Immanuel Lutheran Church 229 Eleventh Avenue West Grinnell, Iowa 50112

June 2020 Newsletter

Immanuel Lutheran Church LC-MS

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Let's Get Social



<u>Website</u> http://www.immanuelgrinnell.org



Facebook Immanuel Lutheran Church LC-MS

Anchor
<u>Podcast</u>
https://anchor.fm/ImmanuelGrinnell

Worship with Us! Sundays at Immanuel

Divine Worship 9:00 a.m. Christian Education 10:30 a.m. Bible Study 10:30 a.m.

Thursdays Weekly Bible Study 11:00 a.m.

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Immanuel News *Reference Information*

HAVE YOU...moved? ...changed phone numbers? ...changed email addresses? ...need to update birthday/anniversary dates? Let the office know! Thanks!

LET US KNOW...If you have a loved one ill or hospitalized, have a new baby, would like a pastoral visit, or if any pastoral need arises.

PRAYER REQUEST...If you would like a special prayer during the prayers of the church on Sunday, please contact Rev. Dr. Koepp:

Office: 641-236-6691 Email: koeppj@hotmail.com Cell: 507-829-3901

DO YOU...want to put something in the bulletin or newsletter? Have a prayer request? Birth/Anniversary/Graduation announcements? Upcoming events? If so, please submit the information as you want it to appear in the bulletin or newsletter by the deadlines listed below to the church secretary at immanuelutheran@iowatelecom.net.

<u>Deadlines:</u> Bulletin – 12 noon of each Wednesday Newsletter – 15th of each month

For those of you without email access, please call or submit your written request to the church secretary.

June 2020

May 2020 "Who is this God?"

From the Pastor's Desk

This June marks the beginning of the Trinity Season. On Trinity Sunday, we read the Athanasian Creed. If you remember from confirmation, a creed is simply a confession or statement of what you believe. This solid declaration of our faith is usually only read once a year. As

we read through it, it is easy to get caught up in reading and not pay attention to what we are actually confessing. The first sentence begins with a solid and bold declaration, *"Whoever desires to be saved must, above all, hold the catholic faith."* The word "catholic," and notice that it is a small "c," is a word that simply means "universal." So this creed begins with the simple fact, that if you want to be saved, then you must know and truly confess the Triune God as the Triune God.

But what does that mean? It is easy to get lost in the "and yet there are not three, but one," etc. I encourage you to read through this creed again, at home, more often than once a year, and as you do, do not forget what you learned in Confirmation class. Who is God? What are the distinct works that are ascribed to each person in the God-head? The Triune God is not a man-made, rationalistic adventure. How can the sinful mind fully comprehend the fullness of *"one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity, neither confusing the persons nor dividing the substance."*

So who is God? What has He done for me? Why should I worship Him? Very simply, again go back to confirmation. What work is ascribed to God the Father? Creation. What does this mean? God has created everything! He has made me and all creatures. He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses. But He not just created them; He also still, daily and continually takes care of them. He has given me everything! You know the list, clothing and shoes, and so on and so forth. He daily provides me with what I need to support my body and life.

Is that all? Nope! He defends me against all danger and guards and protects me against all evil. Why? Because I am so wonderful? Nope again! He does this out of fatherly goodness and mercy. As parents, we don't do things for our kids because they are perfect and wonderful. We try to tell them that if they are good, then they will get rewarded. But they can't always be good, so we try and still reward them for trying to be good. Our Heavenly Father doesn't reward us for being good. We can't be that good! Our Heavenly Father does all of these things because He is gracious and merciful.

If that weren't enough for God to have our thanks and praise, His love continues to be poured out. Jesus Christ, true God and true Man, has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person. Because we cannot be good, because of our sin, our lot lies with the devil and God's wrath against sin, which is eternal destruction in hell. But God's Love and mercy for us is so great, that He sent His Son to buy us back. Your body and soul were bought not with gold or silver, but the precious, innocent, body and blood of God Himself. Jesus bought and paid for you! He died and rose for your sins so that you may be His own and live in His Kingdom!

