

July 2018



From Pastor Aleese

Later this month, we'll hear Jesus say to his disciples: "Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and

rest a while" (Mark 6:31). After sending out the disciples two by two, the disciples had returned and were telling Jesus all that they had done and taught. One can only imagine the excitement and energy – and perhaps the disappointment and frustration – as they shared all that had happened since the disciples had last been with Jesus. Regardless of what they were sharing, certainly there was a lot to catch up on. But after hearing 'em out, Jesus sends them away to rest for a while. After debriefing what went well and what didn't go so well, one might think that the disciples were ready to go again. But before continuing on, Jesus tells them to take a break.

The idea of taking a break isn't "normal" in American culture. Society tells us to "just keep swimming" and to accomplish as much as humanly possible in the time allotted. Though some companies have recently adopted policies to give their employees breaks so that they can continue to be efficient and creative when they return, this idea of "taking a rest" is a luxury for many.

In June, you all allotted me the luxury of taking that rest on two separate occasions. The first full week in June, I attended a Leadership School at Prairiewoods in Hiawatha. Though the week was still jam-packed with education, that week also served as "a place apart" for me to reflect on where we are at as a congregation and to reflect on my own spiritual well-being. Then later this June, you all gifted me the opportunity to spend time with our youth in "a place apart" at Camp EWALU. During that week, I was able to build relationships with our youth and encourage them in their faith development. Throughout the week in my interactions with youth and EWALU staff,

I saw the mission statement of EWALU come to life: "In the rhythm of Christian life, EWALU serves as a place apart to connect the Word of God with the world of God."

Though often the idea of "taking a rest" seems to suggest that we're putting the breaks on life, the truth is that taking a rest is a part of the rhythm of Christian life. Just as the disciples needed to take a rest, so do we need to find those "places apart" to rejuvenate. Over time, I could've had the same thoughts about where the congregation is at and where I am at spiritually if I would've stayed in Muscatine. And over time, our youth could've developed in their faith and in relationship with each other. But having "a place apart" to go to allowed for further growth on a much deeper level.

It's for this reason that I encourage you to find that "place apart" for yourself this summer. Perhaps it's a room in your home that you can retreat to for 5 minutes when things get tense. Or perhaps it's a separate place out and about in Muscatine. Find a place and reflect: reflect on where you've been, where you've seen God, and where God may be leading you. And even if finding a few spare minutes in the rhythm of your life isn't a realistic possibility, know that SOTC will remain that "place apart" for you to rest and grow each Sunday. SOTC may not be an all-inclusive retreat center like Prairiewoods or EWALU. But, even this building and this property can serve as "a place apart" in the rhythm of your Christian life to rest and rejuvenate before being sent out once again in mission.

So, wherever your place may be, "come away to a place all by yourselves and rest a while," dear Shepherds. For it is Jesus who invites you to find rest for your souls.

Peace,
Pastor Aleese

OUR MISSION TOGETHER

Led by Christ, and transformed by his love and grace, we welcome all to join us as shepherds, in praise, worship and compassionate service to others.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

2nd	Reggie & Melanie Drake
3rd	Rich Dunham
4th	Aleese Baldwin
5th	Jeff Rogers
6th	Jeff & Michele Rogers
7th	Mary Wellington
8th	Marnee Acker
10th	Mindy LeGrand
13th	Trinity Christy Gracelynn Freers
14th	Betty Burch Conner Corman
16th	Holden Brockert
17th	Jeff Morrison
19th	Drew Dunham
24th	Tyler & Anne Lamb
25th	Tyler Lamb
26th	Andy Christy
27th	Caleb Allen
31st	Amy Bakke



Board Meetings

- Lay Ministers
July 3 @ 5:30
- Property
July 10 @ 5:30
- Education
July 10 @ 6:30
- Evangelism
July 12 @ 6:00
- Stewardship
July 19 @ 6:30
- PPC
July 24 @ 6:30

Upcoming Events

SOTC Monthly Faith Formation and Worship Schedule

Worship and Music

Worship - Sunday, 9:00 a.m.
The Way - Wednesday, 5:00 p.m.

