



The Palestine Press

April 2016

Volume XXX Number 4
Monthly newsletter of
Palestine Lutheran Church
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

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Reaching Out in Christian Love to All

Our Vision:

Palestine Lutheran Church will be a haven for all generations, a people worshipping and growing continually in relationship with Jesus, inspired by God's Word; a living example of stewardship, a loving and caring fellowship that reaches out in Christ-centered faith and love to the world.

Mission Statement:

"Palestine Lutheran Church exists to proclaim and live God's Holy Word, to nurture and support our membership, and to enable us to live our faith in our daily lives. As we are nourished, we are called to reach out to our communities, our spheres of influence, and to the wider world through the church-at-large."

Reaching out in Easter LoveWith Pastor Eric

*But when he (Peter) noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" **Jesus immediately reached out** his hand and caught him, saying to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?" When they got into the boat, the wind ceased. And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God." Matthew 14:30-33*

As we begin our fifty day journey through the Easter season (*Easter Sunday to Pentecost*) I am hoping that you will share in this personal devotion with me. I am reminded of Peter during the storm getting out of the boat and walking on the water in response to Jesus' summons. Then Peter notices the waves and the fact that "*he is standing on water!*" and begins to sink. Jesus immediately reached out and caught Peter. Jesus stretched out his hand and strove to catch him before he drowned. I love the verb "*reach*" because it's active, deliberate, and hopeful. It helps me to remember that God does not wait for me...God pursues me actively and deliberately out of mercy and love. Just as Jesus reaches out to me in the midst of doubts and struggles, God reaches out through Jesus to save me over and over from my sins both known and unknown!

Easter reminds us that God reaches out to us even through death to save us like an exclamation point "!" at the end of every proclamation of God's faith, hope and love for you and me. "*If God is for us, who is against us...*" writes Paul in Romans 8. During this season in which we remember "Jesus is risen!" I invite you to respond in two ways: 1.) Take a Stations of Light devotion from the Easter Table and reflect on the stories of Christ's resurrection, and 2.) Try a "new thing", such as join a Bible Study, or Small Group, or whatever might present itself that will allow you to reach out to someone with God's love in Jesus in a new way. After all, God does "new things" and calls us into newness as well. Think of it as a spiritual growth adventure!

What's our motto, oh yeah..."**Reaching out in Christian love to all !**" (I added the Easter "!")

Let us pray. *Heavenly Father, who raised Jesus from death to new life, empower me to live into new life during this Easter season, so that I might reach out to others and share what you have showered upon me, faith, hope and so much love in Jesus Christ, my Risen Lord. Amen.*

Palestine Lutheran Church

Worship & Study Opportunities-

April 2016



Call in number to listen to worship services: 597-3994
[Please be sure to put your phone on mute or sounds from your home will be carried to all phones that have dialed in for the service.]

Saturday, April 2

7 a.m. Tri County Men's Bible study @ Ballard Creek

Sunday, April 3 2nd Sunday of Easter

9:30 a.m. Worship: Holy Communion; Children's Church

Monday, April 4

2 pm Palestine Women of ELCA Bible study

Wednesday, April 6

7:00 a.m. Men's Bible Study

6:00 p.m. Confirmation

Saturday, April 9

7 a.m. Tri County Men's Bible study @ Ballard Creek

Sunday, April 10 3rd Sunday of Easter

9:30 a.m. Worship; Baptism of Evelyn Marie Johnson;
Children's Church

10:45 a.m. New Member Orientation

Wednesday, April 13

7:00 a.m. Men's Bible study

6:00 pm Confirmation

Saturday, April 16

7 a.m. Tri County Men's Bible study @ Ballard Creek

Sunday, April 17 4th Sunday of Easter

9:30 a.m. Worship: Holy Communion; Children's Church

10:45 a.m. New Member Orientation

Wednesday, April 20

7:00 a.m. Men's Bible study

6:30 pm Confirmation

Saturday, April 23

7 a.m. Tri County Men's Bible study @ Ballard Creek

Sunday, April 24 5th Sunday of Easter

9:30 a.m. Worship; Children's Church

Wednesday, April 27

7:00 a.m. Men's Bible study

6:00 pm Confirmation

Saturday, April 30

7:00 a.m. Tri County Men's Bible study @ Ballard Creek

9:00 a.m. – 3 p.m. Council Retreat @ Riverside

Easter Fellowship Small Groups sign-up in the Fellowship Hall or email the church (*names, children, preferred time/date*)