And if that still were not enough for God be worshiped and adored by all creation, it does not stop there. He again knows that we cannot be perfect or even good enough. He knows that we cannot go to God, nor in our sin do we want to. But He has given us Himself, His Holy Spirit, Whom calls us by the Gospel. He speaks to us through His Word. Here we are convicted of Sin and receive the mercies of forgiveness through the resurrected Word. The Holy Spirit also enlightens us with His gifts. As sinners we are continually wanting to look the other way, but here we have divine gifts. Look, here is water that has washed over your very body. That water washes you! You are born as a Child of God. You are born into His Kingdom. Here is His very body and blood that you eat and drink with your own mouth. That forgiveness and freedom won on the cross is yours. You are the eater; you are the recipient of that forgiveness. That peace that passes all understanding belongs to you! That strength to live in a sinful world with the assaults of the devil and your sinful flesh still attacking, that strength is yours as you eat and swallow. That strength in the body and blood of Christ is yours as it is on your tongue and in your belly.

And if that were not enough, the same Holy Spirit sanctifies you! It is He who makes you Holy as you cannot get there on your own. In the same way, on your own you cannot remain true to His word, and He knows that. That is why He sent His Holy Spirit for you, given to you through these gifts so that you are kept in that true faith. He is the one who works for you and through you. He uses you as in instrument of grace for your neighbor. As Luther writes many times, we live in faith towards God and in love towards our neighbors. Our works of service for our neighbors are done not for our glory, but for God's glory. He sanctifies us; through Him we can and do serve our neighbors in love.

Thanks be to God! Who in His great love created, redeemed and sanctified us! All glory be to the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who are "coeternal with each other and coequal, so that in all things...the Trinity in Unity and Unity in Trinity is to be wor-shiped."

President's Piece for Peace

Rev. Dr. Brian S. Saunders District President

As we find ourselves somewhat closed off from normal activities I have used my time to do some in-depth studying. Since we are experiencing a pandemic situation I have been studying the word "plague" in the Old Testament. It has been good to review those texts once again and also enlightening as to God's use of a plague in the history of His people Israel.

The most common Hebrew word for plague is NAGAH. It is used over 150 times. For the most part it refers to a skin condition that requires a visit to the priest. Leviticus 13 and 14 cover this usage more than anywhere else. Interestingly enough should a skin disease be found on and Israelite they would be assigned a 7 day isolation outside the camp. After 7 says the infected person would return to the Priest for examination. If the skin condition was still there they would be isolated for 7 more days. Should it persist beyond that a medicinal mixture of bird's blood, cedar wood, water, and a scarlet yarn would be placed on a hyssop and sprinkled on the affected area. The reason for the isolation was to prevent the spread of the infection to others.

The next Hebrew word for plague is NAGAPH. This is a plague of punishment upon disobedience against God. It is only used 6 times but each instance is a plague that leads to instant death. A prime example of that is found in Numbers 16:46-47. While on sojourn Israel was being led by God's appointed servant, Moses. Three men of high rank in the camp objected to Moses having so much say over the nation. Their names were Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. These three raised up over 250 followers who rebelled against Moses. Immediately God opened the earth which swallowed the three leaders. He also sent forth fire from the Tent of Meeting that burned the 250. Then God sent a plague against the nation for its act of disobedience against God and God's appointed servant. The plague killed 14,700 before Moses and Aaron pleaded with God to stop the plague.

An even stronger word for plague is MACAH which is used only 8 times. This plague issued by God is mainly a tool of punishment against pagan nations but also a few times used to punish Israel for false worship derived from the pagan worship of other nations. It is the word used mostly in Jeremiah 19, 49, 50. Israel had adopted the worship practices of neighboring nations that were a clear violation of God's Law. They: 1) forsook the Lord; 2) built altars to pagan gods; 3) burned sacrifices to pagan gods and; 4) spilt innocent blood by burning their sons on those altars. God sent a plague even as He brought Babylon down upon Judea to conquer them and also predicted a plague against Babylon for defeating Judea.

In the 1918 flu epidemic that hit the United States with deadly force an article published in the Lutheran Witness gave an opinion as to the reason for the plague (flu). It was an article that articulated all the woes and moral failings of this nation. The conclusion was that God sent this plague to punish the American people for disobeying His Commandments. I can't say that I can agree with such a conclusion. While the Old Testament has narratives where God sent a plague to punish, this is all prior to the New Testament ultimate punishment against mankind. The sins of the world, the disobedience of everyone was meted out on Jesus in our stead. The plague of sin was cast upon the Son of God where He bore the totality of its consequences. That is why Paul tells us there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. I would refrain from preaching or teaching that the Covid-19 is a plague sent from God to punish a godless world.

