



ST. PAUL
LUTHERAN CHURCH
ANAMOSA, IOWA

CREATIVELY CONNECT • INTENTIONALLY GROW • JOYFULLY SERVE

July 5, 2020
5th Sunday after
Pentecost

Prayer Concerns: For Fred Williams; Denny Oltmann, Troy Lyon, and Leslie Swartz (niece of Jan Allaire); for all facing issues from the corona virus—sickness or social isolation. (send prayer requests to stpaulanamosa@gmail.com; include your name, prayer recipient name, and family relationship)

Introduction: The mystery of God's ways is sometimes hidden from the wise and intelligent. Jesus associates with those often excluded from the religious community. Like Paul, we struggle with our own selfish desires and seek God's mercy and forgiveness. We gather to be refreshed by Christ's invitation: "Come to me, all you that are weary." Gathered around word, water, and meal, we find rest for our souls.

Service in the "Park"ing Lot: Weather permitting, an outdoor worship experience will be offered at 10 A.M. each Sunday on the east side of the Education Building. **Bring your lawn chairs** for versatile social distancing in the parking lot. A few spaces within earshot will be made available for those who are unable to exit their vehicles. The service will be comprised of an opening song, a reading, a brief testimonial or reflection, prayers of intercession, the Our Father, and a closing song. This service is not intended to replace the recorded Sunday service but to accentuate it. An e-blast announcement will be sent by 9:00 a.m. if the service is cancelled. Wear your favorite Live Generously shirt.

The ALY Board of Directors has decided to suspend its summer sack lunch program for 2020, due to Covid 19 concerns. The Anamosa Community School lunch program will continue to serve all community students with sack lunches through June, then will begin hot lunches in July, gathering and returning the children with school buses through out the community. The ALY Board supports this program, and will continue to use its time and resources to provide weekend backpacks of food during the 2020-2021 school year. ALY appreciates the work of its many volunteers as well as the support of the community as these decisions are being made.

Jones County Food Bank: To donate money, make checks payable to Jones County Community Food Bank (NOT HACAP) and mailed to 105 Broadway Place, Anamosa IA 52205. For appointment to drop off/pick up call 462-4343. **They need pancake mix to match the large donation of pancake syrup just received; also canned fruit, peas, green beans and corn.**

Wayne Zion web page has information about Jones County Food Banks. <https://waynezion.org/> in "Partner Links" tab.

Apostolic Assembly Church, food pickup times: Every 2nd and 4th Saturday 10AM-12PM Drive in, tell them number in your household, they will put a bag in your vehicle.

(more community events on page 4)

All are invited to join us for the Saint Paul



at the CE Building Parking Lot
Immediately following 10:00 A.M. service.
(Rain date: Sunday, July 19th)

Welcome New Members: Matt & Kim, Emma and Joe Gregorich. Kim and Matt moved to Anamosa in 2009. We have been attending church at St. Paul for the last 3 years. Emma is entering 5th grade, enjoys softball and art classes. Joe is entering 3rd grade, enjoys swimming and legos. Kim is a new Family Nurse Practitioner at UIQuickcare in Iowa City—enjoys reading and volleyball. Matt is a machinist at Weber Metals in Cascade, Ia. He enjoys farming and working on cars.

Congratulations to Emma and Joe Gregorich who celebrated their First Communion on Tuesday, June 30, 2020. Welcome to the table.

1st Reading: The Book of the Prophet Zechariah 9:9-12 {NIV}

⁹ Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. ¹⁰ I will take away the chariots from Ephraim and the warhorses from Jerusalem,

and the battle bow will be broken. He will proclaim peace to the nations. His rule will extend from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth. ¹¹As for you, because of the blood of my covenant with you, I will free your prisoners from the waterless pit. ¹²Return to your fortress, you prisoners of hope; even now I announce that I will restore twice as much to you.

Zechariah (whose name means “Yahweh has remembered”) was most likely writing to the Israelites after they returned from their exile in Babylon around 525 BCE, but may have been writing post Greek conquest under Alexander the Great in 333 BCE. An appalling desecration of Jerusalem and the Jewish Temple took place under the Greek generals and there was subsequent chaos. While scholars find it difficult to date this writing with surety, what is obvious is that Zechariah was writing to the Jewish people during a time when they lacked a king, a clear identity, and a sense of how to care for themselves.