Education

Adult Education - Sunday, 10:45-11:45 a.m.
Bible at the Brew (BATB): Not meeting in July
Women's Group: 2nd Sat. of the month, 8:30 a.m. at SOTC
Christians Underground: 3rd Wed. of the month, 11:30-1 at Geo John's

July Adult Education Schedule

Date	Focus Personality	Theme
July 1	Nehemiah	"Rebooting"
July 8	Esther & Job	"For Such a Time as This"
July 15	Psalms	"The Power of Praise"
July 22	Isaiah	"Living with Hope"
July 29	No Adult Education	

Summer Youth Fun Nights

We've got two nights under our belts and the youth have been having a blast! Early in June we met at SOTC and walked for water using the simulation that was rained out after our Semi-Annual meeting. Then on the last Sunday, a crew of four youth



joined Pastor Aleese and Darren Pittman for a night at the River Bandits....and a quick stop at Whitey's Ice Cream!



All youth grade 4 and up are invited to join us as we continue this summer. Come and hang out with us as we grow in relationships and in faith. Schedule is as follows:

- July 8: SOTC Night (5 p.m.)
- July 22: Deep Lakes Canoeing (5 p.m., meet at Deep Lakes)
- Aug. 12: SOTC Night (5 p.m.)
- Aug. 26: TBD, off-site

Upcoming Events

Vacation Bible School – July 30-August 3



"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God." - Ephesians 2:8

This verse, mirroring the ELCA Youth Gathering and the theme of Camp EWALU, will focus our VBS week. Throughout the week, kids will learn what "grace" really means and how it changes everything—our hearts, our identity, our purpose, our community and our perspective on the world.

Registration is now open. There will be a link available soon to register online. This will be emailed when it is ready, or pick up a form in the narthex. Please pre-register kids PreK-5th grade so that leaders can plan appropriately for needed supplies. Kids will be fed a meal each night beginning at 5:30p.m. Mon.-Thurs. will be at Grace and Fri. will be at SOTC.

Not a kid but want to be a part of the action? We need your help! Volunteer forms are in the narthex. Only able to help for a night? Consider helping us on Friday night. Later in July we will be asking the congregation to help provide food for that evening as well. Questions? Talk to Dave Bakke or Pastor Aleese.

VBS Finale and Camp Out!

To conclude our VBS week, SOTC will be hosting the final night's activities. *All members* of SOTC and Grace are invited to join in for the last night. Schedule is as follows:

5:30-6:30 p.m.	Meal and Outdoor Games
6:30-6:50	Alpha (Opening Worship)
6:55-7:15	Bible Study in Small Groups
7:15—8:00	Omega (Closing Worship including a recap of the week and a blessing of supplies gathered as our service project)

Following the close of VBS, we'll move directly into our camp-out. Even if you're not into tent camping and won't be spending the night, feel free to join us for an evening of faith and fellowship. As we determine how many people will be attending, we'll ask for people to sign up to help provide food. In the meantime, mark your calendars and plan to join us!

Summer Choir

On Easter, we had quite the crew singing! Inspired and want to join in? The choir will be singing during worship on Sun., July 15 and 22. Rehearsals will be immediately following worship on July 8 and 15 and prior to worship on July 15 and 22. The two pieces we'll be learning are quite accessible for all, regardless of music background. Questions? Talk to Patti Oestmann or Delene McConnaha.

Ministry Connection

Lutheran Services of Iowa (LSI)

Around Christmas, we joined with Grace and Zion Lutheran to help provide gifts for families in the LSI Healthy Opportunities for Parents to Experience Success (HOPES) program. Though the holidays are often a time when people are inclined to give, we all know that need knows no season. Recently, LSI has begun a laundry drive. Why laundry? Because laundry is never ending for all of us...and many times for families in poverty, soap is just one more expense that they struggle to afford. One way that families have cut laundry costs is by making their own.

To help those families, LSI is sponsoring a drive to collect needed items to make laundry detergent. One batch, costing about \$30 for all supplies needed, can last a family for almost an entire year.

Donations needed are as follows:

- Baking Soda (4 lb. box)**
- Borax (4 lb. box)**
- Fels Naptha (in bar form)**
- OxiClean (4 lb jar if possible)**
- Washing Soda**

The goal is to fill a tent with laundry supplies! Even if you are not participating in VBS this year, all are encouraged to contribute. Bring in your contributions either **Sun., July 29 or August 5** to join the pile. A representative from LSI will be joining us for our final night (Fri., Aug. 3) during our closing worship to accept our donations.



Adult Retreat: Mark Your Calendars!

Looking to deepen your understanding of your identity as a person and as a disciple of Jesus?

Or, are you looking to recognize God's call and connect your faith to day-to-day life?

