



ST. PAUL
LUTHERAN CHURCH
ANAMOSA, IOWA

CREATIVELY CONNECT • INTENTIONALLY GROW • JOYFULLY SERVE

June 21, 2020
3rd Sunday after
Pentecost

Prayer Concerns: For 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: God does not promise that the path of the disciple will be easy. Jeremiah feels the pain of rejection from those who do not want to hear what he has to say. Jesus declares that his words may bring stark division. Even so, we need not be afraid for God accounts for each hair on our heads. Though we may experience rejection, frustration, division, and death, God's grace and love make us a new creation each day. Marked with the cross and filled with holy food, we are sent from worship to witness to Christ in the world.

VBS Announcement!

Due to the current Covid-19 guidelines and St. Paul wanting to keep our community as safe as possible we will be taking

Pre-registered students only.

Registration will end on
Wednesday, June 24th at 7pm.

You can register on our website or through our link on Facebook. If you would like a paper copy to fill out please call Kaileen at (951)553-5728

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. (more community events on page 4)

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

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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!

Happy Father's Day

Nancy Stout in Memory of **Bill Lubben**
Lois Ocenosak in Memory of **Edward Ferreter**
Carlene Vavricek in Honor of **Paul Pinney**
Jane Ortgies in Memory of **Ernie Ortgies**
Jane Ortgies in Memory of **Brenton Pearson**
Barb Kleis in Memory of **Donald Heiserman**
Annette Wheeler in Honor of **Dale Thurm**
Scott Wheeler in Honor of **Joe Wheeler**
Easton, Miken, & Wes Wheeler in Honor of **Scott Wheeler**
Lori Reynolds in Honor and Memory of **Ron Goldsmith**
Lori Reynolds in Memory of **Gus Taylor**
Kent Reynolds in Memory of **Brady Reynolds**
Kent Reynolds in Memory of **Jack Parks**
Deb Hardersen in Memory of **Ed Schultejans**
Darvin Hardersen in Memory of **Darvin Hardersen**
Aydin, Bruce, & Naomi Weaver in Honor of **Curtis Weaver**
Curtis Weaver in Memory of **Arlie Weaver**
Kaileen Weaver in Honor of **Clyde Deskin**
Nancy Lyon Douglas in Memory of **Darel Hefflefinger, father.**
Nancy Lyon Douglas in Memory of **Ed Walkup, father in law**
Michelle, Chad & Angie in Honor of **Dennie Hinrichs**
Angie Coyle & Kristi Grassfield in Memory of **Erv Rickels**
Dixie Rickels in Memory of **Clifford Taylor**
Kathy Dornbusch in memory of **Wally Fegebank**
Steve Dornbusch in memory of **Russell Dornbusch**
Rodney Bluml in Honor of **Don**
Kiana, Kylee, Seth, & Elijah Secrist in Memory of **Darel Secrist**
Phyllis Kula in memory of **Philbert Hardersen**
Marla, Tommy, Cindy, Kathi, Susan and Amy in Memory of **Tom Koppenhaver**
Ed Gerst in Honor of **Dale Gerst**
Virginia Danielson in Honor of **Jim Danielson and John Evans**
Hank & Karen Biere in Memory of **Henry Biere and Leonard Hartwig**
Marna Gaye Ketelsen in Memory of **W. H. Red Chipman**
Kristi, Zak, Ashlyn and Conor in Honor of **Jeff Fortune**
Jeff and Kristi Fortune in Honor of **John Jones**
Jeff and Kristi Fortune in Honor of **Ray Fortune**
Chris and Barb Wilson in Memory of **Charles Wilson**
Wilson & Robertson families in Honor of **Bob Robertson**
Andrea and Ella Giegerich in Honor of **Will Giegerich**
Christina White, Shawna Giegerich, and Taylor White in Honor of **Kevin White**
Will and Wyatt Giegerich in Honor of **Paul Giegerich**
Sheryl White in Honor of **Orval Walton**
Will Giegerich in Honor of his grandpa **John Giegerich**
Kevin White in Memory of **Jim White**
Will Giegerich in Memory of his Grandpa **Paul Brokaw**
Wayne & Steph Hora and family in Memory of **Darvin Hardersen**
Wayne & Steph Hora and family in Honor of **Don Hardersen, Dennis Hora and Bob Hora**
Dan & Marilyn Lambertsen in Memory of our fathers **Ellis Lambertsen, Ivan Hempy and Verne Embree.**

There is no profit in prophecy except before God. God guards and guides those who strive to honestly follow God's Word. With God there is no reason to give in to fear -- we are worth more than hairs and sparrows. Through Jesus, the Christ and the new Adam, we hear and see the outpouring of divine grace upon humanity. What more shall we ask for?

