

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH
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GRINNELL IA 50112-8217

May Newsletter

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH LC-MS
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REV. DR. JOEL G. KOEPP
EMAIL- koeppj@hotmail.com

ALL SOCIAL MEDIA LINKS ARE ON OUR WEBSITE
SERVICES ARE LIVE STREAMED ON OUR FACEBOOK

LET US KNOW...

If you have a change in address, phone or email, have a loved one who is or hospitalized, have a new baby, would like a pastoral visit, or if you would like a special prayer during the prayers of the church on Sunday, please contact Pastor Koepp or the church office.

DO YOU...

have an announcement for the bulletin or newsletter?
Have a prayer request? Birth/Anniversary/Graduation announcements?
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 lcms.immanuelgrinnell@gmail.com
Deadline for submitting in the weekly bulletin is Thursdays by noon.
Deadline for the monthly newsletter is the 15th of each month.
For those of you without email access, please call or submit your written request to the church secretary.

HELLO *May*



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Pastor's Message

As we reach May 2025, I find myself reflecting on parenthood. Mother's Day comes each year in the middle of spring, just as flowers are blooming are ready to be placed into loving bouquets. Father's Day comes a few weeks later, when the warmer summer days make their arrival. These seasonal holidays coming so closely together, remind me of another season in that life that has passed, and another one is yet to make its way.

For children, these are occasions not only to think about mom and dad, but also to think about someday becoming a mom or a dad. For parents, these holidays hold special meaning, as they recall the events and people who made them parents. For the older generation, a dual celebration occurs as mother and father contemplate not only the heritage they have received from their parents, but also the legacy they are leaving to their own children.

Parenthood involves dedicated work and is concerned with many things. There are of course the things of this world, clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, etc. But parenthood also has a spiritual dimension. Children are to be trained in the fear and knowledge of the Lord. These two dimensions are captured in the 4th Commandment, as parents serve as God's Representatives to their children. Parenthood is an important vocation.

Martin Luther defined "vocation" broadly to include any station of life to which God calls a person in order that God might distribute His bountiful blessings to other people through that person. Prior to the Reformation, it was commonly supposed that only the clergy, or members of a religious order, had received a divine call from God.

Medieval society also at times recognized civil magistrates as people serving according to God's calling, since they exercised the "divine right of kings." In contrast to the prevailing social convention, Luther not only included the common peasant's mother and father in his theology of vocations, but even more boldly he insisted that no other estate—neither the ecclesiastical authority nor the civil government—was higher than the office of parenthood.

"To this estate of fatherhood and motherhood," wrote Luther in his Large Catechism of 1529, "God has given the special distinction above all estates that are beneath it that He not simply commands us to love our parents, but to honor them." Love is what each person owes to his neighbor, to his brother or sister, to his co-worker. *Honor* encompasses love, but goes further, involving "modesty, humility, and deference as to a majesty there hidden." Whether peasant or princess, a child should see in mother and father the hidden majesty of God Himself, who places parents in their children's lives for their blessing. It is through parents that God "nourishes, protects, and defends us, and bestows so much good on body and soul." Therefore, God commands that they be honored.

There is no question as to whether father or mother have deserved this honor. They have done nothing to actually deserve it; yet, Luther still insists—proclaims that Scripture insists—that "however lowly, poor, frail, and strange they may be, nevertheless they are father and mother given them by God. They are not to be deprived of their honor because of their conduct or their failings."

By why not? Why shouldn't a child dishonor a parent who does not deserve to be honored? Why must a child honor a parent even when that parent has failed in his or her most fundamental duties toward that child? To this pervasive social reality, Luther speaks: "We are not to regard their persons, how they may be, but the will of God who has thus created and ordained."

At creation, God established marriage as a one-flesh, life-long union between a man and a woman. He blessed this institution and assigned to it a divine ordinance of procreation: "Be fruitful and multiply" (Genesis 1:28). Just as children are the natural fruit of the marital union, so also parenthood is the natural fruit of marriage. From this foundation, society receives both its origin and its purpose.

“All authority,” explains Luther, “flows and is propagated from the authority of parents.” Teachers, civil magistrates, and others who lead, provide for, or protect us derive their authority from the office of parenthood. “For where a father is unable alone to educate his child, he employs a schoolmaster to instruct him.” Similarly, Luther speaks of “those who in their government perform the functions of a father, and should have a paternal heart toward their subordinates.” In this manner, civil government is “all embraced in the estate of fatherhood.” Luther therefore interprets the Fourth Commandment—“Honor your father and your mother”—to involve our respect due not only to parents, but also to all others whom God has placed in authority to bless us.