Or, are you interested in thinking about the story of SOTC and mining for those "gems" that point to our values as a congregation?

As a part of our visioning/listening process under the theme "Grounded in Christ, Sent in Mission," the Visioning Task Force is inviting all adults (graduated high school and up) to join us for a retreat. The intent of this retreat is to offer "a place apart" for us to dive deep into our relationship with God and for us to begin to identify our values as a congregation.

During June, the Visioning Task Force met for a double-header meeting: two back-to-back meeting nights in homes. During this time, the task force spent time sharing stories of faith. It was through those stories shared that we learned more about our identity and our values—both as individuals and as a congregation.

Though the task force took a lot away from this experience, we're looking for everyone to be a part of this process. And we believe that all adults can benefit from taking a look at our identity and values and seeing how those things impact our actions/way we live in the world.

Interested yet? Mark your calendars, and look on the small bulletin board in the narthex for more details soon.

Date: Fri., Nov. 9 - Sun., Nov. 11

Check in on Fri. will be between 8-8:30 p.m. Goal is to be wrapped up on Sun. by mid-morning.

Location: Wartburg Seminary, Dubuque

Cost: \$65/room/night

Room sharing is an option for couples or individuals who would like to bunk together. Facilities cost will be covered. Participants may be asked to help provide food.

Confirmation Camp: Reflections from Camp EWALU

From Sunday, June 17—Friday, June 22, Jake Walton, Noah Jorgensen, Brynn Eichelberger, Ava Acker and Raen Acker travelled with Pastor Aleese to attend Confirmation Camp at Camp EWALU in Strawberry Point, IA. Though the week can hardly be summarized in a few words, here are a few thoughts from the youth. Be sure to talk with each of them to hear more stories!



Noah: My favorite part of camp was canoeing and camping. The Bible Studies really had an impact on me and made me really think. After learning about God and his love for us, we put it to the test by playing a game called Romans vs. Christians. As campers, we were the Christians who were running from the Roman guards. But the real object of the game was to speak the Word of God to make them believe.

Jake: In my opinion, EWALU served as a place to observe and study God and take a break from everyday life. While doing this, you get to have a ton of fun!



Ava: In Bible Study we did something called "WHEAT." This was a way to remember how we could introduce ourselves to other people. W is for where you are from, H is for hobbies (running and stuff), E is for events and A is for acquaintances. Acquaintances was really hard to think about, but then I said, "Do you know Mira!" and everyone said, "Yes!" And T is for travel. Abby (our counselor)

looked at her watch and told us that we had been in Bible Study for 2 hours and 20 minutes!



Raen: I learned that Jesus is always with you, even if you don't think he is. I am glad we got to meet new people, like the girls in my cabin and come of the LT's (Leaders in Training).

Semi-Annual Meeting

June 10, 2018

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Pastor Aleese, led by Roger Luft

Election of New Board Members: The following members were elected to the respective boards; Andy Christy-Lay Ministers, Sandy Hill- Lay Ministers, Mike Bermel- Property, Betty Burch-Stewardship, and Melanie Wachtel-Stewardship. A motion was made by Mike Schulte and seconded by Kaia Petersen to elect the new board members. The motion passed.

Synod Assembly Report, Roger Luft: The Synod Assembly was attended by Pastor Aleese, Delene McConnaha and Roger Luft. Roger mentioned that 25 Hymns were sung throughout the meeting. Voting was held on Governance Restrictions with some discussion. 1/2 page biographies were provided of those running for office. Roger thought it was nice to have a choice. There was a prayer before every vote. Nothing voted on was protested. The Bishops gave their reports. Mikka McCracken spoke on World Hunger. Julian Gordy also spoke, he is the Bishop of the whole southeast part of the United States. He mentioned that Iowa has twice as many synod members as there are in his synod area. In Africa, Ethiopia has the most Lutherans. The country of Germany has the most Lutherans in the world and the United States is home to 4 million Lutherans. Saturday morning, all the afternoon business was finished so they were able to leave early.

Report on the Congregation, Pastor Aleese: Last summer we looked at "Our Stories." Now what? Now we look at our vital signs. What is vital in our lives and keeps us moving? Are we vital in our core?

