



This month I'd like to start a new newsletter series. I've done that in the past with "Justice" and "War". This time around I'm going to aim for something a little brighter: Favorite Scriptures. In my experience, favorite scriptures are the ones that grab my attention enough that I need to grab a pencil and underline it or write a note about it. And favorite scriptures are the ones that I know how to find because I've gone looking for them before. They capture big ideas in just a few words.

With that in mind, there is no better place to start than John 11. At least, I think that's where it is. Let me go check. .... Ah yes, here it is, John 11:35, "Jesus wept." This has long been the favorite of kids who need to memorize a Bible verse, but don't want a challenge. But is its brevity just a joke? Of course not! This is a great scripture verse and here is why I love it.

Throughout history there have been theologians who, out of reverence, make God seem impersonal, far away, unapproachable. One extremely old example of this is how Jews would not speak nor write the name of God, Yahweh. Instead, you would see usage like this, "G-d." Or they would replace the name of God with the phrase, the "Lord God."

In the first few hundred years of the church, some theologians tried very hard to "fit" the God of the Bible with a Greek understanding of what God must be like. So, we had philosophical ideas like the necessity of God being omnipotent (all powerful), omniscient (all knowing), omnipresent (everywhere present), impassive (unphased by emotion). Some of this was true; God is omnipotent, for example.

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But some of it seems wrong. God is not impassive. Again and again, God is moved by strong emotions: pity, love, anger, even remorse.

That is why I love the verse, "Jesus wept." In just two words it captures Jesus' humanity. An impassive, robotic Jesus is absolute nonsense. Rather, Jesus is deeply moved by the death of his friend Lazarus and moved to tears by how hurt the sisters are. Or, possibly, Jesus sheds tears of frustration as the sisters' lack of faith causes them to needlessly despair. Either way, Jesus is acting like a real person, not like someone's reverent idea of what God should be like. Jesus' weeping is important because he is showing us what God is like. If Jesus doesn't care whether his friends live or die, if he doesn't care that his friends are being crushed by grief, then why would he care about my problems? But Jesus wept. His tears are the proof that we matter.

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## Utility Shed Fund

Pastor Ben, Faith, and family are in need of a storage shed "utility shed" as the one that was at the parsonage deteriorated and had to be removed! We have started a "shed" fund and hope to have enough money soon to replace the old one with a new one with a concrete base. Please consider an extra gift with "shed fund" in the memo space on your check or cash in an envelope labeled for the "shed fund". Thanks!



*Emanuel-St John Lutheran Church  
Council Meeting Minutes  
June 12, 2024*

Vice-President Brian Lantz called the meeting to order. Present were Karen Cerra, Rhonda Johnson, Pauline Lange, Kari Lantz, Pastor Ben, Dar Lake, LaVerne Arndt, Faith Worley, Randy Souder, LeRoy Johnson. Pastor Ben gave the opening devotion. Motion by LaVerne Arndt, second by Dar Lake to approve the agenda. Motion passed. Motion by Dar Lake, second by Randy Souder to approve the May minutes. Motion passed. Motion by LaVerne Arndt, second by Dar Lake to approve the treasurer's report with a balance of \$10,977.24. Motion passed.

**Old Business:** None

**Vice-president report:** Brian Lantz reported he would like to do a Gala Days Fall Fest to kick off the start of Sunday School on Sept 8<sup>th</sup>. If this is something you are interested in, please talk to Brian. He would also like to see a project binder done so we can keep track of all projects that are done at the church so we know the companies who did the work or gave an estimate, dates and cost of the projects.

**Pastors Report:** Pastor Ben reported he has been busy with hospital visits.

**Worship and Music:** None

**Parish Education Committee:** Faith Worley reported that the pots for change is going really well. They are also working on VBS details.

**Outreach Committee:** Kari Lantz reported they will be looking for donations for the June 21<sup>st</sup> lunch they will be doing for the Break the Cycle bike riders that will be stopping on their way to Okoboji.

**Property management:** LeRoy reported that they are still working on the basement water issue. They talked with WCI of Carroll and they say to start with the gutters and getting them to flow to the middle of the roof instead of the north. They also found a hole by the gutter which is part of the water issue and may also be a part of the bat problem. It will be repaired in the next couple weeks. Ty cleaned out the AC units to try and prevent leaking inside the church like in the past. They are getting a bid for the painting work that needs done on the outside of the windows. The Worley's would like a storage shed for the parsonage. We will begin a fund to save for that project. If you would like to make a

donation to the shed, please let Rhonda know or put it on the memo line of a check.