Talk of honor and authority do not often receive a warm welcome in the ears of many Americans. Ours is a democratic age in which we assert that all people are of equal station. Like rebellious teenagers, citizens dishonor the civil authorities; like citizens who disrespect their superiors, adolescent children assert their rights over mom and dad. What begins as a dream for equality soon becomes a reality of chaos.

Here again Luther has gleaned some pertinent insights from Holy Scripture and set them forth clearly in his Large Catechism. First, he acknowledges human equality: “in other respects we are, indeed, all alike in the eyes of God.” Our nation recalls the words of its Declaration of Independence: “All men are created equal.” Christians recall the words of St. Paul: “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28). All people participate in a fundamental equality as fellow humans, created in the image of God. Christians from all walks of life unite in the Body of Christ as equals in sin and equals in grace.

Nevertheless, there remains a hierarchical order. Luther continues: “among us there must necessarily be such inequality and ordered difference, and therefore God commands it to be observed, that you obey me as your father, and that I [as a parent] have the supremacy.” Similarly, every child owes to his or her mother the honor appropriate to “the majesty there hidden.” In summary, all persons are equal in the eyes of God, first through creation and then again through redemption in Christ Jesus, but all are ordered by God in their callings as parents and children, as magistrates and citizens, such that children should honor their parents.

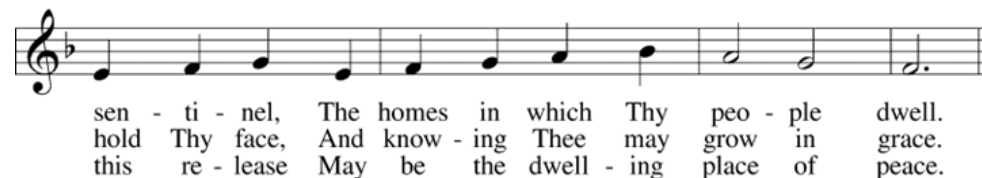
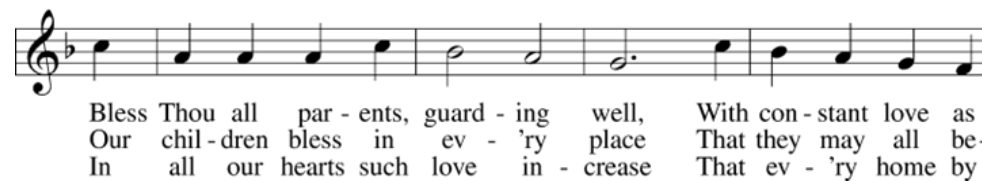
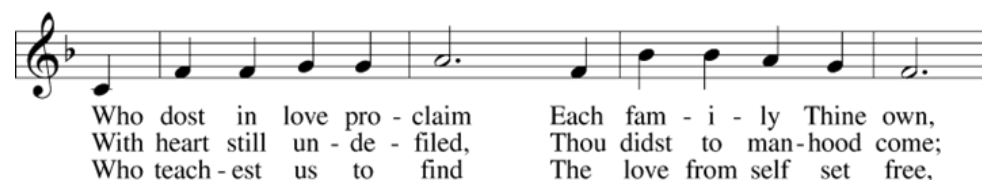
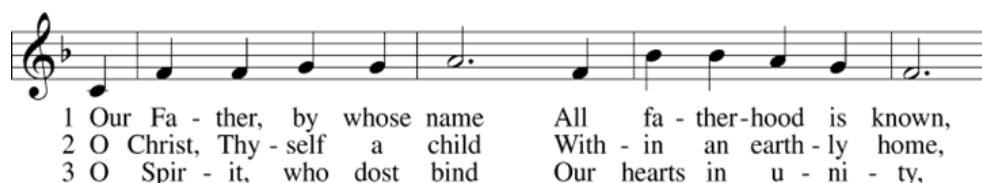
Fathers and mothers, for their part, submit to God, who assigned them their office. Once more, from Luther:

[God] does not wish to have in this office and government knaves and tyrants; nor does He assign to them this honor, that is, power and authority to govern, that they should have themselves worshiped; but they should consider that they are under obligations of obedience to God; and that, first of all, they should earnestly and faithfully discharge their office, not only to support and provide for the bodily necessities of their children, servants, subjects, etc., but, most of all, to train them to the honor and praise of God.

