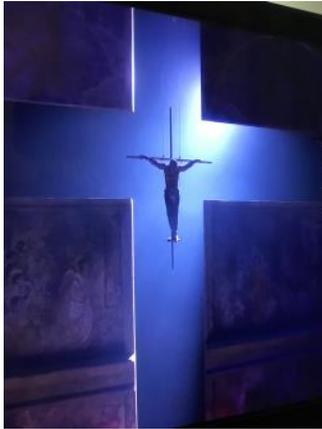


May 2018



From Pastor Aleese

On April 1, *Jesus Christ Superstar Live!* hit the airwaves on NBC primetime. Originally written in 1970, Andrew Lloyd Weber creatively depicts the story of Jesus' sacrifice and leaves the audience to answer the question at the end of the show: Is Jesus Christ really a superstar?

Artistically, *Jesus Christ Superstar Live!* seemingly gives us everything we need to answer that question. Throughout the production, we see Jesus show his love and devotion to those around him. But when people come to Jesus to be healed, John Legend, who plays Jesus in this production, seems to become weaker and weaker as he offers his love and power to them. It's as if, in that moment, Jesus doesn't hold back anything. Rather, he gives every ounce of his power and love to those who need it most.

But that love is what takes Jesus to the cross, and brings us to the climax of the show. In the 2018 version, we see John Legend hang on a cross suspended high above the set. Remembering Jesus' seven last words, Legend takes the audience through the hours of Jesus' death, as more and more of the cast fall to their knees on the stage floor. But as soon as Jesus breathes his last, the musical comes to a close. The cross, still with Legend upon it, slowly rises higher into the rafters, and the set behind the cross gradually opens in a perfect "t," making room for the cross to seamlessly pass through. As the cross fades from view, a bright light creates the image of a glowing cross. And suddenly, that's the end of the show, and that image of a glowing cross becomes the last image that the audience sees as the cast comes back on stage for their bows.

After the whole story of Jesus that Weber masterfully weaves together, it all ends at the cross. Which, maybe makes sense. Because if anything could point to Jesus Christ as a superstar, it's his act of love and sacrifice on the cross, right? Well, kind of. As Lutheran Christians, we do believe that God's love is shown to us in the cross. But, without the resurrection, we believe that the cross is just an empty promise. Because if Jesus stayed dead, then Jesus' death would just be one more "good person" dying as an example of how we are to love others in the world.

So, is that what we think about who Jesus is? Is Jesus just another good person to follow? A person who showed us what it means to live a morally decent life? Or, is Jesus the Son of God - the one who conquered sin and death, and by his life death and resurrection, is the one who saves us from anything that separates us from the love of God - giving us life, now and forever?

Each Sunday, we celebrate this Easter promise: that because of Jesus death and resurrection, we are given everlasting life. Together, we confess in our creeds that Jesus is more than just a good example of what it means to love. As Lutheran Christians (and not just Lutherans, but many Christians), we believe that Jesus is a "superstar" because he has the power to break every chain that otherwise keeps us bound. Jesus was a great guy who walked this earth. And yes, we *do* witness God's love in and through Jesus. But Jesus was more than a great guy. Jesus is *our Savior, our Lord*, and is the one who promises to break every chain so that we might have abundant life.

So, for us to truly answer the question, "Is Jesus Christ really a superstar?", we need more information that what *Jesus Christ Superstar Live!* gives us. We need the final act. We need the end of the story. And we need the promise of Christ's resurrection, offering us life, salvation and resurrection, now and forever.

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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

4th	Reggie Drake Kelsey Drake
12th	Vincent Costante
13th	Kurt Guhn
14th	Samantha Fusco
16th	James Corman
20th	Delene McConnaha
25th	Joe Bartling
26th	Doug Bunn
28th	Judy Braun Kim & Judy Bartling
	Tom Atkinson & Becky DeBlaey



Board Meetings

- Lay Ministers
May 1 @ 5:30
- Education
May 1 @ 6:00
- Property
May 8 @ 5:30
- Evangelism
May 10 @ 6:00
- Stewardship
May 10 @ 6:30
- PPC
May 22 @ 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

Sunday School and Adult Education - Sunday, 10:20-11:30 a.m.
Bible at the Brew (BATB): 1st Thurs. of the month, 5:30 p.m. at
Missipi Brewing Company
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

Loaves and Fishes

Sat., May 19

Meal preparation starts at 9:30 a.m. with the serving and cleanup from 11:30-12:30 p.m. at the MCSA building (lower level). We will also need cookies or bars and milk. Please see the sign-up sheet in the narthex.

