

August 2018

From Pastor Aleese



"Listen to your teacher today," we tell our kids as they head out the door. "Listen to your gut," we tell our friends when they're trying to make a tough decision. "Listen to each other," we

say when there's a disagreement between two people. "Listen," we all say. But what does "listening" really mean?

Back in April, I heard Krista Tippett, host of the podcast "On Being," speak in the Quad Cities. During her presentation, she described listening as a social art that needs to be learned anew. Listening is not just about being quiet; rather, listening is about being present with another person. In one of her writings, she expands and says: "[Listening] is about presence as much as receiving information; it is about connection more than observing. Real listening is powered by curiosity. It involves vulnerability – a willingness to be surprised, to let go of assumptions and take in ambiguity. It is never in 'gotcha' mode. The generous listener wants to understand the humanity behind the words of the other, and patiently summons one's own best self and one's own most generous words and questions."

Generous listening can change the way we interact with each other and deepen our relationships with those we know dear and those we barely know. But, there's a risk. Because generous listening involves demands vulnerability on the part of the person sharing and on the part of the person listening. In the Bible we hear in Psalm 139: "O Lord, you have searched me and known me. You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from far away...Where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence?" For many, this psalm brings comfort, knowing that our God knows every part of us. And yet, for some, this psalm brings

discomfort. "I don't want God to know *everything* about me!" Just as it takes risk to generously listen to each other – and generously share ourselves – it also takes a risk to generously share ourselves with God...and generously listen to God.

So then, what does it mean to generously listen to God? First, it means that we are open to being in the presence of God, knowing that simply dwelling with God *has the power to transform us*. Second, it means that we don't go to God with assumptions of what we think God will say to us but are open to God's message. And third, it means sharing our whole self – body, heart, mind, soul and all that is ours – with God.

But how do I know that it's God's voice that is speaking to me? There are a lot of people out there who have thought that they've "heard the voice of God" and done some pretty wild things! True. But here's the bottom line: our God is a God of life. Though there may be many messages bending our ear, as Christians we can distinguish God's voice by discerning what it is that *gives life*. Does a message from someone bring life to you or to your neighbor? If so, listen up. God may be speaking to you through that person. If not, be careful. For even if that voice may sound life-giving to you, but denies life for your neighbor, we have reason to pause and *together* discern what God's voice is telling us .

It might not easy to stop and generously listen to each other. And it might be even more daunting to think about stopping for a moment to generously listen to God...and allow God to generously listen to us, every part of us. And yet, we trust that our God is a God of life and desires nothing but abundance and blessing for each of us and for the world. Together, as Christian community, we can help each other stop and listen for the voice of God in our midst. And together, we can help each other discern how God is still speaking in the world today.

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

1st	Brynn Eichelberger
5th	Jeff & Melanie Wachtel Nathan Stalheim
8th	Gary & Marlys Grete Josh Allen
9th	Zach Allen
10th	Shelly Corman
11th	Craig & Jessi Freers Olivia Guhn
13th	Parke McConnaha
14th	Tom Burger
16th	Joe Morrison
17th	Braedyn Burger
19th	Daryl Eichelberger
20th	Tonya Looker
21st	Noah Jorgensen
24th	Kathy Dunham
26th	Joe Corman
27th	Margaret Hildebrandt
28th	Polly Owens
30th	Dawn Eichelberger



Board Meetings

- Lay Ministers
August 7 @ 5:30
- Education
August 7 @ 6:30
- Evangelism
August 9 @ 6:00
- Property
August 14 @ 5:30
- Stewardship
Not meeting this month
- PPC
August 28 @ 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): 1st Thurs. of the month, 5:30 p.m.
at Missipi Brewing Company

Women's Group: Not meeting in August
Christians Underground: 3rd Wed. of the month,
11:30-1 at Geo John's

B90 Adult Education Schedule

We'll be wrapping up our romp through the Bible in 90 days by Sept. 2. Be sure to join us as we bridge into the New Testament!

Date	Focus Personality	Theme
August 5	Jonah	"Praying for our Enemies"
August 12	No Adult Ed - Group may meet on own if desired	
August 19	Jesus and Paul	"The Gospel and Its Spread"
August 26	Revelation	"The Destination in Sight"
Sept. 2	Wrap Up	Q&A Session

Summer Youth Fun Nights

Early in July, our youth gathered at SOTC for a night of frisbee, smores, Apples-to-Apples, and got to watch one of the speakers who presented at the ELCA Youth Gathering in Houston. Then later in the month, the youth and other adults from the congregation took a stab at canoeing voyageur canoes!

(thanks Dave Bakke for coordinating!)



