

St Matthews Service

Rev. Christopher LaBoube

January 03, 2021

"Trust in the Lord with all our heart, and lean not on our own understanding. In all you ways, acknowledge him and he will direct your path." **(Proverbs 3:5-6)**



St. Matthew Lutheran Church

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FB page: [St. Matthew Lutheran-Mapleton](https://www.facebook.com/St.MatthewLutheran-Mapleton)

Rev. Christopher LaBoube

Pastor

(712-840-1652)cell

Karen Krusen

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(volunteer)*

(712) 881-2243-office #

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2nd Sunday after Christmas
3 January 2021

St. Matthew Lutheran Church, Mapleton, IA

1 Kings 3:4–15 / Psalm 119:97–104 / Ephesians 1:3–14 / Luke 2:40–52

Sermon Title: Living According to God's Promises

Sermon Text: Luke 2:40-52

“Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father, and our LORD Jesus Christ.” (2 Tim. 1:2) Amen.

We are now in the second and last Sunday of the Christmas season. Today is the 10th Day of Christmas. Epiphany is three days from now on Wednesday. Last Sunday we talked about what Joseph and Mary did according to the Law of Moses. They took baby Jesus to the temple in Jerusalem and offered the required sacrifice, and they had baby Jesus circumcised according to the Law of Moses written in Exodus and Leviticus.

Now, we jump ahead several years, and meet up with Jesus as a child, who is 12 years old.

⁴⁰ *And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him.*

⁴¹ *Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover.* ⁴² *And when he was twelve years old, they went up according to custom.” (Luke 2:40-42)*

The yearly celebration of the Passover was a required event of all Israelites. Everyone was to travel to Jerusalem where they would offer a lamb sacrifice as part of the Passover celebration. Back in Deuteronomy 16 God explains the Passover sacrifice:

“You may not offer the Passover sacrifice within any of your towns that the LORD your God is giving you, but at the place that the LORD your God will choose, to make his name dwell in it, there you shall offer the Passover sacrifice, in the evening at sunset, at the time you came out of Egypt.” (Deuteronomy 16:5-6)

And then several verses later in the Deuteronomy 16, we see how God says at least every man from every family is required to attend the three festivals throughout the year. *“Three times a year all your males shall appear before the LORD your God at the place that he will choose: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of Booths. They shall not appear before the LORD empty-handed. Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD your God that he has given you.” (Deuteronomy 16:16-17)*

So we know that every year, at least Joseph would travel to Jerusalem, though Mary and Jesus also probably went with him. Males were required to attend the three festivals throughout the year. Their families were invited to attend, but were not required.

In addition to these biblical requirements to attend the annual festivals, there is significance in Luke mentioning that Jesus was 12 years old. According to Jewish tradition, “When the boy Jesus was twelve years old, the parents followed the rule laid down by the elders that the sons must be trained in the observance of all religious duties and must take part in the festivals with their elders.”

Twelve years old “was the age at which the Jewish boys entered the secondary school, the Beth-ha-Midrash, the foremost of which was located at Jerusalem and usually conducted in one of the Temple halls.” (Popular Commentary of the Bible: New Testament Vol. 1: Kretzman, p. 277)

So in our Gospel lesson from Luke, we see Joseph, Mary and the boy Jesus are in Jerusalem celebrating this annual festival of the Passover. Jesus is also beginning to learn how to observe the Passover celebration along with the other festivals.

Later in Luke’s Gospel, in Luke chapter 22, we read more about the Passover celebration. The Passover celebration is the festival that Jesus changed into our current practice of Holy Communion. The Passover festival was a week celebrating how God saved his people in Egypt and brought them safely into the Promised Land of Israel.

“⁴³ And when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it, ⁴⁴ but supposing him to be in the group they went a day’s journey, but then they began to search for him among their relatives and acquaintances, ⁴⁵ and when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, searching for him.” (Luke 2:43-45)

Some folks have asked how Mary and Joseph could not have known where their child was as they traveled home. It’s a valid question. In those days, extended families would travel together from their hometowns to Jerusalem to celebrate the festivals required by God in the Old Testament. Joseph and Mary would have known when they left that Jesus was with them. Jesus would have been hanging out with cousins and other relatives his age, lagging behind their parents, just as kids do today.

So it wasn’t that Joseph and Mary were negligent and lost their child. They were simply traveling with their extended families as most people traveled in those days for temples festivals. Joseph and Mary figured that Jesus was hanging out with other kids, and so they headed towards home.

Then, somewhere in this journey, maybe as they were preparing to stop for the night, Joseph and Mary started looking for their son, but they couldn’t find him. *but then they began to search for him among their relatives and acquaintances, ⁴⁵ and when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, searching for him.”*

Since none of their relatives, who they were traveling with, had seen Jesus or knew his whereabouts, they concluded that Jesus was still in Jerusalem. So they quickly headed back to the capital city to find their only child.