I say this because of the cross of Christ and also for the fact that sometimes, in the Old Testament, God used plague to protect His people. The few times it is used as a weapon against Israel it was not a total destruction like the other words, it was a teaching plague bringing Israel back to the Lord. It is the Hebrew word MEGAPHAH used over 20 times. It is used in the Exodus account of the plagues God sent to warn the Pharaoh he should set Israel free. In I Samuel 6 the Philistines had captured the Ark of God. God sent a plague against Philistia so that they would send the Ark back to Israelites. In Zechariah 14 it is a prophecy against the nations who took Israel into captivity. It is also a future prophecy that will be experienced by the world when Jesus returns. Unbelievers will be destroyed, Children of God will be delivered.

If I were to teach or preach about this virus I would put it in the realm of a world wreaked with sin and a sin filled world is a dying world. This virus is not a specific act of God upon a specific people for a specific violation of His Commandments. The sicknesses, accidents and any other life ending catastrophe is simply a reminder that we are but strangers here, heaven is our home. It is reminder that we really don't control anything and that our lives are replete with the need for daily repentance. Repentance is twofold. It is sorrow over our sins and trust in Jesus Christ alone as Savior from sin, deliverer from death, and destroyer of the Devil. We see in these tragic days struggle, sadness, hurt, worry, anxiety, and more. Our only respite from all this is settling into the comfort of Jesus atoning arms where we are protected from Satan's accusation. Jesus shuts the mouth of the Evil One with His crushing heal on our behalf. In baptism we have been clothed with the Robe of Righteousness which is how the Father sees us who believe in His Son.

If there is ever a time where hope and comfort come together it is at the cross of Calvary. There our plague has been stopped. In that blood instrument our death has been nullified. In the Blood of that Cross we have redemption that is promised unto eternity. I pray you are safe from the virus and if it should invade your body that the Lord of both body and soul would bring you healing. Praise be to our Lord Jesus Christ. He is our hope and our stay.

God be with you.

President Saunders

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod LCMS Stewardship Ministry Newsletter Article – June 2020

The sin of the world is paid for. God's Law has been kept perfectly on our behalf. The prophecies have all been fulfilled. Jesus Christ has finished it all! And that, dear Christians, should fill us with complete confidence in our salvation. Since Jesus has finished all these things in His self-sacrifice, we can be fully certain our sins are forgiven, and we have everlasting life!

St. Paul wrote: "I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship." (Rom. 12:1)

We hear the same teaching in 1 Peter. "As you come to him, a living stone, rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, you yourselves, like living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 2:4-5)

It's the very thing Malachi foretold of the Lord, that He would come and purify His priestly people, that they may offer to Him an offering in righteousness. (Mal. 3:3)

So, what does this mean? In view of God's mercies – that is, because Jesus sacrificed Himself to make us pure, giving His entire self into death – Paul said that we are to sacrifice ourselves entirely to God, offering Him our whole lives. For our Savior did not give Himself for us in part. So, we do not give back to Him in part.

We don't offer ourselves to God just on Sunday mornings or Wednesday evenings, for example. Rather, we give Him our whole selves, all the time. We understand that offering ourselves to God as living sacrifices involves the giving of our time. It requires us to be faithful stewards of the time He has given us. Yes, it means we devote to our Savior all our time. Otherwise we are not sacrificing our whole lives.

You see, God both teaches us, and has graciously qualified us, to present ourselves to Him as living sacrifices – to live as His holy priests, who offer Him acceptable sacrifices through Jesus Christ, all day, every day, in our various callings.

In the passages from Romans and 1 Peter, we hear several examples of Christian self-sacrifice: serving, teaching, encouraging, giving, leading, showing mercy, living peaceably with others, submitting to governing authorities and those over us in the workplace, wives submitting to husbands, husbands honoring wives, showing compassion, and suffering patiently in doing good.

In all these things, and in all our other everyday activities, we sacrifice ourselves by using our time, not just for our own benefit, but also and especially for the well-being of others. Work time, school time, exercise time, study time, mealtime, chore time, recreation and relaxation time, even sleep time – it's all God's gift to us to use for purposes that please and honor Him.

This challenges us to think about the way we spend our time, how we utilize our talents, and the way we spend our treasures. Whatever it is I'm doing, am I doing it "for the Lord"? (Col. 3:23) Am I presenting God a living sacrifice? Am I conducting myself as a holy priest, whose sacrifice is acceptable to God?