New Member Class and Orientation - April 10th and April 17th at 10:45 am in Council Meeting Conference Room

April 30th Council Retreat at Riverside 9am to 3pm

Daily Discipleship themes which will be used for Wednesday morning Men's Bible study (uses the text for the following Sunday).. They are available on the ELCA website – www.elca.org → Resources → Downloadable Resources → Bible Studies

April 3 2nd Sunday of Easter – **Primary Text:** John 20:19-31

Prayers of Discipleship: *To Finish One's Work*

April 10 3rd Sunday of Easter – **Primary Text:** John 21:1-19

Prayers of Discipleship: *To Love Jesus*

April 17 4th Sunday in Lent – **Primary Text:** John 10:22-30

Prayers of Discipleship: *To Hear the Voice of the Good Shepherd*

April 24 5th Sunday of Easter – **Primary Text:** John 13:31-35

Prayers of Discipleship: *To Love Another*



April 3-24th

Break into two groups (PK-2 and 3-6)

Children will leave after the children's sermon and proceed downstairs to have

their lesson which will be run by two different teachers. Children will then reenter church after their lesson (about 25 mins) during the sharing of the peace. An usher will come down and let the teachers know when it is about time to share the peace and rejoin their families.

Celebration Sunday - Potluck event after worship on Sunday, May 1st. Celebrate our teachers and the paying off the church addition. More information forth-coming.

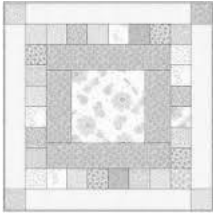


June 13-16 Vacation Bible School!

VBS will be held jointly with Fjeldberg Lutheran Church.

It will be at our site this year. If anyone has an interest in helping with food, classroom chaperoning or planning, please contact Michelle Siepker. We will also need one or two host families for daycamp counselors from Riverside.

Registration forms will be available soon! They will be included in next month's newsletter and also will be available on our website – www.plchuxley.com under the calendar/form button on the homepage.



Baptismal Quilt Kits

Looking for a quick and simple project? Help us replenish our inventory of baptismal quilts.

There are quilt kits available in the choir room. Each kit has all

the needed materials (Quilt top pieces, binding, batting, backing). Once completed, they can be returned to the choir room. You can complete all or part of the quilt – whatever you have time to do. Thank you to all those who have and continue to share their time and talents to help with this ministry!

Thank you for your service during the Lent season and Holy Week!

Devotion readers! - Klimpel, Hartman, Lewis, Twedt, Moore families, Altar Guild! Lent Supper providers! - Leona Larson, Chris Nelson, Roger Moore, Helen Kepler, Jean Saveraid, Holly Twedt, Jeff Van Pelt, Karen Hadaway, Doreen Blackmer, Lesa Lewis, Shannon Wilson, Teri Klimpel, Jeannie Williams, Robin Doty, Confirmants and Parents, Church staff! - Oriett for brilliant logistics, Nels and Mindy for music and Kari for youth service planning, Youth Readers! - First Communion Class for wonderful service readings, Cheryl Blackmer, Zach Larson, Ellie Twedt for Good Friday, Austin and Ashley Klimpel for Maundy Thursday, Readers for Palm Sunday - Brent Larson, Laura Kepler, Bruce Hartman, Jean Saveraid, Lora Young, Leonard Larson, Lyle Martin, Austin Klimpel! Julie Huxford for the palm branches and Easter lilies, Musicians! – Instrumentalists: Mark on trombone and Karina on flute, the choir for singing on Easter, Easter egg hunt volunteers! - Christa Hartsook, Teri Klimpel, Julie Huxford, Lent service supporters especially Pastor Heidi and Pastor Marsha, Easter breakfast volunteers - our outstanding Confirmation group!
Special Thanks to Chief Garrett Fagen of the Huxley Fire Department, our friends at Ballard Creek Residence, and the City of Huxley for allowing us to have worship around town.

There are so many people to thank and I thank the congregation for their support and prayers during this Holy Week Journey. Thank you God for your Son Jesus who makes all things possible in love!