By now, Joseph and Mary were obviously worried and very concerned about their child’s whereabouts and wellbeing. Any parent would react the same way. *“⁴⁶ After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. ⁴⁷ And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers.”* (Luke 2:46-47)

After searching for three days for their lost child, Joseph and Mary were probably leaning on being hysterical. Where on earth is Jesus!?!?!? Scripture tells us that they looked for their son for three days. Now, you have to understand that they didn’t cell phones or texting options. They simply had to ask everyone who they met, if they had seen their son. Joseph and Mary repeating the same description of their lost son to many different people. Also, Jerusalem was a big city which hindered Joseph and Mary as they searched for their boy.

But let’s flip over to where Jesus is, and see how things are going with him in the temple.

“⁴⁶ After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. ⁴⁷ And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers.” (Luke 2:46-47)

Jesus was sitting with the rabbis, the men, who taught the meaning of the Scriptures to the people. Even at 12 years old, Jesus appears to these rabbis as a promising teacher at such a young age.

Back in verse 40, we see how Jesus as a 12-year-old boy, is able to engage highly educated Bible teachers, with his own thoughts and questions, just as these older men were doing. *⁴⁰ And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him.”*

Scripture teaches us that the Messiah will be endowed with wisdom from the Holy Spirit. And we know this is what was happening as Jesus engages the Bible teachers of his time with his own spiritual questions and ideas.

When Joseph and Mary finally find their son, they are naturally upset. *“⁴⁸ And when his parents saw him, they were astonished. And his mother said to him, ‘Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been searching for you in great distress.’ ⁴⁹ And he said to them, ‘Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?’ ⁵⁰ And they did not understand the saying that he spoke to them.” (Luke 2:48-50)*

And yet, Jesus does not respond in anger or frustration. He simply talks to them as though they completely understand the relationship of Jesus with God our Heavenly Father. Of course, at that moment they don’t get it. *⁴⁹ And [Jesus] said to them, ‘Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?’ ⁵⁰ And they did not understand the saying that he spoke to them.” (Luke 2:48-50)*

When Joseph and Mary finally find their son, after they had been looking for him for three days, they are probably frustrated and relieved. They finally found their son, who was lost. They find Jesus in the temple courts sitting calm and confident engaging the rabbis with biblical and spiritual questions.

⁴⁹ And [Jesus] said to them, ‘Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?’ ⁵⁰ And they did not understand the saying that he spoke to them.” (Luke 2:48-50)

Here we see Jesus as a 12-year-old boy publicly confessing, who he is, the Son of God Most High. Son of God our Heavenly Father.

Jesus says that he must be in his Father’s house, tending to his Father’s business, that business of being filled up with the truth from God’s Word, and then going out and sharing that Good News with other people.

So Joseph and Mary found Jesus sitting with the rabbis in the temple. The rabbis were regularly holding classes in the temple halls—areas outside of the actual temple courts—for young boys, who had just turned 12 years old, and for older kids, who were high school aged. The rabbis were teaching the basics of the Jewish faith to the younger boys, who were Jesus age, up to the more advanced biblical topics for high school age boys. This is where Joseph and Mary found Jesus sitting with other kids.

“⁵¹ And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them. And his mother treasured up all these things in her heart. ⁵² And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.” (Luke 2:51-52)

Here we see another example of Jesus showing true humility. First, Jesus showed the entire world humility by willingly being born of a virgin, to live the exact same life as you and me. Now, as a 12-year-old boy, Jesus shows true humility by obeying his parents, by doing what the Fourth Commandment says: *“Honor your father and mother.”*

Jesus not only lived according to the Fourth Commandment, but he lived according to ALL the commandments. Jesus did this to show us that with God’s help, it is very possible to do what God asks of us. Now, granted, you and I will fall short often trying to live the way God wants us to live, but that’s where confession and absolution come in.

Psalm 32 gives us a short example for confessing our sins and receiving God’s forgiveness: *“I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, ‘I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,’ and you forgave the iniquity of my sin.”* (Psalm 32:5) Simply pray and tell God what you have done against him and against someone else, and then tell God you’re truly sorry, and God will forgive you. That’s what he promises.

Jesus, as a 12-year-old boy, lived according to the Ten Commandments and according to the traditions of his culture at that time. He did this so that he can then take your sins and mine onto himself, and then be hung on a cross to die a horrible death so that you and I don’t have to die. Then, by God the Father’s glorious power, Jesus was raised again from the dead three days later. His death means that he has overcome sin, death and the devil. This is reason enough to praise and thank the Lord our God. Amen.