**Stewardship and Finance:** Dar Lake reported they will be starting a fund for the shed project.

**WELCA:** Karen Cerra reported they did 8 health Kits for World Relief. They would also like to use some of the undesignated money to clean and Scotch Gard the dining hall chairs. Motion by Karen, second by Kari to use undesignated funds for chair cleaning. Motion passed.

**New business:** None

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



Join us for a come and go baby shower for Amberly Van Hulzen Sunday, July 21 from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Lytton Library community room. Mom to be is registered at Target and Amazon.



**The best things in life are free**

The best things in life are still free. Everything is too high you may say or hear on all sides. Yes, maybe the frills are, but not always the essentials.

The rain still falls, and the sun still shines – for free. The roots still go down into the soil to bring up nourishment, and the birds render their evening serenades for you – all for free.

And the laughter of the children costs no more than ever. There is no tax on love or companionship or friendship. The best things of life are free, and always have been free, and the more you use them, the more you enjoy them, it seems.

That makes sense!



- 1) Pauline Lange, Jamie Waller
- 2) Michael Loux
- 3) Scott Piper, Jr.
- 4) Laurel Linquist
- 5) SaraJo Talbott
- 7) Otis Segebarth
- 8) Douglas Kral
- 10) Joslyn Herrick
- 12) Ricky Linquist, Emily Roth, Skylar Warme
- 13) Peggy Dettmann
- 15) Aaron Sands
- 17) Jay Cerra, Miekko Prenger, Sara Schultz
- 18) Lexi Althiser
- 20) Krista Albright, George Diersen, Bradley Purdie, Christopher Ramsey
- 21) Amelia Holt
- 22) Terry Kruckenberg
- 23) Ann Sands, Brody Olsen
- 24) Becky Manning
- 25) Jamie Bartels, Sara Nattress, **Margie Sands**, Benjamin Worley
- 26) Myra Horton, Joel Lutz
- 27) Dean Dickey, Danika Meyer
- 28) Kellee Smith
- 30) Will Adams, LeAnn Rosado
- 31) Jackson Bailey



- July 3, 1999 Ron & Jamie Maulsby  
July 4, 1997 Brian & Sara Pibal  
July 6, 1985 Lyn & Nancy Bruns  
July 6, 2013 Doug & Jamie Bartels  
July 7, 1979 David & Laurie Glasnapp  
July 7, 2007 Michael & Stephanie Loux  
July 11, 1998 Douglas & Theresa Schultz  
July 13, 1974 **Arlyn & Virginia Hillmer**  
July 14, 2007 Matthew & Jennifer Haden  
July 15, 1978 Gary & Becky Manning  
July 15, 2017 Colten & Ashley Riley  
July 19, 2008 Ben & Susan Albright  
July 19, 2008 J.R. & Tiffany Evans  
July 25, 1981 Steven & Dierdre Schultz  
July 30, 1983 Keith & Shelli Berry  
July 30, 1972 **Dean & Deb Rix**  
July 31, 1981 Leland & Jane Loux



**Nelma Byriel**, age 84 of Lytton, IA, passed away on Monday, June 10, 2024, at Loring Hospital in Sac City, IA. Nelma Lucille Davis was born on October 24, 1939, in Wrenshall, MN, to parents Howard and Lillian (Abbott) Davis. Nelma was baptized at the Lutheran Church in Wrenshall in 1939. She and her family lived in Wrenshall where she attended Carlton-Esko grade school. They later moved to Sac City where Nelma attended school, graduating with the class of 1957 from Sac City High School. She and her family were members of Emanuel-St. John Lutheran Church in Lytton where Nelma was confirmed in 1963.

On June 17, 1959, Nelma married the love of her life, Ellis "Red" Byriel at Emanuel-St. John Lutheran Church. This union was blessed with four children: Bruce, Bart, Brenda, and Brian. Outside of being a mother and wife, over the years Nelma was employed at Jerry's Super Value, Arthuads, Ben Franklin, and Marjo's, all in Sac City. She also sold Avon for many years. Nelma was very active in her church serving on the church council and alter and funeral committees. She also took part in quilting for World Relief through her church.