FINK Corner

Though FINK (our confirmation program, geared especially for families with youth grades 7-8) officially ended at the end of April, the Board of Education along with Pastor Aleese are **in the process of scheduling regularly occurring Summer Youth Fun Nights. These nights will be intended for upper elementary through middle school youth (though not excluding our high schoolers!).** These nights will resemble a typical "youth group" format – centering in building relationships through fellowship and will also include a devotion/study. If you have youth in this age range, are interested in taking part, and have specific days that work better than others, please talk to Leslie Eichelberger and/or Heather Allen.

A huge shout out to our "youth of the cross" who've really stepped up this year through FINK, and to all our youth of the congregation who are living examples of what it means to engage in discipleship. And a big thank you to all who assisted with FINK - Kaia Petersen, Dave Bakke, Leslie Eichelberger, and Becky DeBlaey - and all who continually plan and organize children and youth events. Finally, thank you – Shepherds of Christ's Cross – for engaging our youth in this community and uplifting them as fellow ministers in Christ!



Upcoming Events

Walk for Water Simulation

Sat., May 12, 4pm

Well done Shepherds! We are well on our way to collecting \$500 toward clean water efforts, both domestically and abroad. Our goal is to collect this money prior to Synod Assembly, May 18-19, where congregations from across the synod will bring their offering together.

To help us bridge the final gap in our fundraising effort, and to help us experience what it might be like to constantly walk for water, the Stewardship Board is hosting a Walk for Water simulation. Come with clothes and shoes that you're able to walk in. Following the simulation, we'll have pizza - free of charge! Our fellow ELCA congregations will also be invited to partake in this event. Questions? Talk to a Stewardship Board member.

Pentecost Sunday – Wear Red!

Sun., May 20

The Easter season closes each year with the celebration of Pentecost, which falls 50 days after Easter. To visually represent the coming of the Spirit, you're encouraged to wear red to church! Also, we are planning to decorate the sanctuary with red geraniums. More information to come soon.

Summer Discipleship Opportunities

As we shift toward summer, often our calendars fill up very quickly. To honor a different "rhythm" of summer, you'll notice that some of our fall opportunities will discontinue this May until the beginning of the school year. That said, note that **Christians Underground, Bible at the Brew and Women's Group will continue to meet!** Currently, the "regulars" of Women's Group are considering changing the meeting time from Sat. morning at 8:30am to a weekday evening. If you are interested in this group, and have feedback regarding what time works best for you, please talk to Marlys Grete.

Adult Education: Summer Sessions?

Last Sunday, many people in Adult Ed expressed desire for our study to continue past the "end" of the Sunday School year (through May 13). Though we are still figuring out what this might look like, we want to honor the request for continued fellowship, prayer and study! If you're not able to stick around for Adult Ed to offer your two cents, talk to Pastor Aleese.

Semi-Annual Congregational Meeting

Sun., June 10 following worship

We gather twice a year as a congregation to attend to the "business" of this community. This June, we'll gather to elect new board members who will serve as leaders of the congregation. We'll also take some time to communicate where we are in our visioning process as we continue to be "grounded in Christ and sent in mission." Mark your calendars now!

Ways to Listen to God this Month



How many of us, at one point or another, have said to another person: "But you're just not listening to me!" Likely many of us. It's a frustrating experience to try to communicate something and feel as though you're not really "heard."

So, what really does it mean to listen? David Isay, leader of StoryCorp Iowa, once coined the phrase, "listening is an act of love." To expand on this, Krista Tippett, host of the podcast On Being, says that "listening is more than being quiet while others have their say. It's about presence as much as receiving; it is about connecting more than observing. Real listening is powered by curiosity...It's never in 'gotcha' mode. The generous listener wants to understand the humanity behind the words of the other..."

So what might it mean for us to listen in order to understand the humanity behind another person's words? And rather than listening in order to respond, what would it look like to simply be with that person, receiving those words or that story with love... and generosity?