To teach children to honor their parents, therefore, teaches them also to honor God. For it is God who gave them their parents. And it is God who gave them Christ, His Son, to forgive the sins of the children and of their parents. It is, finally, God's Holy Spirit who sanctifies the vocations of fatherhood and motherhood, making these offices most worthy of our reverent contemplation.

Hymn 'Our Father, by Whose Name'

LSB 863



Text: F. Bland Tucker, 1895–1984. Tune: John D. Edwards, 1805–85. Text: © The Church Pension Fund. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110001879. Tune: Public domain

+ Soli Deo Gloria +
Rev. Dr. Joel G. Koepp

The Easter Season is the anchor of the Festival half of the Church Year. From Advent to the season of Holy Trinity, all the readings flow from out of this most blessed of seasons. It is the season of the marvelous truth that Jesus has overcome sin, death, and the Devil with His resurrection from the dead. Darkness gives way to light; death gives way to Life. Jesus is "the way, the truth, and the life."

That message is tireless to the ears of the hurting conscience. And hurting is the conscience of the sinner. It is good for us to delight in the Easter message because it was and is so necessary for our salvation. I will show you just how much in a very familiar text that sometimes doesn't get the full attention of what it is saying to us. I refer to Isaiah 53:4-5 for starters.

Verse 4 tells us about our condition in the flesh. We are "sickly", that is what infirmities are. Our entire life is lived infected with the virus of "iniquity" and "transgression." The Hebrew word for iniquity is a gavel coming down by the judge with a guilty verdict even before we are able to open our mouths to speak. There are no excuses, no explanations, no bargaining. The Hebrew word for transgression is willful disobedience. While we may know what is right and wrong, good or bad, what God's Word says and how it guides our actions; the Old Adam in us does not care. It does what it wants because of our desire for personal pleasure determined by what we think we like. All of which results in the fruit of sorrow.

So, what does Easter have to do with that? It is what Jesus got because of all that verse 4 identifies about us. He got "stricken", "smitten", and "afflicted". Once again, the Hebrew goes deeper than the English. To be stricken is to be beaten so severely that every human eye would notice the vicious manner in which discipline was carried out. To be smitten is to have something smeared on you with disastrous effect. The iniquities and transgressions of all mankind were smeared on Jesus as He hung on the cross such that He became the guiltiest of all mankind. To be afflicted is to be humbled. Jesus, who sat at the right hand of the Father from eternity entered humiliation. He who sat On High, became the lowest of beings, the Suffering Servant for the fallen. What did Jesus get for being our substitute? Punishment!

It is the season of the marvelous truth that Jesus has overcome sin, death, and the Devil with His resurrection from the dead.

What do we get because He substituted for us? "By His stripes we are healed." To be wounded by stripes to say that the instrument applying the punishment entered His flesh so deep that it became one with Him. That is why St. Paul says, "He who knew no sin, became sin for us that we might become the righteousness of God." We are healed. To be healed is the word for darning a hole in a sock. It is the repair of that which is broken, the stitching together of that which had been torn apart.

We are healed, reconciled back with God the Father because of Jesus Christ. His death, burial, and resurrection seal for us the Father's kindly countenance upon the fallen. Pentecost will describe for us just how the benefits that Jesus earned become ours. Pentecost will bring the merits of Jesus to the recipient by God's grace. That will be the topic for the next article.

God bless you all and may His Eternal Peace pacify the guilty conscience. May His resurrection joy prove beyond all doubt that He is the Lord of Life, indeed, your Lord of Life.

Rev. Dr. Brian S. Saunders
District President

Iowa District East - LCMS



VBS

God or Not God?

*"Be Watchful,
Stand Firm in the Faith,
Be Strong."
1 Corinthians 16:15*

**July 21, 22, 23
9:00am -11:00am**

Please let the Board of Education know if any parents or grandparents plan to have their children and/or grandchildren attending so we can properly prepare. Even if they are only doing one or two of the three days, please sign-up and inform the Board of Education.

Registration forms are available on the entryway table at church and on our website.