ELDERS
Jeff Krusen
Leo Dose
Ryan Paulsen
Mark Witzel
Bert Schauer
Joe Hogan
Duane Hamann

READERS
Joseph Hogan
Karen Kueny
Ryan Paulsen
Sarah Schmidt
Mark Witzel

SCREENS
Sarah Schmidt
Dennis Muckey
Shelly Boyle

ALTAR GUILD
Brenda Brown
Joan Chandler
Kay Elmquist
Shari Erlemeier
Donna Goslar
Marla Hogan
Janeal Holmes
Kay Johnson
Karen Krusen
Judy Kuehl
Karen Kueny
Rita Lafrentz
Sarah Schmidt
Carolyn Sexton
Mavis Skow
Maxine Thies
Kathe Trucke
Dorothy Wessling

St Matthew Lutheran Church thank these people for their dedication of their service to the Lord this past year 2020.

Please take time to thank these people because they are serving our Lord and Savior. This takes dedication and time out of their schedule. Think of a way that you can serve the church and Jesus.

PARAMENTS ON OUR ALTAR:

Color is everywhere. Color is God's way of filling his world with beauty and giving pleasure to those who live in this colorful world. Christians, for centuries, have used color in divine worship to emphasize the redemptive action of God through his Son. Color's Purpose However, color and its bright message can easily be taken for granted or mistaken in its purpose. The paraments, vestments, altar clothes, banners, traditionally employed each Sunday, must be seen as more than an attempt to decorate, or give accent to the chancel. That is, no doubt, the view of some. It's true; interior design and decoration are important. But a greater service is demanded of our liturgical colors than merely making the surroundings "pretty." Furthermore, when altar paraments are used year after year without much attention given to their message, as well as their care, the pastor, along with his faithful altar guild would do well to throw away the key to the sacristy and refrain from using those altar cloth "decorations." Frequent instruction about the church year and its corresponding colors must go hand in hand with its weekly use

Color, like music, plays an important role in the life of God's worshiping people. Just as music is the "handmaiden to theology," liturgical color complements the message of the seasons and occasions during the church year. Taking a familiar seat in the nave of his/her chapel preceding worship on any given Sunday, the worshiper's emotions and intellect are immediately engaged by color. Liturgical colors aid in establishing a climate in which Law and Gospel may be heard and received.

Color allows us to see the Light of Life, Jesus Christ. It serves to communicate the message of salvation. And communicate it does when it reinforces a specific "colorful" chapter in the life of our Lord and his church, retold annually by the church calendar.

Symbolism of Colors It is appropriate, from time to time, to take a thoughtful and fresh look at the colors that are displayed throughout the church year. In the end, we admit, the use of paraments, vestments, altar clothes, banners is an adiaphoron. Even the symbolism behind the traditional colors is somewhat arbitrary and open to additional interpretations as generations pass. The primary source and guarantor of their meanings is tradition. However, the important thing to remember is why we retain this traditional liturgical standard. The value of the "Bg-BgsPwr" color scheme rests in their purpose: to serve God's worshiping community by assisting in communicating the holy faith from generation to generation. In every age, the beauty and symbolism of color in the church continues to serve us exceptionally well!

White is the color of purity and completeness. The theme for the "great fifty days" of Easter is supported by the use of white. This color, used primarily during these Sundays, assists in bearing the message that "though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow." Christ's triumph from the grave on Resurrection day is the cause for our rejoicing. His purity before his Father becomes our purity. White reinforces that message of joy. In addition to its use during Eastertide, white is the appointed color for such festive Sundays as Christmas and its twelve days; Epiphany (Jan. 6) and the first Sunday following it, observed as the Baptism of Our Lord; the Last Sunday after the Epiphany, also known as Transfiguration Sunday; Holy Trinity Sunday; and twenty-one minor festivals and occasions listed on the church year calendar in *Lutheran Service Book*. In all, white serves as the best festive color for the church year.

Douglas K. Escue—pastor of Immanuel Lutheran Church in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Originally published in *Lutheran Worship Notes*, Issue 29, 1994.

God's Gift of a Good Reputation



THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT

You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor. (*Exodus 20:16*).

What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not tell lies about our neighbor, betray him, slander him, or hurt his reputation, but defend him, speak well of him, and explain everything in the kindest way.

Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. (*Ephesians 4:29–30*)

FOR SHARING

1. "It is always the best policy to speak the truth, unless of course you are an exceptionally good liar" (Jerome K. Jerome). In what ways does this statement reflect today's standards and practices?
2. Why is reputation so important in business? in relationships?
3. How can lies, betrayal, slander, and gossip destroy lives?
4. In His life and through His death, Jesus was the true and faithful witness to God's plan of salvation. He spoke the truth and demonstrated the truth at the cross. How does the Gospel change us to live in God's truth?
5. What positive results occur when God's forgiven and renewed people "explain everything in the kindest way"?