To round out the summer, be sure to encourage youth 4th grade and up to join us on **Aug. 12 and 26**. The Education Board is strongly considering continuing this youth group into the fall. Stay tuned for more details!



Upcoming Events

VBS Finale and Camp Out!



We've been looking forward to VBS for much of the summer and now it's finally here! If you did not pre-register but would like your child to be part of the action, simply show up to Grace (Mon-Thurs) or SOTC (Fri.) at 5:30p.m. and we'll get you in the right group!

Reminder that ALL members of SOTC and Grace are invited to come out for the VBS Finale on Friday. Bring a lawn chair for seating. Schedule is as follows:

- 5:30-6:30—Meal and Gathering Games
- 6:30-6:50—Alpha (Opening Worship)
- 6:55-7:15—Bible Study in small/family groups
- 7:20-8:00—Omega (Closing Worship)

To help make the finale a success, **we need your help to provide food. Please contact the church office if you are willing to help.** Following the finale, we'll move into our camp-out. Bring your tent or camper and sleep under the stars!

Blessing of Backpacks... ...and Briefcases and Diaper Bags...

All school-aged youth (PreK-college!) are invited to bring your backpack to church on Sun., August 19. We'll offer a blessing during the children's sermon and each child will receive a tag for their backpack along with a little surprise! But it's not just for kids! Bring your briefcase, diaper bag, or whatever you use!



Mark Your Calendars!

Mark your calendars for the following fall program dates at SOTC:

- Wed., Aug 29 FINK Kick-Off**
For 7th and 8th grade youth and families to kick off a year of confirmation ministry
- Wed., Sept. 5 First Official Night of FINK**
- Sun., Sept. 9 Rally Day**
Beginning of Sunday School Year
God's Work. Our Hands Service Day
Sending of Mission Trip Participants

More information regarding all these events to come soon

Ministry Connection

VBS Service Project— Laundry Drive

We've been challenged! Can we fill the tent with laundry supplies?

Lutheran Services of Iowa (LSI) is hosting a laundry drive to help their clients make their own laundry soap. For about \$25-30, you can buy all the ingredients to make one batch of soap. One batch can provide soap for 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**

Bring in your contributions to church through Sun., August 5. A representative from LSI will be with us during our VBS Finale on Friday night to receive our donations to that point. After that, we'll deliver the remainder of our donations.



Adult Retreat:

So what is this all about?

By now, you've likely heard about the retreat. And by now, you've likely seen the poster with the flowers and the caterpillars. And by now, you've heard a message from the Visioning Team in worship (July 29). So what is this all about?

Quite simply, the Visioning Task Force is inviting you to spend a weekend away from all the "noise." During that time, participants will be encouraged to consider how we have changed throughout the course of our lives and how that has impacted our relationship with God.

Reality is that even if we live in the same spot, each and every one of us go through several changes through the course of life. There are big life events: like marriage, having children, or the death of a spouse. But there are also little life events that are just as much of a "change" as well: starting college, ending one job to begin another, sending children off to school, etc. All of these events shape us: our identity, our purpose in the world, and our calling. After spending some time considering our own individual journeys of faith, we'll also ask the same questions about who we are together, as SOTC.

So on behalf of the Visioning Task Force: the question is posed to you: **Are you ok with where you're at spiritually? Or, are you ready to grow?** And, are you ready to watch SOTC grow in this process as well?



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.

ELCA Youth Gathering:

A Glimpse from Carly Dunham

My time spent in Houston, TX for the ELCA Youth Gathering as a volunteer was eye opening to say the least. While in Houston, I served on the Safety and Security team. My job was basically to display "radical hospitality" while helping with crowd control,



checking for wristbands, and overall making sure all participants and chaperones were safe. During the day, I was stationed in NRG Center. There I help patrol the interactive learning area. While working I was able to learn more about organizations within the ELCA. At night, during the mass gathering, I helped patrol the floor of the stadium. I was stationed right next to the satellite stage where the up and coming artists performed.



My favorite mass gathering was the first night, Wednesday night. The stadium was filled with so much energy and organized chaos. It was exhilarating! During the mass gathering Rev. Tuhina Rasche spoke. She was one of my favorite speakers. She told of her journey from growing up Hindu to

becoming an ELCA pastor. The full video of her talk can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5tc7pofBsjc>.