Lutheran Women in Mission

MAY 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
LWML Iowa East District Prayer Calendar	Featuring LWML Dubuque Zone		Pray for our leaders: local, state and national		St. Paul, Delaware	Rev. Matthew Vesey
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Men's Bible Study, we pray for growth and continuation	Orphan Grain Train	Our Redeemer, Dubuque	Rev. Jesse Cearlock Rev. Mark Zieroth	Bless our missionaries and their work world wide.	Our Redeemer Pre-School	S. Paul, Dubuque
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
All Mothers	Rev. Jonathan Crawford	Parking Lot Picnics	Friendship Tea	Trinity, Guttenberg	Rev. Michael Keller	Goody Bags for Mothers and Father's Days
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Hospital Tray favors	St. Paul, McGregor	Rev. Michael Keller	Quilting for Lutheran World Relief	Our Savior, Manchester	Rev. Isaiah Armbrecht	Celebrating 60th Anniversary. Special service June 22
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
St. John's, Monticello	Remebering all who have gone before us.	Rev. Caleb Schewe	Swaddling Clothes	St. Matthew, Sherill	Rev. Jesse Cearlock Rev. Mark Zieroth	Cookie Walk



APOSTLE'S CREED AND LORD'S PRAYER

Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca
July 29 - August 1, 2025

Sometimes the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed can seem like a chore or some motion we go through, something we memorize and spew back out without thinking too much about it. It can seem like some fantasy wish list for God that never comes true. I mean, "Thy kingdom come?" Come on! But when we compare the Lord's Prayer and the Creed, we can see not just a fantasy, but a promise. His promise to us, not based on us, but based on who He is as we confess Him and pray to Him, we will see how it's all connected.

Things to Know

When:	July 29 - August 1, 2025	Included:	Aside from edifying catechesis and distinctly Lutheran worship, participants will spend time in activities such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Archery • Canoeing • Rock climbing • Zipping (zip line) • Disc golf • Swimming • Large-group games • Campfire and s'mores • So much more!
Where:	Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca		
Who:	Registration is open to both groups and individuals. Confirmants can come with their classmates and a chaperone or register individually and be chaperoned by one of Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca's camp counselors. This event is open to all youth going into grades 5-8.		
Cost:	\$300 per person		

APOSTLE'S CREED AND LORD'S PRAYER

Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca
July 29 - August 1, 2025

Rev. Brett Simek - Trinity Lutheran Church Rantoul, Hilbert, WI

After being convinced to be a Lutheran pastor by his Jesuit (Catholic) high school, Pastor Simek has been involved with HT in a number of ways including CCV, housing coordinator, and assistant chaplain, before being ordained in 2015. He served as the catechesis coordinator for HT for 8 years! He now serves Trinity Lutheran Church Rantoul, Hilbert, WI, and is the husband of Nicole and father of Joel, Elijah, and Jude. As a husband, father, pastor, and student, he has seen and felt the great influence of distinctively Lutheran teaching and the comfort and confidence it gives.



*The Camper Profile, Health Form, Health Screening Form, and Release of Liability must be completed for each camper. To register a group please follow the registration instructions located on the website as well as the informational packet. Groups and individuals should **register online or by mailing the Camp Registration Packet to Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca by July 22nd.***

Higher Things is a Recognized Service Organization of the LCMS. Its mission is to make the Gifts of Christ Jesus known to youth and young adults. HT accomplishes this through conferences, retreats, and various print and online content.

Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca is a mission of the Iowa District East of the LCMS. Leveraging a best-in-class outdoor recreational and camping environment, Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca exists to promote and provide Christ-centered education, recreation, and inspiration for individuals and groups of all ages. Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca offers year-round, Christ-centered programs that support the ministries of local congregations, nurture the faith of individuals and families, and motivate people toward congregational involvement and living in their God-given vocations.

Contacts

Alec Deppe
Director of Programs and Retreats
Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca
(319) 848-4187

Tana McKenna
Retreat Coordinator
Higher Things
(888) 482-6630 ext. 4
retreats@higherthings.org

Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca



May 2025

Iowa Lutheran Theological Symposium May 21-23, 2025

Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca is excited to once again host the Iowa Lutheran Theological Symposium! **This year's theme is Sexually Pure and Decent: Reflections on the 6th Commandment.** Speakers include Cassie Beltz, a Licensed Mental Health Counselor with Lutheran Family Service; Rev. Jonathan Conner, pastor at Zion Lutheran Church in Manning, IA; and Rev. Dr. David Lewis, Associate Professor of Exegetical Theology at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. The Symposium is a theologically enriching event for pastors, church-workers, and lay-people! Registration, a tentative schedule, and the list of speakers can be found at campiodiseca.org/symposium/ or by scanning the QR Code.