Because our Lord sacrificed Himself wholly for us, we offer ourselves wholly to Him as living sacrifices. This is following Jesus in self-sacrifice. By His saving mercy, yes, our sacrifice is acceptable to God. For the sake of Jesus' finished work, God is pleased with us.

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For Pete's Sake

God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM."^[a] This is what you are to say to the Israelites: "'I AM' has sent me to you.'" Exodus 3:14 NIV

Many years ago, a weary traveler was hiking across the desert with the hot sun beating down on his shoulders. His water supply was gone, and he knew if he didn't find water soon he was going to die.

In the distance, he spotted a deserted cabin. Was it a mirage, he wondered? As the traveler got closer he saw that there was indeed a cabin. Glory be! He soon discovered an old well. He frantically pumped the handle to draw water, but all that came out of the pump was dust.

Upon further inspection, he noticed a tin can tied to the pump with a note inside. The note said:

Dear stranger:

This pump is all right as of June 1932. I put a new sucker washer in it, and it should last quite a few years. But the washer dries out and the pump needs to be primed. Under the white rock, I buried a jar of water, out of the sun and corked up. There's enough water in it to prime the pump, but not if you drink some first. Pour about a quarter of the water into the pump and let her soak for a minute to wet the leather washer. Then pour the rest medium fast and pump hard. You'll get water. Have faith. This well has never run dry.

When you get watered up, fill the bottle and put it back as you found it for the next stranger who comes this way. Pete

By the time you read this article we will be in what feels like the 40th week of self-imposed quarantine due to the COVID virus pandemic. I don't know about you, but I sometimes have wondered over the past few days and weeks if God is a little late – why is he sending the 11th plague now? I mean, He was done with that in Exodus. Everyone's plate is full – we don't have time for this COVID virus attack, and Moses is nowhere in sight to wave his staff around, or go up to the mountain and talk to God.

But here we are. In Iowa District East faced with all the uncertainty of what is the new normal. We are reaching out to our students through a virtual world that became a reality literally overnight. Some of our co-workers are on furlough. There are concerns about making payroll yet this year and future enrollment for next year. Perhaps one of your loved ones is ill, maybe with the Corona virus. Parents are needing to stay home because their employer needed to close the doors. Though no one has actually called this pandemic a plague, it does cause one to wonder.



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Again and again, throughout the book of Exodus, we hear God state the purpose of the plagues...so you will know that "*I AM WHO I AM*." This was so that Pharoah would know. So that the Egyptians would know. So that the children of Israel would know. So that the future generations of the children of Israel would know. So that the world would know. So that you and I will know "*I AM WHO I AM*". So that you and I will know the One who knows us. That's relationship language. And, it is that larger, deeper, eternal relationship that God wants and continues to have with us.

In this time of an unprecedented pandemic, God is giving us, His chosen workers of Lutheran schools in Iowa, everything that you need to look this situation in the eye. He gives and He takes away, not to show His authority, but because He loves us. He created you and me to be His adopted sons and daughters into His family through Jesus so that for such a time as this we are where we are. What an opportunity! What a challenge.

Back to our story at the beginning of this article. The rescue plan Pete had for those travelers who were thirsty pales in comparison to the rescue plan God has for the world. The message in Pete's tin cup may have helped a parched throat, but it's nothing like the message of the cross where we see what the Father did through His Son. That's sacrificial love is what Jesus did for you and me. In Jesus, we already have everything we need to face what lies ahead. In Him, there is only love - love of the Father. After all, He who says, "I AM WHO I AM", His word is sure.

Jan Doellinger Assistant to the President, Schools

Fear, Common Sense, and the 4th Commandment

In these troubled times in which we live there are many things which seem to be coming to the forefront. The above title brings three of those things together. The Gospel lesson for the 2nd Sunday of Easter states: "When therefore it was evening, on that day, the first day of the week, and when the doors were shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst, and said to them, "Peace be with you." John 20:19.

Those early disciples were hunkered down, probably fearing their own lives, thinking, "Are we going to fare any better than our Lord Jesus did?" I don't know if I have ever felt threatened as they did, with fear for my own life. The coronavirus has certainly raised the fear levels of many people, yes even among faithful Christians. People are staying behind closed doors because of fear of the virus.