Zechariah’s prophecy of a king and savior for Israel was a striking contrast to the conquering heroes we hear about elsewhere in the Hebrew Scriptures. The prophet predicts the arrival of a different kind of ruler – one who will be renowned for justice and peace and bring an end to wars. This king will not be the one who establishes the peaceful kingdom but will announce it on behalf of the Divine Warrior, Yahweh, who will have already conquered the surrounding oppressors. The image of this king’s arrival to Jerusalem on the foal of a donkey speaks of peacefulness; it contrasts the horse, which was used in war and by those who exuded pomposity. This king’s rule will include the lands between the Dead Sea, the Euphrates River, and the Mediterranean; i.e. reminding the people of the peaceful kingdom that existed under King Solomon in the 10th century BCE. The image of this kind of ruler was so significant that Matthew referred to Zechariah when describing Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem, which we commemorate on Palm Sunday. This image is used precisely to describe Jesus as a king of peaceful liberation and not a king of war or politics.

2nd Reading: St. Paul’s letter to the Christians in Rome 7:15-25a

¹⁵I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. ¹⁶Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. ¹⁷But in fact it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me. ¹⁸For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. ¹⁹For I do not do the good I want, but the

evil I do not want is what I do. ²⁰Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me.

²¹So I find it to be a law that when I want to do what is good, evil lies close at hand. ²²For I delight in the law of God in my inmost self, ²³but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind, making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. ²⁴Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? ^{25a}Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!

Take some time to really ponder the uniqueness of this message. The whole person, the whole world is redeemed by Christ and filled with Holy Spirit. Everything that exists, says Paul, has been transformed and renewed through the resurrection of Jesus. This concept is in great contrast to those Christians who would categorize those who are saved from those who are unsaved, and those who see the world as fundamentally bad or tainted. God wills life for all people, indeed for all His creation. And Jesus’ life revealed God’s desire to all creation. We are in debt not to this world’s limited powers, but to God who loves us into life. We Christians are not held ransom to sin by an earthbound view of life. We see beyond the earth’s limits, and that is precisely why we love it. We are all called to care for the earth as God’s creation, and to prepare it for future generations who will receive it as their heritage. God’s life will continue and we have the opportunity to promote that life.

Paul is not setting the Spirit over and against the idea of the flesh. Rather, he is talking about the life of a baptized person in the community. Paul wants the followers of Jesus living in Rome to throw off the trappings of a Greek philosophy that says the things of the created world are inferior to the things of the spirit world. He wants them to see that their false “fleshy” lives can be informed and regenerated through the Spirit given them by God through Christ. One’s actions are reflective and revealing of a person’s “spirit.” A baptized person cannot say in truth, “I follow Jesus the Christ” while intentionally choosing to act against God’s will for life, order & unity. Either the person is a liar or the power of Holy Spirit has not been fully manifested. In either case, the person needs prayer, not condemnation.

Similarly, the Jew who is burdened by the belief that life is merely a struggle for control of the flesh by good and bad demons can find liberation in remembering that God’s Spirit is more powerful than any other spiritual forces. While both Gentile pagans and Jews are tempted to fall into sin through the flesh (*sarx*), a person has the best chance of living the life of God by turning away from behaviors that flow from a lack of belief, being baptized into the Spirit of

Christ, and staying attached to the Christian body (*soma*) that strives to manifest this Spirit of integrated life.

Gospel: Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30 NIV

[*Jesus spoke to the crowd saying:*] ¹⁶“To what can I compare this generation? They are like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling out to others:

¹⁷“We played the pipe for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not mourn.’

¹⁸For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, ‘He has a demon.’

¹⁹The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.’ But wisdom is proved right by her deeds.”

²⁵At that time Jesus said, “I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. ²⁶Yes, Father, for this is what you were pleased to do. ²⁷“All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

²⁸“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

Jesus’s experience throughout his ministerial life was that the powerless found it easier to accept the revolutionary good news of God’s reign than did those who were self-reliant or full of their own self-importance. By “little ones,” Jesus means exactly those who experienced themselves as small in the world, the 98% of the population without status, education, or family wealth, who did not own land but worked the land of wealthy landowners for subsistence pay. These were the same people to whom the learned Pharisees preached the 613 laws of righteous living, a tract of rules only God himself could fulfill. These were the same lowly people who paid annual Temple tithes to the already wealthy chief priests and their families. The God presented to the peasants by the religious leaders of the day was demanding and unforgiving; one who did not bless them due to their sinfulness or the sin of their parents. This sin, according to the religious leaders, was rooted in their inability to fully keep the laws.

To these humble ones, Jesus presented his Father of

mercy, compassion, and generosity. The kingdom Jesus proclaimed is not based on the status or honor granted by humans but on the honor willingly bestowed by his Father; a kingdom in which the little ones do not have to earn or buy back the Father’s love. Often times those who think of themselves as wise and learned are too distracted by their own inflated egos to respond to other’s needs. Jesus praises God for revealing the truth of his love to those who were unlearned, laborers, tenant farmers, and common folk, while those who had studied the law and were educated remained too full to hear his message of true fulfillment. It is not salvation that eludes them but the joy of living in it.