April Birthdays



- 1 - Derrick Rhoads
Brett Walton
- 2 – Logan DeHaven
- 3 -Bill Napier
- 5 -Doris Ness
- 6 - Craig Fausch
- 7 - Cindy Friedrichsen
- 9 - Cheryl Blackmer
Kyle Jolly
- 10 -Margo Baldwin
- 11 -Marvin Edwards
- 12 -Josie Harmon
Brookelyn Rahner
- 15 -Todd Schmidt
- 18 -Garrett Jensen
Maggie Larson
- 22 - Omar Brendeland
Wayne Reinhart
- 23 -Brady Brendeland
- 26 -Valerie Brendeland
- 27 – Emma Sample
- 28 - Bob Snider
- 29 - Olivia Ewing
- 30 -Ruth Evans



- APRIL
- 2 – Mike & Holly Larson
 - 18 – Garry & Sandy Wirtz
 - 19 – Marvin & Lori Edwards
 - 21 – Lowell & Denise Elliott
 - 23 – Tyler & Sarah Roelfs
 - 24–Andrew & Kristine Polich

If your birthday or anniversary was not included or was incorrect, please contact the church office so we can update our records.

Remember in Prayer

The following were included in the Prayers of the Church during March: Anita Brendeland; Grace Johnson; Ordean Johnson; Diane Larson; Merlin Lyon; Deb Moore; Deidre Qual; Lorraine Sorensen; Bob Wetzler; Hunter Wise

- Krishna & his family of India, child sponsored by Palestine’s Sunday School students.
- Those impacted by flooding, earthquakes, tsunamis, storms, tornadoes, drought & wild fires.
- Those impacted by terrorist attacks in Paris, Beirut, Egypt and elsewhere in the Middle East, in Nigeria, Kenya, Bangladesh & the Philippines.
- Syrian refugees.

A Card of Thanks

Our Brother, John Martin Huser, passed away March 21st. He suffered complications following a struggle with colon cancer. John knew we were with him and passed while in the loving embrace of his family. John's funeral will be held in Chicago, IL. He is survived by Lynn, his wife, of 46 years, his children, John C Huser and Amy Huser, 5 grandchildren, JJ, Luke, Sam, Tessa and Emily, sister, Jane Huser Reinhart, and brother Gordon Huser. He was a former member of Palestine Lutheran Church. We want to thank you so much for all of your love and support through this difficult time.

Jane and Gordon



Volunteer schedule

Greeters

- 4/3 Teri, Ashley, Austin Klimpel
..... Mark & Robin Doty
- 4/10 Bob & Oriett Snider
..... Lyle & Pat Martin
- 4/17 Bill & Sandy Harleen
..... Justin & Jodie Sample
- 4/24 Tracy & Kyle Rhoads
..... Matt & Erika Williams

Acolytes –

- 4/3
- 4/10
- 4/17
- 4/24

Lectors -

- 4/3..... Ellen Huxford
- 4/10.... Cheryl Blackmer
- 4/17.... Brent Larson
- 4/24.... Jean Saveraid

Ushers

- Leonard Larson, captain Jacob Huxford
- Dennis Millang Bruce Hartman

Sunday Fellowship

Families who greet also serve beverages for fellowship.

Communion Assistants

- 4/3..... Brent & Julie Emerson
- 4/17.... Lyle Martin

Offering Counters

Tom Shelton, Brent Emerson, Tracy Rhoads

Altar Ministry

Cindi Thomas, Holly Twedt

Snow Removal

March 28-April 3

Deliver Food Pantry donations for April

April is Paper Trail month at the food pantry – please donate paper products – toilet paper, paper towels, napkins, paper plates & bowls, plastic silverware.

Sponsored by Palestine Mission Outreach Committee

Church Office: 515/597-2620

Fax number: 515/597-2621

Website: www.plchuxley.com

Secretary's Office: 515/597-2624

Church e-mail is: PLC@huxcomm.net

Pastor Eric Klimpel's email: ericklimpel@gmail.com

cell: 936/444-3895

Treasurer's Report

Balance on hand March 20, 2016	
Checking Account	\$ 8,630.26
General Fund	\$ 1,999.22
Designated Funds	
Benevolence	630.00
Improvement	2,082.49
Technology	1,300.00
Confirmation Class	2,172.55
ROCK	25.00

April Council Meeting – Sunday, April 3, 2016 at 8:00 am

Council Retreat @ Riverside – Saturday, April 30, 2016 - 9am to 3pm

Church Council 2016

President: Matt Williams
 Vice President: Jeff Van Pelt
 Secretary: Jacob Huxford
 Treasurer: Deidre Qual
 Financial Sec'y: Dick Kepler

