



Our Saviour's Lutheran Church; ELCA Sebeka, MN E-News

For March 22, 2020

DAILY BIBLE READINGS 3/22/20—3/28/20

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SUNDAY, 2 Chronicles 1:1-17
MONDAY, 2 Chronicles 5:2-14
TUESDAY, 2 Chronicles 6:1-11
WEDNESDAY, 2 Chronicles 6:12-31
THURSDAY, 2 Chronicles 6:32-42
FRIDAY, 2 Chronicles 7:1-10
SATURDAY, 2 Chronicles 7:11-22

March 15 2020

ATTENDANCE : 90
Weekly General offering : 3/15 \$1269.00
Weekly Vanco offering : 3/16 \$885.00
Total weekly offering \$2154.00
Weekly Set-aside : \$215.40

Weekly Offering Needed: \$2,488

* All activities at the church have been postponed until further notice. Watch our Facebook page and website for weekly devotions from Pastor Eric. We will mail out printed versions to those who don't have access to the online version. If you have any questions please feel free to contact the church office or Pastor Eric on his cell-phone, e-mail, or social media. Thank you!

* Our next Second Collection is April 12 is for Camp Emmaus Camperships.

* Menahga-Sebeka Ministerial Scholarship applications are now available. Application are due March 31st. See Pastor Eric for any questions.

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There are so many ways for us to stay connected even in this new time of social distancing. One of the ways we want to stay connected to God, especially for those who don't use social media or spend much time on the internet, is a written devotion. So every week we'll send out a written devotion with the E-News, as well as mail that devotion to anyone who would prefer it through non-digital means. Let Dawn know if you or someone you know would like to be on the mailing list for these devotions. Thank you and God bless you! - Pastor Eric

Known by name

But now, says the Lord—the one who created you, Jacob, the one who formed you, Israel: Don't fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are mine. -Isaiah 43:1

Jesus said to her, "Mary!"

-John 20:16

Like many American teenagers, I was required to take a yearlong U.S. history course in high school. On the first day of school, second period, my history teacher announced to the newly assembled class that we'd have our first quiz on Friday. Uh, what? What were we supposed to learn in four days?

It would not be a history quiz, he explained. The quiz was this: on Friday, he'd hand out a paper with the classroom laid out on it, including where all the students sat. We would then fill in the paper by labeling the chair with each student's correctly spelled first and last name. Now, there were just over 1000 students in my high school. We hadn't all grown up together. We didn't know all of one another by name. Certainly I didn't know how to spell all their names.

Was it Kati Larsen or Catie Larson or Caity Larssen? We needed to keep straight Matt and Matthew, not labeling them what they didn't want to be called. An incorrect spelling, noted the teacher, would be marked incorrect. No partial credit. Even for a single class of students, this was going to take some work.

Naturally, we all spent the whole week practicing the names, writing them out and being sure we could match the name to the person. By Wednesday, I had two-thirds of the names down, spelling and all. By Thursday, I was pretty sure I could keep the three Chrises and the Sara/Sarah pair straight. By Friday, I was ready to label every student and the teacher by first and last name. For the rest of the year, in fact for the rest of high school, I had no trouble remembering those students by name.

There's power in being called by the correct name, isn't there? It shows, at the bare minimum, that the other person has put the mental energy into connecting our name with our face. It makes us feel known and remembered. Being called by name makes us feel like we matter.

In the Bible, we hear many stories of God calling people by name. When God calls by name, it shows how well God knows the identity of that person or group.

That's why we baptize by name. God isn't interested in loving and forgiving any generic sinner; God is interested in loving and forgiving Carol and Dana and Martin and Erik and Frankie and Malik and Ali and Fatima and Yuri and... well, you get it. God calls us by name. God knows us by name. God loves us by name.

As Christians, when we call someone by name, it's not just recognizing who they are as an individual, but also who they are as children of God. They're not just a generic neighbor, they're Lydia. He's not just some coworker, he's Patrick. She's not just somebody who goes to church here, she's Mandi. Our names matter. When we can't be bothered to learn someone's name, we send the message that we just don't care very much. Yes, that includes spelling! No partial credit.

But even if no one else can remember our names, we are called by name by God. God knows your name. God forgives you by name. God loves you by name. God, the one who created and formed you, calls out: "Don't fear! I have redeemed you. I am calling you by name. I love you. You are mine."

God, I thank you that even with all the people in the world, you know my name. Thank you for calling me by name as your dear child. Teach me to see each child of yours as you do: beloved and called by name. Amen.

Written by Pastor Beth Wartick from Trinity Lutheran in Tipton, IA