In Need of Summer Staff

We are still in need of **male and female counselors** who have a desire to serve others, share the Christian faith, and be a role-model for all the kids who attend camp! Serving as a counselor is also a great way to develop professional skills such as working and communicating with people of all ages, being able to adapt, and making quick and sound decisions in a variety of situations. We anticipate needing **up to 4 more counselors** to accommodate the amount of campers getting registered! We're primarily looking for **college-aged, LCMS young adults** to serve as counselors in **overnight and day camp settings**. To get started with the application process, go to www.nloma.org, or scan the QR Code, and complete a summer service profile. Be sure to list Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca as your first-choice camp!



[Summer Staff](#)



3271 Sandy Beach Road NE, Solon, IA 52333

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email office@iodiseca.org



**The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
LCMS Stewardship Ministry – lcms.org/stewardship**

Stewardship in the Body of Christ

Baseball season is upon us. The southern images of spring training give way to the pageantry of Opening Day. On that day, the hopes and dreams of every major league team, player and fan focus on doing whatever it takes to get to the Fall Classic, the World Series. Baseball is a secular way that so many of us confess that hope “springs” eternal.

With all of this in mind, baseball can also teach us a new perspective about stewardship. Think about the game itself. Baseball is a team sport. The home team faces off against the visitors. Yet while it is a team game, there are repetitive, individual confrontations that take place within the game. The baseball game cannot start without the individual pitcher against the hitter. Once the batted ball is in play, the battle is between the ability of the fielder against the speed of the baserunner. Once there is a runner on base, an attempt to steal a base pits the runner against the catcher. A base hit into the outfield pits the outfielder against a runner trying to score.

Baseball is a team game with many smaller units at play. Without all those smaller units working together and achieving their tasks, the team will lose.

Romans 12 puts our stewardship of the Gospel in a similar setting. The church is certainly described as a team, if you will.

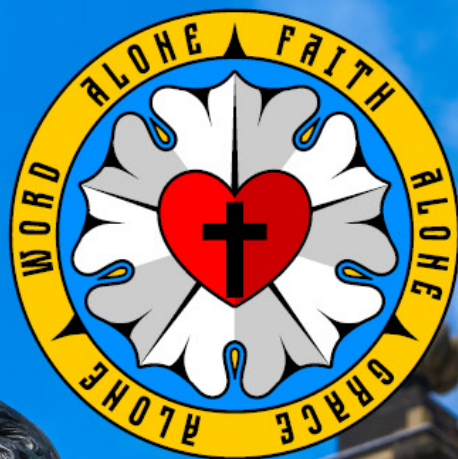
Verse 3: “For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.”

This is where the Body of Christ is really seen as a team. No one member of the baseball team can win the game by themselves. In the same way, no one part of the Body of Christ can accomplish stewardship of the Gospel alone. The pastor cannot. The congregational chair cannot. The lead soprano in the choir cannot. But each of these individuals have been added to the local congregation to be built into a team that can win the victory with Jesus.

Verses 4–5: *“For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.”* In baseball, the pitcher pitches. The catcher catches. The hitter hits. When a pitcher attempts to hit, the result is usually not very pretty. Catchers often do not excel at running the bases. The hitter usually does not do well when they are sent to the mound to pitch. Every member of the Body of Christ has a unique set of abilities and functions. Not everyone preaches. Not everyone leads. Not everyone sings well. Yet when the congregation assembles together as a team, it can succeed in ways unattainable by the individual.

Verses 6–8: *“Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.”* Each member of the team has a role to play. Abilities and opportunities are entrusted to the individual members of the Body of Christ to be used for the ultimate purpose of stewarding the Gospel for the glory of God and the benefit of the neighbor. The one preaching is no more or less important than the others. The one serving or the one teaching, the leader or the merciful one — all are equally important in the faithful stewardship of all that the Lord has entrusted to the Body of Christ. All this stewardship is for the sake of the other!