1st Reading: The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah 20:7-13 {NIV}

⁷You dooped me, LORD, and I was deceived; you overpowered me and prevailed. I am ridiculed all day long; everyone mocks me. ⁸Whenever I speak, I cry out proclaiming violence and destruction. So the word of the LORD has brought me insult and reproach all day long. ⁹But if I say, "I will not mention his word or speak anymore in his name," his word is in my heart like a fire, a fire shut up in my bones. I am weary of holding it in; indeed, I cannot.

¹⁰I hear many whispering, "Terror on every side! Denounce him! Let's denounce him!" All my friends are waiting for me to slip, saying, "Perhaps he will be deceived; then we will prevail over him and take our revenge on him."

¹¹But the LORD is with me like a mighty warrior; so my persecutors will stumble and not prevail. They will fail and be thoroughly disgraced; their dishonor will never be forgotten.

¹²LORD Almighty, you who examine the righteous and probe the heart and mind, let me see your vengeance on them, for to you I have committed my cause. ¹³Sing to the LORD! Give praise to the LORD! He rescues the life of the needy from the hands of the wicked.

Jeremiah was the "mouthpiece" of God in the city of Jerusalem through the turn of the 6th century BCE. In about 604 BCE, he received news that the Babylonians had defeated Egypt. With mounting power, the Babylonians would begin to unite the entire Middle East in its empire. Jeremiah spoke to the people of Judea, urging them to remain faithful to Yahweh and to the covenant. Like Isaiah, Jeremiah was concerned that the Hebrew leadership would put its faith in wealth, weapons, or foreign powers to protect themselves. Jeremiah assured his people that to do so was the path to sure destruction; all they had to do was reflect on the destruction brought to the northern kingdom, Israel, in the previous century when they tried to stand against the Assyrians by relying on Syria's army.

In the course of today's reading, we hear Jeremiah wrestling with a series of emotions flowing from his situation. He was a prophet speaking words that were difficult for a nation that had become selfish and hard-hearted to hear. Already the people were forgetting the needs of the widows, orphans, and vulnerable ones in society. This was the sure sign that God's laws were not being followed. Jeremiah had witnessed so much sinful behavior that he discerned it would be best if the people allowed themselves to be taken over by the Babylonians because it was God's will; justice for their behavior.

When the wealthy leaders had finally heard enough, they accused Jeremiah of treason and plotted to do away with him. He was ridiculed, especially by former friends, imprisoned, falsely put on trial for his life, beaten, and left to die (does this story sound like another famous messianic prophet?) Jeremiah was aware of their intentions, and he expressed genuine fear. In the context of this reading, he begins to experience resentment towards God, feeling as though he has been duped into proclaiming a message that will surely cost him his life. But then, Jeremiah remembers that he is the servant of the Lord. He gains righteous strength, and turns it into anger towards the sinners of Israel, calling upon the Lord to bring divine justice through vengeance upon his persecutors. Today, we hear him calling upon the strength of King David as he quotes Psalm 31: *Prayer during an ordeal*. Through it, Jeremiah receives confident assurance that God is protecting him, delivering him from the hands of the evildoers.

In the middle of the reading, we hear Jeremiah stating that with the Lord at his side, triumph is surely his, and that his persecutors will be left to "unforgettable confusion." This confusion is a result of their failure. When people put their trust in themselves, man-made might, or their material possessions, and their plans do not go as intended, they are often left with no answers to explain the weakness of their designs. As long as people insist upon relying on themselves, they will have limited vision and remain confounded in their failure. Human power alone is insufficient to stave off sin or transform lives.