Nelma cherished spending time with her family. She kept busy attending her children and later on grandchildren's activities. She also enjoyed bowling and played in the local women's bowling league for many years. In her free time, she enjoyed oil painting, playing cards, working on puzzles, shopping, and loved taking care of her flowers every spring and summer. Nelma loved jewelry and was almost always adorned in it. She was active in the Ravishing Red Hats ladies' group and the After 5 organization in Sac City, both of which she always looked forward to attending.

Nelma and Red were always together. They enjoyed riding the motorcycle and loved being at each other's side. They were truly the best of friends and their love for one another was evident. Nelma will be deeply missed by her family and all who knew and loved her.

Those left to cherish her memory include her husband, Ellis "Red" Byriel; children Bruce (Tracie) Byriel of Colfax, LA, Bart (Barbara) Byriel of Estherville, IA, and Brenda (Randy) Martin of Nixa, MO; sister In-law Ramona Davis of Lakeville, MN; grandchildren: Brad Joy, Corey (Julie) Joy, Jessica (Jeremy) Byriel; great-grandchildren: Ivy, Kaden, and Karliegh Joy, McKenzie and Maverick Joy, and Keaton, Jace, and Wyatt Jeseritz; many nieces, nephews, other extended family members and friends.

Nelma was preceded in death by four-year-old son, Brian Carl Byriel; parents Howard and Lillian Davis; sisters Maxine Cook, Donnabell Kilpela, Luella Zimmer, and Burnice Mandernach; brother Marvin Davis; parents-in-law Kenneth and Lorraine Byriel; brother-in-law Carl Byriel; sister-in-law Marilyn Cates; nephew Lance Mandernach; and niece Lorri Thomsen.



## July 2024 – God’s Work, Our Hands

It’s nearly that time of year again – God’s Work, Our Hands! Though the official day is in September, it’s not too late to plan how your congregation can engage with GWOH Day.

One of the best ways to practice GWOH is through volunteering. At LSI, we have volunteer opportunities for individuals of nearly every age, ability, and schedule. Additionally, we offer group volunteer projects – the perfect opportunity for this upcoming day of service.

If you are interested in volunteering with LSI for God’s Work, Our Hands, talk to your pastor and have them contact [philanthropy@LSIowa.org](mailto:philanthropy@LSIowa.org).

For more information, please contact Deb Whitford, LSI’s 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).



## A Prayer for the Fourth

May freedom be seen not as the right to do as we please, but as the opportunity to please to do what is right. May it ever be understood that our liberty is under God and can be found nowhere else.

May our faith be something that is not merely stamped upon our coins but expressed in our lives...To the extent that America honors thee, wilt thou bless America, and keep her true as thou hast kept her free, and make her good as thou hast made her rich. Amen.

--From *The Prayers of Peter Marshall in the U.S. Senate*

The Newsletter Newsletter

## Church of the Damascus Road Prison Ministry Update

Hello Western Iowa Synod! It’s been an exciting month in prison ministry. God is showing up in big ways and transforming the lives both inside and outside the prison walls. Of course, none of this happens without your generous support, so from all of us. THANK YOU!!!!

Special thanks to our good friends at St. Olaf Lutheran Church in Fort Dodge for donating a beautiful baptismal font to our Rockwell City prison service. It’s been getting a workout. We’ve baptized 17 new members into God’s family in the last 3 months! The guys inside are sharing their faith out on the prison yard and our service is growing to over 40 attendees per week. Last week we actually ran out of chairs!

A HUGE shout out to Walker’s Bike Shop here in Fort Dodge for partnering with us to provide new bikes for the Fort Dodge Community Corrections Center (*men’s halfway house run by the Iowa Department of Corrections*). These new bikes will give the residents there a safe and reliable mode of transportation for all their needs. We’re also providing heavy duty bike locks and a commercial bike rack to keep everything secure. Chris Walker and his shop mate, Tim Tucker are not only great bike mechanics, but awesome volunteers for the Prison Fellowship Academy program we provide at the Fort Dodge Prison. Thanks Guys!

The Church of the Damascus Road has partnered with an organization called Prison Fellowship to provide **Prison Fellowship Academy** – a year long intensive program designed to prepare individuals for life after release. We’ve been learning how to navigate conflict in healthy ways, how to take responsibility for the things we’ve done, how to empathize with others and even how to gently correct others just like the bible tells us. It’s been an awesome experience so far for everyone involved!