This month, you're encouraged to pay attention to how you're listening to those around you. As people are talking, what thoughts are coming into your mind? Do those thoughts pertain to what the person is saying? Or, are those thoughts and analysis of what the person is saying? Or, has your brain wandered to an entirely different spot? There's no shame in that we don't listen 100% of the time. No one is perfect. But consider this your challenge: to listen generously to those around you.

Looking for a Movie Night?

Consider one or both of these movies.

I Can Only Imagine

This movie captures the inspiring and unknown true story behind Mercy Me's beloved, chart



topping song. Following the story of Bart Millard, lead singer of Mercy Me, the movie takes us through the most challenging moments of Bart's life, leading up to the moment where he crafted the lyrics to this iconic song in mere minutes. But having seen the journey of Bart through the ups and the downs, the movie reminds the audience that, in fact, those lyrics took a lifetime to come together. The movie leaves viewers with hope and is a gripping reminder of the power of true forgiveness.

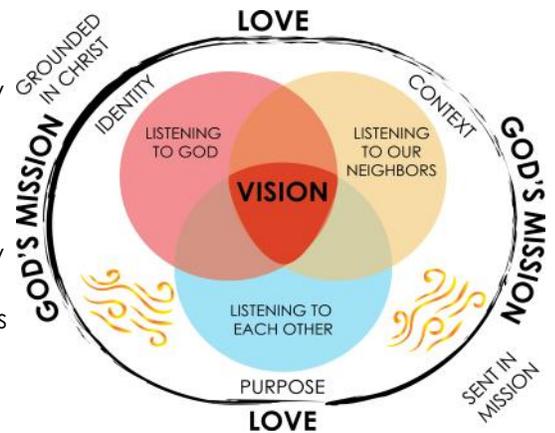
A Wrinkle in Time

This movie follows the struggle of Meg Murry, a typical middle school student struggling to fit in. The daughter of two world-renowned physicists, she is intelligent and uniquely gifted, as is Meg's younger brother, Charles Wallace, but she has yet to realize it for herself. Complicating matters is the mysterious disappearance of Mr. Murry. Through the movie, Charles Wallace introduces Meg to three celestial beings (Mrs. Which, Mrs. Whatsit and Mrs. Who) who have journeyed to earth to help search for their father. Together they embark on their quest but find that they must confront a powerful evil force. To make it back, Meg is faced with the power of darkness, but finds that love always makes a way. Though a secular story, there are many clear connections to the power of God's love which transcends any power of darkness.



"Grounded in Christ. Sent in Mission" Update

During April, both the Constitutional Review Task Force and the Visioning Task Force met for their initial meetings. The Constitutional Review Task Force began reviewing the process for constitutional changes and has begun their initial work, with the goal



of having a revised constitution before PPC by August/September. Following council approval, and approval by the Synod Constitution Committee, it will appear before the congregation – likely at the January 2019 annual meeting.

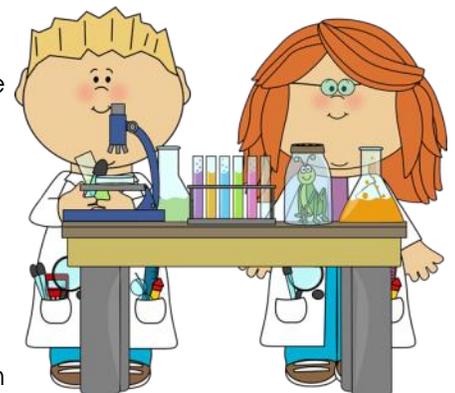
Also, the Visioning Task Force met to develop a trajectory moving forward. During May, they will take time to think about what it means to listen generously to God and will begin sharing their stories of faith with each other. The goal of this work will be for that team to plan and lead an adult retreat in late summer/early fall for the congregation. Stories of faith shared at that retreat will be captured, and following the retreat, the Visioning Task Force will look identify common themes in those stories (and in the stories gathered at the 30th Anniversary). The hope is that through those stories, common threads pointing to our identity and purpose as a congregation will shine through.

As this process gets off and rolling, look for an updated bulletin board in the narthex in the near future to keep tabs on how you can be involved. If you have any questions, please talk to a task force member (Constitutional Review: Roger Luft, Kim Bartling, Al Oestmann, JoAnne Drinkall; Visioning: Andy Christy, Amy and Dave Bakke, Heather Allen, Judy Bartling, Delene McConnaha).