A baseball team can have five All-Star pitchers but cannot win if the hitters do not hit. The best lineup in the league will struggle if the pitchers cannot get anyone on the other team out. Pitchers need the defense behind them to play well. Coaches need to lead well. When they all work together, you have a winning baseball team. When the Body of Christ has all its members faithfully stewarding the unique individual talents that have been entrusted to them, the victory goes to Jesus! This is the goal of faithful stewardship! It is all about Jesus!



**THE IOWA
THEOLOGICAL
SYMPOSIUM:**

Sexually Pure and Decent:
Reflections on the
Sixth Commandment

May 21-23, 2025

Registration Information

(Lay People Welcome)

With Lodging:

Preaching Workshop and Symposium with
2 Nights of Lodging & Meals **\$85**

Symposium with 1 Night of Lodging &
Meals **\$65**

Without Lodging:

Preaching Workshop and Symposium with
Meals (stay off site) **\$65**

Symposium with Meals (stay off site) **\$35**

[REGISTER HERE](#)

or by scanning this QR code



Location:

Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca
3271 Sandy Beach Rd NE
Solon, IA 52333
Alec Deppe: programdirector@iodiseca.org

Questions?

Contact Rev. Sam Beltz: 870-476-0028

MAY 21: PREACHING WORKSHOP

*APPLYING THE FIVE-FOLD USE IN
SERMON PREPARATION*

MAY 22-23: THEOLOGICAL SYMPOSIUM

*SEXUALLY PURE AND DECENT:
REFLECTIONS ON THE SIXTH
COMMANDMENT*

GUEST PRESENTERS

REV. DR. DAVID LEWIS

REV. ISAIAH ARMBRECHT

REV. JAMES ROCKHILL

REV. TRAVIS BERG

REV. JONATHAN CONNOR

CASSIE BELTZ

WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT!

Please send donations to:

Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca
3271 Sandy Beach Rd NE
Solon, IA 52333

Checks should be made out to "Camp
Io-Dis-E-Ca" with a memo line of "ILTS"

LUTHERAN FAMILY SERVICE PRESENTATIONS

Hosted by St. John Lutheran Church
2370 Merino Ave | Oskaloosa, IA
641-673-6546



**Lutheran
Family Service**

All presentations will be held from 9 am to 12 pm (with a break and time for questions), with registration and breakfast from 8:30 to 9 am, and lunch to follow at 12 pm.

JULY 19 | ON BECOMING SCREEN WISE

"The fear of the LORD is instruction in wisdom..." (Proverbs 15:33). Through the practice of fearing the Lord (i.e., honoring the Lord as Creator, meditating on His Word, and appreciating our status as His creatures), Lutheran Family Service seeks to bring instruction in wisdom into Christians' lives both as a means by which to promote human flourishing and so as to equip them to be positive witnesses for Christ. In this series Pastor Jonathan Conner brings wisdom to bear on the question of individualized screens (especially internet connected screens), emphasizing our created purpose beyond the pixel. After grounding participants in God's three-dimensional grace given in Christ's Church, Pastor Conner exposes the tactics tech developers use to monopolize and monetize our attention (and influence our imaginations), the way screens are affecting our beliefs about life, our relationships, and our religion, and how we can chart a wise way forward that moves us beyond the pixel into the joys and purpose-filled three-dimensions of life in the Lord's creation. In brief, Pastor Conner communicates Biblical wisdom for life in today's technology driven world.

SEPT 6 | END OF LIFE CARE AND CONSIDERATIONS

How can we prepare to depart this life in peace and meet our Lord Jesus? Advanced directives and funeral service planning are good ways to prepare. Faith and trust in Jesus and His Word with beautiful hymns and prayer are even better. Come join Rev. Alex Post, and the saints at St. John's in Oskaloosa as we discuss the infinite God-given value of every human life especially at its end before our joyful resurrection.

NOV 8 | MALE AND FEMALE HE CREATED THEM: CREATION & IDENTITY

Lutheran Family Service walks with the hurting, confused, discouraged, and broken. Through their counseling, teaching, caring, and advocacy, LFS teachers and caregivers confess Christ as they bring Scripture to bear in all things. In this series – Male and Female He Created Them: Creation and Identity – Pastor Jonathan Conner and Mrs. Cassie Beltz (LMHC) address the issue of identity from a Lutheran perspective (incorporating the simple and profound truths confessed in the catechism), giving special attention to the question of gender identity (its provenance, prevalence, and promulgation), as they equip hearers to respond to its false claims and then to appreciate and celebrate God's gift of identity in creation.