In the final line of the reading, Jeremiah counts himself among the "poor" who have been rescued by God. In this particular case, Jeremiah is referring not to economic poverty, but to those who are impoverished because they have temporarily lost status or honor in their community. They are dependent. In his case, he is being ill-treated by community leaders, but he remains confident in God's message.

Psalm 69:7-10 [11-15] 16-18 NIV All together

⁷For I endure scorn for your sake, and shame covers my face. ⁸I am a foreigner to my own family, a stranger to my own mother's children; ⁹for zeal for your house consumes me, and the insults of those who insult you fall on me.

¹⁰When I weep and fast, I must endure scorn; ¹¹when I put on sackcloth, people make sport of me. ¹²Those who sit at the gate mock me, and I am the song of the drunkards. ¹³But I pray to you, LORD, in the time of your favor; in your great love, O God, answer me with your sure salvation.

¹⁴Rescue me from the mire, do not let me sink; deliver me from those who hate me, from the deep waters. ¹⁵Do not let the floodwaters engulf me or the depths swallow me up or the pit close its mouth over me. ¹⁶Answer me, LORD, out of

the goodness of your love; in your great mercy turn to me. ¹⁷ Do not hide your face from your servant; answer me quickly, for I am in trouble.

¹⁸ Come near and rescue me; deliver me because of my foes.

Second Reading: Paul's letter to the Christian community in Rome 6:1b-11 {NIV}

6 What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? ² By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? ³ Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ We were there-fore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

⁵ For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶ For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin— ⁷ because anyone who has died has been set free from sin.

⁸ Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹ For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. ¹⁰ The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God.

¹¹ In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Paul is not talking about magic in this letter. He doesn't think that once someone is baptized all desires of the flesh go away. However, he does challenge those who wish to believe that they can claim belief in Jesus as the Christ, be baptized, and then go on acting the same old selfish way. When a person chooses to be baptized, s/he is choosing to die to sin, the kind of self-centeredness the lack of belief in God brings about, the kind of sin that the faithless of the world present. Baptism is the transition between existences: the former is the old, sinful life, the water is the tomb in which we are buried with Christ, and the new is life within the community of the holy ones. Paul hints at the often observable stages that accompany this transformation from death to new life, and are reflected in the stages of the catechumenate (RCIA): the initial separation from old allegiances to non-Christian ways through inquiry, a period of standing at the threshold when a person is neither outside nor fully inside the community of believers, and finally the ritual passing into full acceptance through the baptismal bath.

Our culture is similar to Rome in the time of Paul because many of its inhabitants were overly focused on self-indulgence, greed, and material possessions. A significant number of the community members were being neglected, and rulers were often egotistical and

ruthless. This was not the kind of community the Christians were called to create. Paul wanted the Christians to be intentional about not participating in the sin of disbelief. He wanted them, (and us for that matter), to think of themselves as dead to sin, meaning that actions outside the will of God were not even a possibility. They were to live in Christ Jesus, choosing life in all situations, physical and spiritual. A person who lives for Christ will naturally be inclined to avoid sinful behavior and will promote reconciliation, healing, and communion. It is not magic; it is the nature of conversion – giving things over to God in prayer while making daily choices to love as Jesus loved in the power of Holy Spirit.

Gospel: Matthew 10:24-39 {NIV}

[Jesus said to the twelve:] ²⁴ "The student is not above the teacher, nor a servant above his master. ²⁵ It is enough for students to be like their teachers, and servants like their masters. If the head of the house has been called Beelzebul, how much more the members of his household!

²⁶ "So do not be afraid of them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. ²⁷ What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs. ²⁸ Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. ²⁹ Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father's care. ³⁰ And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. ³¹ So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

³² "Whoever acknowledges me before others, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven. ³³ But whoever disowns me before others, I will disown before my Father in heaven.

³⁴ "Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. ³⁵ For I have come to turn "a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law— ³⁶ a man's enemies will be the members of his own household.'

³⁷ "Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. ³⁸ Whoever does not take up their cross and follow me is not worthy of me. ³⁹ Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it.

Today's gospel is a continuation of Jesus' preparation for those who would be his Apostles. He is speaking to the Twelve about the likelihood that they will be persecuted for the message they bring because it will threaten those in power who do not have a relationship with God. The religious leaders especially will try to make the Apostles

recant their story about the Kingdom of God, but Jesus tells them not to succumb to the fear, especially when they threaten to torture or kill them. It is not the loss of physical life that should concern them but rather the maintenance of their relationship with God, for God is the one who truly bestows honor.