Pastor Eric Klimpel

Council:
 Mark Doty
 Nels Dovre
 Bruce Hartman
 Cynthia Johnson
 Laura Kepler
 Jean Saveraid
 Kristin Shelton
 Tim Wilson
 Lora Young

Sharing the good news of what is happening in & around the SE Iowa Synod is available as a weekly communication to share the ways that "God's Work. Our Hands." is coming to expression in congregations, in partnerships around the synod, and in the whole ELCA. www.seiasynod.org

**Minutes -- Palestine Lutheran Church Council Meeting
[not yet approved]**

March 6, 2016-- Sunday -- 8:00 AM

In Attendance: Pastor Eric Klimpel, Matt Williams, Dick Kepler, Laura Kepler, Bruce Hartman, Kristin Shelton, Jeff Van Pelt, Jacob Huxford, Mark Doty, Jean Saveraid, Deidre Qual, Lora Young, Nels Dovre, Cynthia Johnson, Cynthia Johnson, and Tim Wilson. A quorum was established.

Devotions - Jean Saveraid

Read Vision and Mission Statements

Goals and Reflections – Get more/different people engaged.

Minutes of the previous meeting –

- Jeff Van Pelt moved to approve the minutes from the February meeting, Tim Wilson seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report -- Deidre

PLC Checking Account:

Benevolence:	545.00
Building Improvement:	2,032.49
Confirmation:	2,200.55
General Fund Checking	1,595.83
Rock Group:	25.00
Technology Fund:	1,300.00
Other:	421.00

Total: 8,119.87

- Lora Young moved to approve treasurer's report, Jeff Van Pelt seconded it. Motion passed unanimously

Pastor's Report -- Pastor Klimpel

- See his report

Unfinished Business:

1. Appoint audit committee. 3 people not on council.
- Dick Cast and Jim Gotta agreed to be on the audit committee. Verifying if we need to find one additional person.
2. Need (1) new mutual ministry member. Appointed by Pastor and President.
- Planning to appoint Tim Wilson, Mike Larson, Lyle Martin, Brad Lewis, Helen Kepler, and Lori Schonhorst
3. Video screens-after Easter/before VBS.
- Have the worship committee get together with Brad Lewis to discuss the video screens further.
4. Music ministry/director.
- No new updates
5. Parsonage update – Tim W.
- Met with Dan Thomas at Ballard Creek, they are on board with using the parsonage.
 - o If a family wishes to come and stay, they allow the families no more than three nights per visit. Has to be family of current residents to Ballard Creek, or family of a future resident of Ballard Creek.

- o Charge \$25 per night and don't require a deposit to be put down.
- o Dan Thomas thought that the parsonage to be used approximately one time a month and a little more during the holidays. Estimates 12 to 20 times a year.
- We "Church" need to discuss more of the logistics that come with allowing Ballard Creek utilizing the parsonage. Need to figure out the risks that come along with "renting out" the parsonage.
- Is this option worth it, and what are the other options with the house?
 - o Intern
 - o Other options that we can come up with?
 - o Pastor Klimpel will look into seeing what other churches have done to repurpose their parsonages.
 - o Suggestion with keeping this moving forward – an informal group that will continue to explore the option of Ballard Creek.

6. Approval of official list of membership status.

Mark Doty moved to approve the official list of membership status, Bruce Hartman seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

7. Kitchen committee-Jean S., Brad L., Marge S., Kristin S., Cynthia J., Roger M.

- a. Observe events to determine needs.

New business:

1. Approve baptism of daughter of Scott and Alyssa Johnson on 4/10/16.
- Jacob Huxford moved to approve the baptism of Evelyn Johnson, Kristin Shelton seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
2. Celebration/mortgage burning for paying off of addition. **May 1st**.
- Any thoughts on who might want to lead that charge? Ask Mike Thomas and Nancy Fausch.
- Will probably revolve around food.
3. Council leadership/training retreat – Sat, April 30th at Riverside.
- From 9am – 3pm.
- Topic is Leading into Change.
 - o Pastor Klimpel will hopefully bring in a speaker.
4. Next town hall meeting date. Topic?
- Table until next month.