Wonder Years Preschool

COMING SOON! "SUMMER SCIENCE!"

Wonder Years will be conducting "Summer Science Camp" in June as we have the past 20+ years. The date has been set for **June 18th -21st**. This is a fun-filled week where young scientists, ages 3-6 explore the exciting hands-on world of science. Contact Michele Rogers at wonderyears@machlink.com or 563-260-5585 for registration information.



Parish Planning Council

April 24, 2018

6:30 p.m.

Present: Heather Allen, Amy Bakke, Pastor Aleese Baldwin, Kathy Dunham, Roger Luft, Al Oestmann and Barb Williams.

Devotion: A reading from Luke 24 was read by Pastor Aleese with discussion on how Jesus continues to meet us where we are, and sends us to be "builders" of God's kingdom, even if we might not know what it will look like.

Approval of March 2018 Minutes: A motion was made by Amy, seconded by Al. All in favor.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Aleese provided the board with a report on how her time has been spent over the past month at SOTC with her focus being on: Visioning- Listening Process, Education, upcoming summer plans and Pastoral Care.

Treasurer's Report: Roger Luft reported that we are currently remaining stable with offerings. With five Sundays this month, it will offset the lower offering weeks.

Board Reports:

- *Education:* Focused on finishing up the school year, Confirmation Sunday, EWALU Camperships, Youth Gathering, YouthWorks, Summer Ideas, and Board Members.
- *Evangelism:* Stepping Out at Mamma Mia's and the June 15th outing to the Quad City River Bandits game were discussed. Current board members are willing to stay.
- *Lay Ministers:* Discussion was on new board members and visioning.
- *Property:* Roof replacement plans continue with the start being the first week of June. The SOTC insurance policy was signed for a 3 year term.
- *Stewardship:* Planned the "Walk for Water" simulation and discussed new board members.

Old Business: 2018-2019 board members and candidates were discussed to be elected June 10th at our semi-annual meeting.

New Business: Roger Luft and Delene McConnaha will join Pastor Aleese at the Synod Assembly, May 18-19th. A Employee Handbook will be created for insurance purposes. This will also establish a baseline for certain policies and procedures.

Next meeting will be **May 22th @ 6:30 p.m.**

Motion to adjourn was made by Al Oestmann, seconded by Kathy Dunham. All in favor, the meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

FINK Youth Serve at MCSA

To close out the FINK year, our youth went to MCSA to learn more about the services offered in that building. After learning about the resources of MCSA, our youth got their hands dirty as they cleaned up a house on 4th street that is used as a temporary transitional housing unit for families. Youth also helped plant a few flowers here and there. Most of all, the girls really got into trimming the bushes with their hedge trimmers! If you have a chance, say thank you to the youth that have served our community in so many ways this year. They have truly done God's Work with Their Hands!



Community Events

New Era Dinner Theater Presents The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee

Music and Lyrics by William Finn
Book by Rachel Sheinkin
Conceived by
Rebecca Feldman
Friday, June 1
Saturday, June 2
Friday, June 8
Saturday, June 9
6:00 p.m.

Dinner and Show: Adults \$25
Children (thru grade 12) \$15
Reservations Required.

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 May you are invited to baby items (diapers, food, formula)



SOTC Hours

Pastor Aleese: Tues.: 8-10 a.m.
Wed.: 2:30-5:30 p.m.
Thur.: 3-5 p.m.
Office Hours: Mon.: 1-5 p.m.
Tues. 4-6 p.m.
Wed.: 4-6 p.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.

Roof Update

We're moving forward! As of the April Property Board meeting, property members have solidified a contractor for work on the roof. Work will likely begin on Mon., June 4. The board is deliberately waiting until that time to



ensure that work does not interfere with preschool and other events at the church. At this time, it is expected that work will be complete by Sunday. The church will remain open that week, but please note that there'll be a bit more noise and debris around!

The Property Board is also following up on having repair work done to the skylights and the lighted sign, which also sustained damage from the hail storm last summer. Much of this work will likely be covered by insurance as well.

