Jane’s garden... they tasted great! There were seeds shared. Plants shared. And Great interest.

Perhaps the most important thing was the way so many of you made people feel welcomed and appreciated. Reaching out with the grace and love of Jesus that shows and shares to all important it is to have Jesus in your life. Jesus in action. Thank you so much!

If you have any suggestions and input, please let me know.

Sincerely, Brian Lantz



CHILDREN’S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

THE CHILDREN’S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM IS NOW SCHEDULED FOR SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2024! THE START TIME IS 5pm. There is, as always, a delicious soup supper to follow at 6pm. It is timed to have the parents of young children to be home and be in bed by 7pm for school the next day! Now here is another new twist... BRING IN A SAMPLE OF YOUR CHRISTMAS COOKIES AND GOODIES to sample at the dinner!

The program will feature our young people. There will be congregational singing on the wonderful songs of Christmas. Be delighted and enlighten by some surprises. You will have to listen to the dialogue very carefully. Once again, the call for prayer goes out to bless the service. Pray for your friends and neighbors and invite them to attend. Let the people know how Jesus came into the world with prophecies being fulfilled. He says

he’s coming back. Feel the warmth of Jesus in your hearts, the warmth that can carry you the rest of your life! There will be joy and gladness as Jesus is the reason for the season!

Parents, please let me know if your children are or are not going to be there as we select roles to be played. Thanks.

Sincerely, Brian Lantz 712-887-9000



National Adoption Month

November is National Adoption Month, a time to honor families who have opened their hearts and homes to children and teens. This month at LSI, we celebrate the families we support through Foster Care and Adoption and raise awareness for the hundreds of Iowa children needing a safe, healthy home.

Iowa foster families, like the Smiths*, raise the bar by opening their loving households to children and teens in need of a place to call home.

At LSI, we understand the importance of keeping youth in their communities to help maintain connections and stability during times of transition. So, when our staff received a referral for a teenage girl needing foster care placement, they looked inward toward the community.

At the time, homes in the area were either full or not open to accepting teenage placements. Coincidentally, the Smiths were present at a meeting the same night the referral came in. When they heard about Rebecca’s* situation, they immediately knew who the child was and wanted to help in any way they could.

The Smiths were already over their licensing capacity, having been granted a variance to accept a sibling group. To be able to bring Rebecca into their home, they would need to be given another variance, which was almost unheard of.

“It was by chance, or the grace of God, that the Smiths were able to accept another child, and give Rebecca a stable placement with a family in her community,” said Dawn Luetje, LSI Director of

Resource Family Licensing and Support, working in conjunction with Four Oaks Family Connections.

Thanks to the combined support of the Smiths, LSI staff, and the community, Rebecca was placed in the foster home, where she could maintain her daily activities with the teachers, coaches, and friends she was comfortable with. Rebecca continues to thrive in a stable, loving foster home environment and a caring community.

Stories like these are possible through our many community partners and generous donors. To learn more about supporting Iowa children in foster care, visit LSIowa.org/Foster, or contact Deb Whitford, LSI's Senior Director of Philanthropy and Church Relations, at 563-676-2065 or Deborah.Whitford@LSIowa.org.

***Names have been changed to protect client privacy.**

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.

From Nov. 2024 WaterLife Journal

November is National Adoption Month! Lutheran Services in Iowa has served adoptive and foster families for decades, helping to ensure every child has a safe and loving home. For over a year, we joined with Four Oaks Foster and Adoption Services to better serve the families of Iowa. As a subcontractor, we continue to train and support foster, adoptive, and kin families in the western side of the state. Our team has served over 700 families through assistance during the licensing process and by providing on-going support and development in the past fiscal year. To learn more about our Foster Care and Adoption services, please visit www.lsiowa.org/foster-care-adoption. For more information, please contact Deb Whitford, LSI's Director of Philanthropy and Church Relations, at Deborah.Whitford@LSIowa.org or 563-676-2065. 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



Portion of Synod Prayers from Nov 2024 WaterLife Journal

Merciful and loving God, you call us to support the weak, to work for justice and peace, to help those who suffer, and to honor all people. We pray to you for all in need...

Those affected by floods, hurricanes, and fires
Save us, O God, as the waters rise, the winds blow, and the flames destroy communities. Grant courage and protection to all emergency workers. Comfort those who are displaced, give patience to those who wait, and support those who work to rebuild what was lost. Bring healing, bring hope, and new life to of your creation. We pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Preparing to vote

Sovereign God, your Son Jesus lived within the structures of society even as he spoke truth to those in power and challenged systems of oppression. Empower us to be courageous disciples and responsible citizens. Grant that our life in the public realm be grounded in loved for our neighbors, care for the most vulnerable in our midst, and respect for the common life we share, following the example of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen. (All Creations Sings, p. 50)



November 5, 2024