Jacob moved to adjourn meeting, Mark seconded. Motion passed unanimously

Adjourn with Lords Prayer

Next meeting – 4/3/16 @ 8:00am

April Devotions: Jeff Van Pelt; Crafts?

LIVING LUTHERAN

Changes. The March issue of *The Lutheran* was the last under that name. Beginning with the April issue, the magazine will be called *Living Lutheran*. A new accompanying website, www.LivingLutheran.org, will also debut in April. You can continue to expect some regular features found in *The Lutheran*, along with new departments. The website will offer content original to it, such as blogs and breaking news. For more, see the "Editor's notes in the March issue of *The Lutheran*. Call 800-328-4648 to subscribe to *Living Lutheran*.

Living Lutheran – The current issue of Living Lutheran is available on the table under the bulletin board in Fellowship Hall. Coming up in the April edition of *Living Lutheran*:

- **April cover story:** Uncovering our appreciation for the gift of water, a life-giving commodity.
- **"God's work. Our hands":** Pennsylvania congregations put together worship kits for children with autism during service day.
- **United:** Lutheran and Methodist congregations in Oregon merge.
- **Employment:** How pastors supplement their income with unique jobs.
- **History:** A journey from *The Lutheran's* past to the present.
- **Kidney transplant:** Fellow congregation member shares gift of life.
- **May cover story:** Vocation—how does your faith inform your work, and vice versa.

2016 Southeastern Iowa Synod Assembly Drawn to the Light of God

The 29th Assembly of the Southeastern Iowa Synod will be held May 6-7, 2016, at the Coralville Marriott Hotel and Convention Center in Coralville, Iowa. We will gather under the theme, Drawn to the Light of God, with an eye toward how Christ, the Light shines in our varied ministries and in every corner of our lives.

Pre-assembly materials Agenda, reports, nominations, resolutions will be available on the synod's website at the end of March: www.seiasynod.org/assembly. Check out these materials to learn what's been happening in the synod over the past year.

Stay Connected Can't attend this year's assembly? Follow what is happening live through social media via Twitter by using and searching #seia16 or following @seiasynod. You can also follow what is happening at assembly on the synod's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/southeasterniowasynodelca.

PALESTINE WOMEN OF ELCA

Monday, April 4, 2:00 p.m. Bible Study.

In the April issue of the Gather magazine we finish a four-session Bible study of an exploration of the book of Philippians, written by **E. Louise Williams** and the **Rev. Phyllis N. Kersten**.

CHRISTIAN CITIZENSHIP 101

Session 1 Confidence in God's Beginnings and Endings (Philippians 1:1-26)

Session 2 Servant-Shaped Soldiers (Philippians 1:27-2:18)

Session 3 Being of One Mind (Philippians 2:19-4:3)

Session 4 Keep On Keeping On (Philippians 4:4-23)

In this closing session of the Bible study, we encounter some of the best-known passages from Philippians. We will also reflect on all four sessions, to respond to God and to witness to one another.

Goals/Objectives for Session 4 are to help participants:

Discover more about Paul and the Philippians' partnership in the gospel.

Explore ways Paul encourages Christians to live their lives and depend on God.

Review the entire letter to the Philippians and recall what they have learned.

In the April 2016 issue of Gather, we continue the theme of Christian Citizenship -- delving into what it means to share in the work of the gospel, care about interests other than our own and live out our "heavenly" citizenship on earth.

MAY BIBLE STUDY IN GATHER - Mary and Elizabeth: Sisters across the generations

For May 2016, Norma Cook Everist, professor of Church and Ministry at Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, shares an intergenerational Bible study session on Mary and Elizabeth: Sisters across the generations. "Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit," Norma Cook Everist writes. "Here is sister conversation across the generations. Elizabeth is the first to witness to the identity of 'my Lord' and his incarnation into the world. Indeed it is the first proclamation. Elizabeth exclaimed with a loud cry! No quiet whispering. No doubtful, 'Do you think, maybe?' "Mary hears surety and feels security in the words and in the arms of her relative Elizabeth. Elizabeth is more than a 'mere' relative; she is a sister in faith."

Cluster 1 of SE IA Synod Women's Organization will meet May 7, 2015 at Memorial Lutheran Church in Nevada, Iowa. The speaker is Ron Krull "One Man's Story" about remember the Holocaust. Registration is at 9:00 a.m. Program starts at 9:30 a.m.