Four marks that determine congregational vitality:

- In the community (would Shepherd of the Cross be missed?)
- Connected to the Church (Synod, ecumenical partnership, etc.)
- Willing to try something new (what are we being called to try?)
- Proclaim Jesus Christ

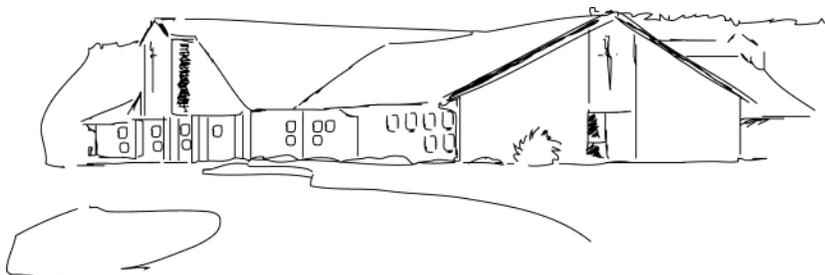
Pastor Aleese encouraged all to take a look at the bulletin board in the narthex. It lays out where we are starting and where we hope to finish. The goal is to finish this year with a revised Constitution.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by,
Kathy Dunham

Property Update

With the roof now finished the Property board is looking into repairing the skylights. A meeting has been set with our insurance adjuster, a representative from Spec Pro Inc. (the company that installed the skylights) and a property board member to discuss what needs to be done to repair hail damage to the protective cover of the skylights. The Property board is also working on repairing the church sign.



Community Events

Families Belong Together

Sat., June 30

Join a community-wide vigil to stand with our immigrant brothers and sisters & against the cruel practice of separating their families.

We will be gathering at Muscatine Riverside Park at the riverfront on June 30th - 6pm. For more information, talk to Pastor Aleese or see the event SOTC's Facebook page.

Food Pantry Needs

Every time you do your grocery shopping, please consider purchasing an item or two that can be donated. Bring it to church and add it to the collection box in the narthex. We will be sure that donated items are taken to the Food Pantry on a consistent basis.

For the month of July you are invited to donate paper products (kleenex, toilet paper, paper towels).



Summer SOTC Hours

Pastor Aleese: Tues.: 3-5 p.m.
Wed.: 8 a.m.-12 p.m.
Thur.: 10 a.m.-12 p.m.

Office Hours: Mon.: 8 a.m.- Noon
Wed.: 8-10 a.m.
Thur.: 8-10 a.m.

For clarification, we will be working throughout the week, these are the times that you can expect to find us in the office. Monday is Pastor Aleese's day off.

Outdoor Camp-Style Worship

Following a week at camp, Pastor Aleese and some of the youth led us in an outdoor camp-style worship on Sunday, June 24. Jake Walton taught us that an "invocation" means that we are inviting God to worship. But who says that needs



to be all serious? To spice things up a bit, we did a "Charlie's Angels" invocation, tried a different form of Confession and Forgiveness and offered God's forgiveness to each other by making the sign of the cross on each others' foreheads.



A huge thank you to all who helped set up and take down! Without your help, we could not have experienced worship together in God's beautiful creation! Enjoy worshipping outside? Be sure to join us on the last night of VBS for another outdoor worship experience!

Weekly Giving

May

May 6	\$2453.00
May 13	\$2425.00
May 20	\$1727.00
May 27	\$1314.00
Total	\$7919.00

June

June 3	\$2620.10
June 10	\$1620.00
June 17	\$1221.00
June 24	\$1615.00
Total	\$7076.10

Thank you for your continued support of the mission of Shepherd of the Cross! Because of your generosity, we continue to share the Spirit and share the story of Jesus! Thank you!

Prayers of the People

Please remember the following people in your prayers this month:

Concerns

Members of SOTC who struggle with health concerns, including:

Sara Guhn, Ruth Reist, Thelma Pendleton, Judy Braun, and Margaret Hildebrandt

Colby DeBlaey, sister-in-law of Becky DeBlaey, diagnosed with breast cancer

Phyllis Martz, friend of the Grete's, diagnosed with breast cancer

Mark Petersen, health issues

Steve Pugh, brother of Cathy Bermel, recovering from a car accident

Nicole Cochran, sister of Leslie Eichelberger and daughter of Roger Luft, health issues

Tiffany & Kevin Priebe, daughter & son-in-law of Tom Atkinson, dealing with life transitions

Mike Bermel, recovering from a stroke

Joys

In celebration of Doug & Bobbie Bunn gaining permanent custody of Lucas Graves

Coming Up...

Please continue to pray for Carly Dunham, who is serving as a volunteer at the ELCA Youth Gathering in Houston.