Common sense says, "Stay home if you are sick. If you are sick, call your doctor. If you have a cold and are coughing, avoid others. Wash your hands. Use hand sanitizer if you can find it. Wipe down your counters. Shaking hands has stopped and hugging, well forget about that." You might consider wearing a mask when you go out into the public or to the grocery store. I have seen people wearing disposable gloves. A friend from the first parish I served sent my wife and I masks which she had sewed.

Where does all this fear come from? None of us wants to die, but all of us will die. The reason is because of our sins. "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." <u>Romans 3:23</u>. "The soul that sins shall die." <u>Ezek. 18:4</u>. I am going to die, and so will you. All people will. For the Christian, we already know how the story ends. It ends with a bodily resurrection on the last day. It ends in victory because the same Jesus who was crucified on Good Friday was raised to life on Easter Sunday! The victory was brought to bear on our lives in the water and word of our Baptism!

Jesus spoke to those huddled disciples with words of comfort: "Peace be with you." It is the peace which comes because sin, death, and the power of the devil have been conquered by Christ Jesus for all people. No, the unbeliever probably won't have any peace and is living in fear. What a wonderful opportunity for the church to bring the message of hope and peace to others!

Our governor, Kim Reynolds is following the data and making decisions based on that. Please keep her in your daily prayers as she strives to make the decisions she must make. We can still gather to receive the Lord's Supper in groups of less than 10 people and some of our churches are doing just that.

It is sad when the church, and families cannot gather in masse to lay to rest their loved ones, but we have an obligation to follow the governors' orders because of the 4th Commandment. You can do a full funeral service at the graveside if you wish. I did one at the Walker Cemetery on April 3rd. The message is always about Christ Jesus, His death and resurrection, and the victory which we have in Him. As we deal with and live through this bearcat of a scenario, Jesus says to us: "Peace be with you."



Relief for Human Need Worldwide

Dear Friend of Orphan Grain Train,

WILL THEY EVER STOP??? Disasters, that is. It seems the past few years we've had one disaster after another, Nebraska flooding, the Paradise fire, Hurrican Michael, etc.

But nothing like this. Nothing like a pandemic that threatens the entire country, indeed the world. Nothing that disrupts people's lives in every state. Nothing that spreads havoc so insidiously from one person to another, silently, stealthily, unknowingly.

Part of Orphan Grain Train's mission statement says, "In loving response to Christ, the servant, the Orphan Grain Train movement encourages and enables God's people to share personal and material resources in bringing Christ's name and character to needy people, both far and near." Right now we have the opportunity, no, the duty, to bring help in the name of Jesus to those who are near, to people in our state, our city, sometimes our block, our family.

How are we helping? As always, we pray, we listen and respond as we are able. Meanwhile, the Lord is opening doors for us to love and serve our neighbors. For example:

- 42 hospital beds, 31 heart monitors, 38 mattresses, 10,000 gloves, ect., were delivered to a Connecticut hospital overrun with Covid-19 cases.
- Thousands of face masks have been sewn and distributed by our 28 branches and collection centers.
- Over 10,000 meals have been distributed from our portable kitchen to people who have lost income and are struggling to feed their families in Nebraska.
- A 40 foot container of medical equipment, solar ovens and humanitarian aid was sent to Zambia to help fight the spread of Covid-19.
- Hundreds of sanitary wipes have been prepared and given to companies, gas stations, grocery stores, churches, etc., to sanitize anything frequently touched by people.

WILL YOU HELP? As the virus abates there will be a backlog of work to be done creating a sudden and huge expense for transportation costs. Critical needs emerging in poor countries where inadequate testing and record-keeping are shrouding the full impact of the pandemic will require far greater aid than normal. This is not over. But it gives us even greater opportunity to be the hands and feet of Jesus, bringing help and healing to the poor and needy.

What does the future hold? The vast majority of cases so far have been in the northern hemisphere. But this pandemic is spreading. While the numbers for the most part are still relatively small in comparison to America, a number of African countries are seeing the number of confirmed cases double in a week or less. Many Africans live in abject poverty where modern communication is often absent. In these vulnerable settings, Covid-19 can easily get a strong foothold and spread like wildfire. People who are malnourished are especially susceptible to this virus, and the death rates and rates of serious complications can be expected to be much higher.