3001 Riverside Rd, Story City, IA 50248
1-800-372-7748

rlbc@riverside.org www.RiversideLBC.org

"To Know Christ and to make Christ known to all."

Upcoming Events in 2016:

- April 2 – Juniors Blast
- April 9 – Gala
- April 11 – Partner Dinner
- April 9 – Junior High/Senior High Blast
- April 30 – Volunteer Work Day
- May 7 – Lil Cowpoke
- May 14 – Volunteer Work Day (rain date)
- May 25-27 – Leadership Training
- May 29-June 10 – Staff Training
- June 9 – Program Review
- June 12 – First Day of Camp
- July 5-8 – Family Camp
- Aug. 6 – Quilt Auction & 5K
- Aug. 12 – Last Day of Camp
- Aug. 26 – Golf Outing
- Aug. 27-28–Mother/Daughter Ride with the King
- Sept. 17-18 – Women’s Retreat
- Oct. 1 – Ride with the King (3rd – 5th grade)
- Oct. 14-16 – Juniors Recharge
- Oct. 21-23 – Junior High Recharge
- Nov. 4-6 – Junior High Recharge
- Nov. 18-20 – Senior High Recharge
- Dec. 4 – Riverside Christmas Party

The Gala: 2016

Join us for another elegant evening of exquisite dining and auction fun at this year's Gala on April 9, 2016. This year's Gala will not be at Riverside, but rather the Holiday Inn Ames Conference Center at ISU. There will be music, food, and of course the auction. All of the proceeds raised at this great event will go towards the Living Water, Living Word capital campaign, which is funding the restoring of the Riverside chapel and the building of a new pool.

Evening Schedule: 6:00 pm - Hors d'oeuvres
7:00 pm - Dinner
Auction and Dancing to follow

Dress: This is a black tie optional event.

Registration: To register, please use the supporting events section of our online registration or call our office at 515.733.5271.

Entrance for the evening's festivities is \$100 per person. You may also reserve a table for up to ten people for \$1000. If you are unable to attend the Gala, but would still like to support this great event, we will accept bids on items at the auction over the phone until Friday, April 8 at 5:00 pm. Just call the office at 515-733-5271 & ask to speak with Dave McDermott or John Foster to place a bid.



National Child Abuse Prevention Month

According to Prevent Child Abuse Iowa, more than 7,400 Iowa children were found to be abused in 2014. The most common forms of abuse included denial of critical care, physical injury, exposure to illegal drugs and sexual abuse.

Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI) helps combat child abuse through prevention, safety and stability services and mental and behavioral health treatment.

LSI's early childhood programs prevent child abuse by giving parents support and resources to build a healthy, stable home environment for their children. In 2015, LSI made more than 15,000 home visits to parents of infants, toddlers and preschoolers!

LSI's Family, Safety, Risk and Permanency Services help children and families already involved in a crisis or abuse situation to become safer and more stable, and LSI's residential programs at Beloit and Bremwood serve many children and youth who have experienced trauma from past abuse or neglect.

You make a direct impact on these children and families through your support of LSI. Thank you!

LSI is proud to be an affiliated social ministry organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). Learn more at www.LSIowa.org and www.facebook.com/LSI.iowa.

All About the Love

The heartbeat of Syntesha's home is made up of three little words: *I love you. I love you. I love you.*

"I tell my son all day, 'I love you,'" she said. "I didn't know what love meant until I had my baby. The definition of love has changed for me."

Syntesha grew up in a troubled, violent home. Her childhood involved fights. Skipping school. Living with one grandparent, then another.

"I wouldn't even call it a home," she said. "My mom and dad were in and out of jail growing up. They were young. I'm 21, and my mom is 35. I've been through anything you can name. Physical, emotional, sexual abuse. Homeless. Shelter. Evicted."

At 18, she was barely ready to take care of herself, let alone a child. So when she was seven months pregnant, she signed up for LSI's home visiting services. LSI helped this motivated young mom with potty training, budgeting and positive parenting tips and encouraged her college dreams.

"If you're a single mom, I think this is the absolutely best program," Syntesha said.

Now a full-time college student, Syntesha is working hard for her dreams while also preparing to welcome another child into her family. She hopes to help local youth who face the same struggles she once did.

"I want my son to know there are bigger and better things out there in the world."

What a big, brilliant, beautiful kind of love.