As contracts are signed, and as the remaining insurance money is collected, we will communicate to the congregation the final cost of the roof project. If you have any questions, talk to a Property Board Member. Thank you for your continued support of this project and thank you for your support of future capital improvements in this congregation!

Weekly Giving

March

March 4	\$3275.00
March 11	\$1557.00
March 18	\$1054.00
March 25	\$1742.00
Total	\$7628.00

April

April 1	\$3705.03
April 8	\$1420.00
April 15	\$1372.00
April 22	\$1882.00
April 29	\$1156.00
Total	\$9535.03

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

Kenneth James, brother of Ruth Reist, recovering from hip surgery

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

Tim DeBlaey, brother of Becky DeBlaey, recovering from surgery

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

Those who mourn the death of Wayne Sanders, father of Sandy Hill, Kenneth James, brother of Ruth Reist, and Pat Schulte, mother of Mike Schulte

Joys

Sunday Fellowship Teams

May 6 ~ Team 5

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

May 13 ~ Team 6

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

May 20 ~ Team 1

Betty Burch, Becky DeBlaney, Kaia Petesen, Melanie Wachtel

May 27 ~ Team 2

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



For the past month, we've celebrated this promise of Christ's resurrection. And soon, we'll near the end of the season of Easter. But that doesn't mean that our celebration of God's promise will be over. Because each and every Sunday is like a "mini Easter" for us to remember, experience and rejoice in God's power over sin, death and the devil. And soon, as we welcome the power of the Holy Spirit among us at Pentecost, that power will be poured over *us*, so that we might do God's work in the world today

So, as we round out this Easter season, join with me in prayer for that Spirit to come upon at Pentecost. And in the meantime, continue to live what it means for Jesus to be your "superstar" – the one who came, lived, died, and *rose again* to give you life, salvation and resurrection.

Peace,
Pastor Aleese Baldwin

Worship Assistants

	Greeters	Ushers	Readers	Children's Sermon	Communion Assistant	Communion Set-Up	Fellowship	Acolyte & Communion Assistant
Sunday May 6 @ 9:00 a.m.			Marlys Grete		Marlys & Gary	Shelly Corman	Team 5	
Sunday May 13 @ 9:00 a.m.						Amy Bakke	Team 6	
Sunday May 20 @ 9:00 a.m.						Shelly Corman	Team 1	
Sunday May 27 @ 9:00 a.m.						Amy Bakke	Team 2	

May 2018

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 5:30 Lay Ministers 6:00 Education Education →	2 5:00 The Way 6:30 Constitution Task Force	3 5:00 Weight Watchers 5:30 Bible @ the Brew 6:30 Stitching Group	4	5 7:30 Weight Watchers
6 9:00 Worship Service 10:15 Fellowship 10:30 Sunday School 5:00 Visioning Task Force	7 5:00 Weight Watchers	8 5:30 Property	9 5:00 The Way	10 5:00 Weight Watchers 6:00 Evangelism 6:30 Stewardship 6:30 Stitching Group	11	12 7:30 Weight Watchers 8:30 Women's Group 4:00 Walk for Water Simulation and Pizza
13 9:00 Worship Service 10:15 Fellowship 10:30 Sunday School 12:00 Building Reserved	14 5:00 Weight Watchers	15	16 11:30 Christians Underground 5:00 The Way	17 5:00 Weight Watchers 6:30 Stitching Group	18 Synod Assembly →	19 7:30 Weight Watchers 9:30 Loaves & Fishes
20 Pentecost Sunday 9:00 Worship Service 10:15 Fellowship	21 5:00 Weight Watchers	22 6:30 PPC	23 5:00 The Way	24 5:00 Weight Watchers 6:30 Stitching Group 6:30 Visioning Task Force <i>Newsletter Deadline</i>	25	26 7:30 Weight Watchers
27 9:00 Worship Service 10:15 Fellowship	28  Office Closed	29 5:00 Weight Watchers	30 5:00 The Way	31 5:00 Weight Watchers 5:30 Mutual Ministry Team 6:30 Stitching Group		
		<div style="border: 1px solid blue; padding: 5px;"> <p><u>Upcoming Events</u></p> <p>June 10 Congregational Meeting</p> <p>June 15 Stepping Out - River Bandits Game</p> <p>June 17-22 Camp EWALU with Pastor Aleese</p> </div>				