With your help, Orphan Grain Train can help stem the tide of this pandemic in such vulnerable settings. Food and medical supplies will especially be needed in the months ahead. Orphan Grain Trains' Mercy Meals program can provide millions of nutritionally balanced meals that will help strengthen the immune systems of people so they can better withstand the ravages of this disease if they become infected. Medical equipment and supplies can also be provided in many areas where these resources are lacking.

But we need your help to accomplish this. We need to transport these supplies to those in need. We are asking you to consider as generous a gift as possible at this time so together we can meet the needs that will soon be upon us. Please remember our Lord's many encouragements to have mercy and compassion on those who are in need. Your generosity will have significant impact on how many people Orphan Grain Train will be able to assist. Though many in our country are facing unexpected challenges right now, we are still so fortunate to live in the most highly blessed country in the history of the world. Gifts of cash, securities, IRA rollovers, ect., can all be accepted and used to help others in great need. If you would like to help in giving a special gift or wish to leave an estate gift of some type, please call our office, 877-371-7393.

Jesus said in the Beatitudes, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy!" It is our duty and our delight to offer the mercy shown by our Savior to those surrounding us, whether near or far. Please join together in a generous outpouring of the blessings God has given us to help save and relieve the lives of many.

In the name of our merciful Savior,

Rev. Ralph G. Schmidt CFRE Director of Donor Advising



Greetings to all Sisters and Brothers in Christ of the Iowa East District,

With this letter, I am notifying you of a change in the 2020 Convention schedule. As you all know, the COVID-19 issue has caused a lot of changes to be made this spring. Your Executive Committee met this past Saturday and decided to change our 2020 Convention plans.

The business portion of our convention will take place in June via mail. We will have our election ballot, Mission Grant Selection ballot and By-Law change proposal ballot along with all supporting information mailed to our voting delegates by May 20. The ballots will need to be returned by June 5 so they can be counted and the results published around June 13th.

On Saturday, September 12, we will hold a Convention/Celebration at Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca, in place of the Fall Retreat. The opening worship service, in-gathering, service projects, Bible studies and speakers will be scheduled throughout the day. Specific details will be forthcoming. (The Clinton Zone Retreat Planning Committee has graciously offered to hold on to their Retreat plans and put them in place next Fall, 2021.)

We look forward to gathering together to worship and praise God for all that He has done, is doing and will continue to do for and through the Lutheran Women's Missionary League and LWML Iowa East District.

In Christ. Under His Wings.

Margaret Kistler, LWML IED President

Lutheran Bible Translators -God's Promises

"Rain streams down the gutters, over the roads, and digs deep grooves into the dirt roads, converting them into riverbeds. It pounds on the tin roofs and relentlessly pours into all the tiny holes until the old ceilings in our house begin to bow under the weight of their rain-soaked boards. Drips begin and we put containers all around to catch the drips. It beats on the office windows until it flows through, leaving everything in its wake wet or damp. There goes some of each box of computer paper for three up-country teams, some small books are ruined, and a small flood washes the office floors. Rainy season is in full swing.

I started thinking about what it must have been like for Noah and his family those 40 days when I was grumbling about not being able to dry any of my clothes. Since it is raining outside most of the time I have to hang all the clothes inside and sometimes they sour or mildew. I'm sure it was worse for them hanging things inside the ark. Not only that, but imagine sharing their space with all those animals! I pictured cows with clothes on their horns and goats pulling things off the lines! It made me chuckle to myself!

We can replace the paper and books, mend or replace the roof. The clothes will eventually dry or will be replaced. All these things are temporal and earthly. God's promises are ours forever. They will not fade in the sun or be tarnished in any way. We have His promise of a bright future with Him in heaven for eternity."

The missionaries who wrote this letter didn't know that they would soon be displaced by wars that raged in Sierra Leone and Liberia. It was a traumatic and stressful time as they had to leave the people and community they had come to love to an uncertain future. With God's help and the support of family, friends and a tremendous group of prayer and financial partners, they went on to serve in Botswana until their retirement in 2010.

"God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble." May this reminder from Psalm 46 bring you comfort during this difficult time. We're praying for you, our communities, the world, as we work from home to bring God's Word to those still waiting for His empowering Word.