As preparations are made for VBS, please pray for leaders, volunteers, and kids so that all might experience God's grace anew this summer!

Sunday Fellowship Teams

July 1 ~ Team 5

Joanne Drinkall, Marlys Grete, Elizabeth Hill, & Sandy Hill

July 8 ~ Team 1

Betty Burch, Becky DeBlaney, Kaia Petesen, Melanie Wachtel

July 15 ~ Team 2

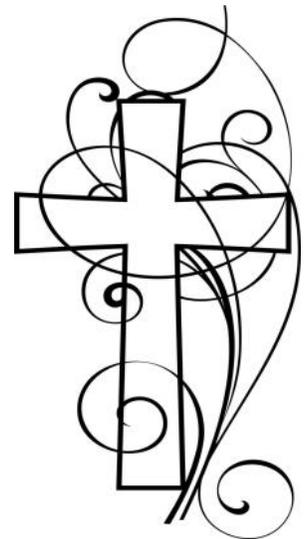
Heather Allen, Cathy Bermel, Leslie Eichelberger, & Patti Oestmann

July 22 ~ Team 3

Judy Bartling, Gladys Reif, Michele Rogers, & Barb Williams

July 29 ~ Team 4

Shelly Corman, Melanie Drake, Kathy Dunham, & Roger Luft



How well do you know your church family?

Recently, there have been some new faces in our church family! Though many people know each other, as a way to help all of us get to know each other better, we ask that you start wearing your nametag as of next Sunday. Nametags for members and regular guests are in the entry way, organized alphabetically by last name. Temporary nametags will always be available for guests. Our hope is that this practice will be a sign of hospitality for those who worship with us and will help us get to know each other even better.

Worship Assistants

	Greeters	Ushers	Readers	Children's Sermon	Communion Assistant	Communion Set-Up	Fellowship	Acolyte & Communion Assistant
Sunday July 1 @ 9:00 a.m.	Tom Atkinson	Roger Luft	Marlys Grete	Patti Oestmann	Marlys Grete	Marlys Grete	Team 5	
Sunday July 8 @ 9:00 a.m.							Team 1	
Sunday July 15 @ 9:00 a.m.						Roger Luft	Team 2	
Sunday July 22 @ 9:00 a.m.			Roger Luft				Team 3	
Sunday July 29 @ 9:00 a.m.							Team 4	

July 2018

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 9:00 Worship Service 10:15 Fellowship 10:45 Adult Education	2 5:00 Weight Watchers	3 5:30 Lay Ministers	4 Office Closed 	5 5:00 Weight Watchers 6:30 Stitching Group	6	7 7:30 Weight Watchers
8 9:00 Worship Service 10:15 Fellowship 10:45 Adult Education 5-7 Youth Fun Night	9 5:00 Weight Watchers 6:30 Constitution Task Force	10 5:30 Property 6:30 Education	11 5:00 The Way 6:30 VBS volunteer meeting at Grace	12 5:00 Weight Watchers 6:00 Evangelism 6:30 Visioning Task Force 6:30 Stitching Group	13	14 7:30 Weight Watchers 8:30 Women's Group
15 9:00 Worship Service, 10:15 Fellowship 10:45 Adult Education	16 5:00 Weight Watchers	17	18 11:30 Christians Underground 5:00 The Way	19 5:00 Weight Watchers 6:30 Stitching Group 6:30 Stewardship	20	21 7:30 Weight Watchers
22 9:00 Worship Service 10:15 Fellowship 10:45 Adult Education 5-7 Youth Fun Night	23 5:00 Weight Watchers	24 6:30 PPC <i>Newsletter Deadline</i>	25 5:00 The Way	26 5:00 Weight Watchers 6:30 Stitching Group Pastor Aleese vacation →	27	28 7:30 Weight Watchers Mission Trip Fundraiser @ New Era for Ragbrai
29 9:00 Worship Service 10:15 Fellowship →	30 5:00 Weight Watchers → VBS w/ Grace →	31				
<div style="border: 1px solid green; padding: 5px;"> <p><u>Upcoming Events</u></p> <p>July 30-August 3 VBS with Grace Lutheran "This Changes Everything"</p> <p>August 3-4 VBS Camp Out at SOTC</p> <p>August 4 Loaves and Fishes</p> <p>August 6-14 Pastor Aleese's vacation</p> <p>August 17 Stepping Out - Chart House 6:00pm</p> </div>						