It is because of people’s sinfulness that some in this world suffer. Many are unjustly treated by their bosses, spouses, parents, or unbelievers in general. Many carry the burdens of loneliness, untreated illness, insufficient confidence, verbal abuse, or neglect because of other’s actions. Some have not heard that God loves them. In Jesus’ day, these same elements were present because of how some interpreted the law and viewed God.

Jesus invites all who are burdened by the yoke of a meaningless Law to trade it for his yoke: a life of wisdom lived in relationship with a caring, generous, forgiving Father. In doing so, they will find their burdens bearable. Jesus creates a new community where all can find rest in each other and in the knowledge that they are pleasing to God right where they are. Burdens are lightened because others listen and help carry them. This is the yoke that guides the Christian community. Meekness and humility are the reins.

Taking it home:

What is the modern day equivalent of “riding in on the foal of an ass”? Can you identify any modern leaders who present themselves this way?

Name people in your life who act out of humility and/or peace.

Youth: Tell someone in your class you think s/he would make a good leader of peace?

What God given gifts do you have to contribute to the effort of peace-making?

Name a way you will die to or let go of the deeds of “the flesh.” Before answering, think about those folks and environments that influence you away from being mindful of God’s will.

Take a deep breath and pray for good to come to those with whom you struggle most.

Mindfulness (set aside five minutes. breathe and read through three times. Which words or ideas hold energy for you? What images and feelings emerge in your imagination?)

“I offer the wisdom of Eric Fromm, in his classic book *The Art of Loving*. He says that the healthiest people he has known, and those who very often grow up in the most natural way, are those who, between their two parents and early authority figures, experienced a combination of unconditional love along with very conditional and demanding love! This seems to be true of so many effective and influential people, like St. Francis, John Muir, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Mother Teresa, and you can add your own. I know my siblings and I received conditional love from our mother and unconditional love from our father. We all admit now that she served us very well later in life, although we sure fought Mom when we were young. And we were glad Daddy was there to balance her out. I know this is not the current version of what is psychologically “correct,” because we all seem to think we need nothing but unconditional love. Any law, correction, rule, or limitation is another word for conditional love. It is interesting to me that very clear passages describing both God's conditional love and also God's unconditional love are found in the same Scriptures, like Deuteronomy and John's Gospel. The only real biblical promise is that unconditional love will have the last word!” — [Richard Rohr, *Falling Upward: A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life*](#)

Declaration on the Way: Church, Ministry and Eucharist, is a declaration of the consensus achieved by Lutherans and Catholics on the topics of church, ministry and Eucharist as the result of ecumenical dialogue between the two communions between 1965 and 2015.

II. STATEMENT OF AGREEMENTS: B. Agreements on Ordained Ministry In “Agreements on the Church,” Catholics and Lutherans affirm the ecclesial character of one another’s communities. This affirmation is an essential first step toward a mutual recognition of ordained ministry, for mutual recognition of one another’s ecclesial character is intertwined with the mutual recognition of one another’s ministry. Ministry in the Church (13) Lutherans and Catholics agree that the ordained ministry belongs to the essential elements that express the church’s apostolic character and that it also contributes, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to the church’s continuing apostolic faithfulness. (14) Catholics and Lutherans agree that all the baptized who believe in Christ share in the priesthood of Christ. For both Catholics and Lutherans, the common priesthood of all the baptized and the special, ordained ministry enhance one another.

Anamosa Community Blood Drive

Tuesday, July 7th 2:00 pm – 6:00 pm
St. Paul Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall.

Sign up online at bloodcenter.org or with Trevor Hulett at thulett@fmbank.biz

***Please make an appointment. (as of 6/30 there are 20 appointments available.)

Walk-ins will not be allowed to make sure that social distancing guidelines are met.

As a special THANK YOU, all donors will get a \$5 gift card of their choice!

Forks and Friends Community Meals:

Forks and Friends will return to its regular once-a-month schedule in July with a picnic in the park (Wapsiana, by the pool). Dinner will be served on Thursday, July 23, from 5-6:30.

New Rules:

1. NO MASK, NO MEAL!!
2. Line will form at the east end of the pavilion.
3. 1 person will get meals for all members of your party.
4. Food will be served by volunteers. NO DINER will touch food until away from the serving line.
5. There will be limited seating in the pavilion so feel free to bring lawn chairs or blankets for use in the park or take food home.
6. Hope to see you there

If this goes well in July we will repeat it in August on our usual 4th Thursday.

In case of inclement weather, there will be carry-out only at the Methodist Church.

St. Paul Office Hours

Lois: M-Th 9-2; F 9-12
Nancy: M, W, Th 9-12
Kaileen M-F 6:00-9:30 pm (summer hours)

Hours Open

St Paul Staff Emails and Phone Numbers

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Please call us if we can be of assistance. PLEASE leave a message if we cannot answer. We will return your call ASAP. We may be separated, BUT we are not alone!