Going into my week as a youth gathering volunteer, I was uncertain of what the week would hold. I knew I would be surrounded by 31,000 of my closest friends. I knew I would be working safety and security. I knew I was going to be exhausted by the end of the week. What I didn't know is that I would meet so many amazing and inspiring people, challenge my faith in new and exciting ways, give thousands of high fives and gain

many new life experiences. I owe a huge thank you to all of those that helped make this experience possible! *Minneapolis, see you in 2021!*



Does all this sound like it might be something for you? Pastor Aleese is already thinking ahead to 2021, the year of the next youth gathering, which will be held in Minneapolis. Will you or your youth be joining her?

PPC Minutes

July 24, 2018

6:30 p.m.

Present: Heather Allen, Pastor Aleese Baldwin, Kathy Dunham, Dave Hill, Roger Luft, Bryan Walton and Barb Williams.

Devotion: Pastor Aleese shared a Youth Gathering video from Erin Power where she talked about a story from John, chapter 4. The key point being baptism and belonging. We were asked how do we get to know someone? Do we really know them? How do we help them feel as if they "belong" with us?

Approval of March 2018 Minutes: A motion was made by Barb Williams, seconded by Kathy Dunham. All in favor.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Aleese provided the board with a report on how her time has been spent over the past two months at SOTC with her focus being on: Leadership School, Youth Fun Nights and Camp EWALU, Semi-Annual Meeting/Walk for Water, Adult Education: B90, Summer Lunch Program, Visioning Task Force and the Constitution Task Force.

Treasurer's Report: Roger Luft provided the board with a more detailed report due to new members joining the council. Summer offerings have been slightly lower as is the trend. \$2,000.00 was moved from saving to checking to pay bills.

Board Reports:

- *Education:* Youth Fun Nights have been well received. VBS starts July 30th through Aug 3rd.
- *Evangelism:* The next Stepping Out will be to the Charthouse/Lighthouse, August 17th. A few new members have joined Fellowship Teams. Plans are underway to update the SOTC website.
- *Lay Ministers:* A new CD player has been purchased for the children's bell choir. Country Friends will be with us Aug. 19th. A "Wish List" was discussed on amenities to improve worship indoors and outdoors.
- *Property:* Continued discussion on the skylights, church sign, and HVAC.
- *Stewardship:* Roger Luft gave a Treasurers Report. Discussion was held on the roof, skylights and remaining funds from the roof replacement. The board would like 2019 budgets submitted to them by Oct. 1st.

Old Business: It was decided to wait until after the Constitution was ironed out to look at the Employee Handbook. The Constitutional Review Task Force is moving along with regular meetings. A rough draft and sneak peek of proposed recommendations may be available at the next PPC meeting. The Vision Task Force had two meetings in June to discuss the "Identity and Purpose" of SOTC. Worship on July 29th will be a precursor of things to come. Plans continue for the Adult Retreat.

New Business: There was discussion regarding the use of the remaining Roof Fund money now that the roof has been replaced. Property Board is pursuing possible repair of skylights that were also damaged last summer. Earlier in the year it was decided that 10% of the remaining Roof Fund would go to Salem. Pastor Aleese has been in contact with them and they have started rebuilding. Given their progress, PPC will revisit this decision at the end of 2018.

Next meeting will be **August 28 @ 6:30 p.m.**

Motion to adjourn was made by Barb Williams, seconded by Dave Hill. All in favor, the meeting adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

Community Events

Sweatin' for School Supplies

Have a few extra dollars to spend when you get your kids school supplies this year? Consider buying a few extra items and dropping it off at the "Sweatin' for School Supplies" bus, sponsored by United Way and Voice of Muscatine. The bus will travel around town throughout August and will begin the first weekend at Yacky Shack and Pierce Furniture. Questions? Call United Way (563-263-5963) for more information.

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.

For the month of August you are invited to donate 'kid friendly' foods (granola bars, fruit snacks, easy mac, pudding cups, etc.)



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.

Listen, God is Calling Worship Series

For the next six weeks, we will be switching our readings in worship from the typical lectionary (schedule of readings according to the church year) to various call stories from the Bible. See Pastor Aleese's article on page 1 for more details as to why we are doing this.



As we move through these call stories, you're invited to dwell in these stories during your work week. Read the story once in the morning or before you go to bed and consider:

1. Do I see myself in this story? If so, where?
2. What is God up to in this story?
3. What is God calling this person to do?
4. What might God be calling me to do through this story?

Schedule of readings is as follows:

August 5	1 Samuel 3:1-4:1
August 12	Jonah 1:1-3, 3:1-5, 3:10-4:11
August 19	Exodus 3: 1-15
August 26	Jeremiah 1: 4-10
September 2	Esther 4:1-17
September 9	Romans 12:1-21

Weekly Giving

June

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

July

July 1	\$3253.00
July 8	\$1140.00
July 15	\$2078.00
July 22	\$2159.00
July 29	\$1075.00
Total	\$9705.00

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
- Richard & Irene, parents of Mindy LeGrand, struggling with health diagnoses
- Olivia Phillips, niece of Delene McConnaha, struggling with health issues
- Delene McConnaha, struggling with muscle pain
- Mike Schulte, recovering from heart attack

Joys

- Congratulations to Joe Bartling and Takoma Miller on their engagement
- In celebration of the baptism of Jacob Allen

Coming Up...