The Jews know there is a tremendous witness in being put to death for one's belief in God; the stories of the Maccabees are still being told and children are still being named after the Maccabee brothers (Judas, Simon, Eleazar, Jonathan), so powerful was their witness in the 2nd century BCE. The Apostles were called to give testimony, especially in the face of real threats. To deny God publicly would be the worst sin of all and the complete loss of honor in heaven.

The Jews have an understanding that life continues in a very real way through the memories of those who come after you. It is the resurrected life in God's Kingdom today. This memory is a corporate reality; the life blood of a faith community. To deny one's faith in front of others may end up preserving one's physical life but at the same time destroys the soul of the people: the collective memory, identity, trust, and relationships. In Jesus' words, it is better to lose one's physical life and maintain the soul of the community (life giving energy, presence, ego, memory, thought, relationship....) than to jeopardize one's eternal relationship with the One who gives life by denying belief in the one who ultimately gives all honor.

I would invite you to reflect for a few minutes about the meaning of this reading if we look at "soul" in a corporate, communal sense, and not merely as an individual one. My hope is that we will begin to recapture the biblical notion that our actions are not ultimately for ourselves but rather are about the people who surround us, watch us, hear us and learn from us. Does the phrase "*the common good*" show up in public discourse anymore? Listen for public servants to use this phrase in talks and articles. Let your informed Christian sensitivities reveal the prophets in your midst.

Taking it home:

- When someone denies faith, the reality of God, or the power of hope today, how is the "soul" of the community affected? Do you bring positive or negative energy to the "soul" of your family, community, and/or group of friends?
 - Read a book by Thomas Merton or Richard Rohr in July. Reflect on the signs of the times.
 - Note the moods and emotional needs of the community. Who is hurting? Who needs some grief work? Are there crises pulling community members apart? What draws people together right now? Give examples of both.
 - Make three lists this week:
 - First list** – "Where I spend my time": make # 1 the thing or activity that gets most of your time and work down to #10. {Do not include making these lists in your list.}
 - Second list** – "Where I spend my money" Same procedure.
 - Third list** – "Relationships" #1 = gets most attention
- Hang on to these lists.
- Look at your completed lists: Does anything surprise you? Share your lists with someone you trust.

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?) "At times we have to step into God's silence and patiently wait. We have to put out the fleece as Gideon did (Judges 6:37-40), and wait for the descent of the divine dew, or some kind of confirmation from God that we are on the desired course. That is a good way to keep our own ego drive out of the way.

Yet there are other times when we need to go ahead and act on our own best intuitions and presume that God is guiding us and will guide us. But even then we must finally wait for the divine backup. Sometimes that is even the greater act of faith and courage, and takes even more patience. What if the divine dew does not fall? What do we do then?

When either waiting or moving forward is done out of a spirit of union and surrender, we can trust that God will make good out of it—even if we are mistaken! It is not about being correct, it is about being connected." — [Richard Rohr, Yes, and...: Daily Meditations](#)

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: **The Word, Scripture and Means of Grace** (5) Lutherans and Catholics agree that the church on earth lives from and is ruled by the Word of God, which it encounters in Christ, in the living word of the gospel, and in the inspired and canonical Scriptures. (6) They are one in holding that the church on earth participates in Christ's benefits through the historical and perceptible actions of proclaiming the gospel and celebrating the sacraments, as initiated by Christ and handed on by his apostles. **Communion, Visibility and Hiddenness** (7) Catholics and Lutherans agree that the church on earth is a communion (*koinonia*). It shares in God's gifts offered for us by Christ, which, by being held in common, bring believers into unity and fellowship with each other. (8) Consequently, they agree that the church on earth combines audible and visible elements with profound spiritual realities that remain hidden from empirical investigation and perception.

Forks and Friends will be providing packaged meals EVERY THURSDAY EVENING between 5 and 6 PM until further notice. Meals may be picked up at the East door (parking lot) of the Anamosa United Methodist Church.

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.**