By: Linda Gari Submitted By: Barbara Beermann

June 2020



Camp Director's Desk Camp Board of Directors

May 20, 2020

Today, we are enacting the first part of our cancellation plans for the summer. We sincerely hope it is the last time we do this for the summer. It is with great sadness that Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca is cancelling resident camp sessions that begin in June. This has been an incredibly difficult decision, and we've held off on making the call as long as possible as we've awaited guidance that either hasn't come or has been unfavorable to our operations. This cancellation includes the camp sessions of June 17-19, June 21-26, and June 28-July 3. A decision on June day camps that begin in June (June 21-26 and June 29 – July 3) will be announced by May 29th.

Late on May 19 the CDC published <u>Considerations for Youth and Summer Camps</u>. Though we have been attempting to develop a program with many of these considerations implemented, a new notable consideration being pushed is the limiting of attendance to local geography and, in this case, the greatest geographical distance is within the county of the camp. Additionally, we have no direction to date (5/20) from the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) and Johnson County Department of Public Health (JCPH) aside from our kitchen and dining operations, though we've heard it will be addressed sometime soon. Even if we were to receive a go-ahead from our local health departments in the coming days or weeks about doing summer camp, there just isn't enough time to implement the necessary measures that we feel meet an acceptable standard.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the current impact of social distancing measures does not allow for a quality camp experience at this point. Our current alternative plan that has been developed from guidelines from the American Camp Association (ACA) calls for cabin-group-only activities, no-all-camp games and activities, and many of our favorite activities eliminated, if not changed or reduced in some way. It just wouldn't feel like camp. The implementation and training for new policies pertaining to the pandemic in order to run a safe camp simply can't be developed in time for our June camps, as they were only just received on May 18. There's a lot to apply, and it isn't as simple as adding a few more handwashing stations and wearing facemasks.

Our hope at this point is to see the situation improve enough so that we can conduct our program beginning with all camps on July 5. There have been many positive trends regarding reopening, and we hope that allows for us to open up in such a way where we can offer a safe program that the unprecedented standards of the time but also meet a quality experience where our campers can enjoy God's creation and have fun, real fun. We are serious about aiming for a July 5 start! We are still hiring our summer staff as planned so that they can be fully trained in all of the additional measures that need to be implemented.

If you have been affected by this cancellation, you have a few options. First, you can reschedule to a session that begins after July 5, <u>so click here for that</u>. Second, we are offering full refunds if you cannot attend camp. Last, please consider donating your deposit and/or existing camp fees to Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca. Our mission has been greatly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. All of our Q2 retreat income has been wiped out and we are now seeing the cancelling of gatherings and family reunions into Q3. It's very likely that Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca could see revenue losses of over \$150,000 due to the pandemic, so your support is key in making sure we can survive in this difficult time. <u>You can find those options by clicking here.</u>

We mourn the loss of summer camp for those registered. We do not take it lightly, and we recognize the impact to our campers, their families, and Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca. We're pleased to announce that all of our Bible study content, campfire skits, WOW (passion drama), and other camp content will be posted online and sent to our campers at no cost for you to enjoy. Though it is certainly not camp itself, it's a small olive branch of some of our most beloved and important traditions, so stay tuned for those.

For now, that's all. Though we're hopeful about our prospects for beginning camp in July, we may also have other updates as we consider alternative programming. If you're interested in a camp outing for your immediate family, please contact us! We'd love to help you enjoy the outdoors, even if it's just for a day or two!

May the Peace of the Lord be with you, my friends...

Daniel Sanchez Camp Director Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca



ARE YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW STRUGGLING? IT'S OKAY TO ASK FOR HELP.

- Have you lost your job or been laid off?
- Are you on a limited income?
- Are you worried about your grocery bill?
- Are you wondering what resources are available?

WE HAVE A RESOURCE GUIDE FOR YOU AND GROCERY VOUCHERS ARE AVAILABLE.



CONTACT US TODAY!

localresources@ahrensfamilyfoundation.org 641-236-5518 ext. 109 or visit ahrensfamilyfoundation.org/local-resources

SPONSORS HELPING:

A coalition of Grinnell residents representing the Claude W. and Dolly Ahrens Foundation, MICA, Imagine Grinnell, Tiger Packs, Local Foods Connection, Grinnell Chamber of Commerce, Grinnell College, Drake Community Library and our local churches and schools have come together to address food insecurity issues arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.



TO DONATE TO THE FOOD VOUCHER FUND:

Tax deductible contributions can be made online at localfoodsconnection.com/donate or sent by mail to:

Local Foods Connection Attn: COVID-19 Response P.O. Box 719, Grinnell, IA 50112

May 2020

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