- Pray for a faith-filled week of Vacation Bible School, that God's grace is shared far and wide!
- Continue to pray for Christopher Pittman, for safety and a transformational experience, as he wraps up his trip in China

Sunday Fellowship Teams

August 5 ~ Team 5

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

August 12 ~ Team 6

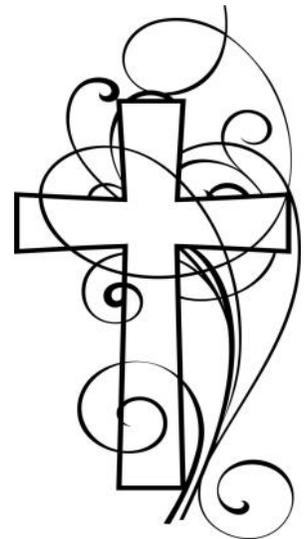
Amy & Dave Bakke, Margaret Hildebrandt, Alice Pittman, Glendola Reinier, and Ruth Reist

August 19 ~ Team 1

Betty Burch, Becky DeBlaey, Kaia Petesen, Melanie Wachtel

August 26 ~ Team 2

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



Why the Nametags?

If you've been in worship in the past month, you've noticed that we've been encouraging people to wear their nametags. But why? Don't we all know each other?

Recently, Pastor Aleese has had even some of our "long time members" ask her the names of other members. As a way to get to know each other better and create an environment of belonging, we hope that wearing nametags will help bridge the gap. Further, the hope is that when guests join us, then we will be able to offer them a nametag as well. However, with everyone wearing a nametag already, they won't feel singled out.



Baptism of Jacob Randall Allen

The ELW explains that "in holy baptism, the triune God delivers us from the forces of evil, puts our sinful self to death, gives us new birth, adopts us as children, and makes us members of the body of Christ, the church" (pg. 225).

On Sunday, July 22, we celebrated God's love poured out on Jacob Allen and prayed for the Spirit to infuse him as he begins his journey of faith.

As a congregation, we welcome him into the mission we all share to spread the news of Jesus Christ near and far and live into our promise to help him grow in the Christian faith and life.

On August 19, we will celebrate another baptism within worship. Plan to be in worship to welcome another brother in our family of God! Haven't been baptized, or haven't had your kids baptized, but would like to learn more? Talk to Pastor Aleese.



August 2018

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 5:00 The Way 5:30 VBS @ Grace	2 5:00 Weight Watchers 5:30 VBS @ Grace 6:30 Stitching Group	3 5:30 VBS Camp Out @ SOTC →	4 9:30 Loaves & Fishes
5 9:00 Worship Service 10:15 Fellowship 10:45 Adult Education	6 5:00 Weight Watchers Pastor Aleese vacation →	7 5:30 Lay Ministers 6:30 Education	8 5:00 The Way	9 5:00 Weight Watchers 5:15 Altar Guild 6:00 Evangelism 6:30 Stitching Group	10	11 7:30 Weight Watchers
12 9:00 Worship Service, 10:15 Fellowship 5-7 Youth Fun Night →	13 5:00 Weight Watchers	14 5:30 Property	15 11:30 Christians Underground 5:00 The Way	16 5:00 Weight Watchers 6:30 Constitution Task Force 6:30 Stitching Group	17 6:00 Stepping Out Charthouse/Lighthouse	18 7:30 Weight Watchers
19 9:00 Worship Service Country Friends Blessing of Backpacks 10:15 Fellowship 10:45 Adult Education	20 5:00 Weight Watchers	21 4:30 FINK Planning Meeting	22 5:00 The Way	23 5:00 Weight Watchers 6:30 Visioning Task Force 6:30 Stitching Group	24	25 7:30 Weight Watchers
26 9:00 Worship Service 10:15 Fellowship 10:45 Adult Education 5-7 Youth Fun Night	27 5:00 Weight Watchers Newsletter Deadline	28 6:30 PPC	29 5:00 The Way	30 5:00 Weight Watchers 6:30 Stitching Group	31	
		<u>Upcoming Events</u> September 8 Bragg/Wagner Wedding September 9 Rally Day and "God's Work. Our Hands." September 9-14 Adult Mission Trip				