PRAYER

Merciful Father, You created me to be a reflection of Your divine goodness. Yet I have fallen short of Your holy will. I humbly acknowledge my sin and ask Your forgiveness in Christ. Give me Your strength through Your Holy Spirit so that I use Your gift of speech to Your honor and the good of all people. In Jesus' name. Amen.

BAPTISMAL BIRTHDAY

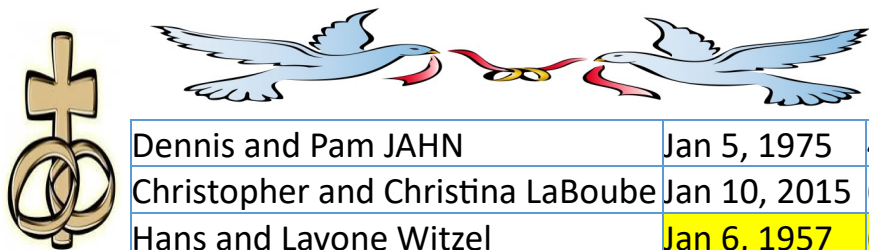
Name		Baptism
Andre	Robert	Jan 17, 1947
Bruhn	Presley	Jan 10, 2010
Bruhn	Hudson	Jan 22, 2012
Else	James	Jan 1, 1954
Holmes	Janeal	Jan 20, 1952
McGrain	Erika	Jan 29, 1994
Namanny	Melinda	Jan 22, 1989
Schmidt	Paige	Jan 22, 2006
Schmidt	Kurt	Jan 4, 1981
Schrader	Selma	Jan 26, 1930



We are listing
Baptismal birthdays
to remember and
celebrate the day we were
adopted into the family of God
through the washing of the Holy
Spirit.

BIRTHDAYS

Name		Birthday
Andre	Robert	Jan 17, 1947
Brodersen	Kaylee	Jan 31, 2005
Bruhn	Jessica	Jan 14, 1986
Dose	Florice	Jan 9, 1935 86
Dose	Carol	Jan 22, 1934 87
Gosch	Myrna	Jan 9, 1941
Goslar	Marshall	Jan 31, 1973
Gronwoldt	Virgil	Jan 3, 1961
Kuehl	Judy	Jan 23, 1945
Namanny	Melinda	Jan 25, 1958
Miller	Tari	Jan 7, 1994
Phillips	Marlene	Jan 17, 1936
Pithan	Derek	Jan 14, 2013
Pithan	Emma	Jan 8, 2009
Schmidt	Paige	Jan 11, 2006
Schmidt	Troy	Jan 27, 2009
Witzel	Lavone	Jan 31, 1938 83
Hamann	Katelynn	Jan 1, 1992



Dennis and Pam JAHN	Jan 5, 1975	47 yrs.
Christopher and Christina LaBoube	Jan 10, 2015	6 yrs.
Hans and Lavone Witzel	Jan 6, 1957	64 yrs.

NEEDED /WEEK	\$3,225.02
TOTAL GIVING (12-20-20)	\$1,565.00
TOTAL GIVING (12-24-20)	\$4,365.00
TOTAL GIVING (12-27-20)	\$540.00
T-SHIRT FUNDRAISER	\$415.00
CHRISTMAS CARDS	\$15.00
SUNDAY ATTENDANCE (12-20-20)	40
VISITORS (12-20-20)	3
SUNDAY COMMUNED (12-20-20)	33
CHILDREN IN CHURCH (12-20-20)	7
BIBLE CLASS (12-20-20)	9
ATTENDANCE (12-24-20) AT 4 PM	21 +5 VISITOR
ATTENDANCE (12-24-20) AT 7 PM	15
SUNDAY ATTENDANCE (12-27-20)	33
SUNDAY COMMUNED (12-27-20)	29
CHILDREN IN CHURCH (12-27-20)	4
BIBLE CLASS (12-27-20)	12
SUNDAY SCHOOL (12-27-20)	3

Faith Step: Do you know someone who needs hope today? Stop right now and pray for them, text them, or send a kind note.

	<u>Week of Schedule 01-04 to 01-10</u>
Mon (04)	Pastor's Family Day
Tues (05)	Board of Elders 7 pm
Wed (06)	Confirmation Class 6 pm to 7 pm
Sun (10)	Baptism of our Lord Church Services 9:30 am Bible Class 10:45 am

Please continue to pray for our church leaders.



"Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer." **Romans 12:12**

Pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17)

PRAYER WARRIORS— The prayer warriors desire to hear from you as to how they can pray for you. We have 14 prayer warriors. We welcome more men and women to join us. if you need prayer call **Alice Miller** phone number 712-880-2380.

Members of St. Matthew with Special Needs and Concerns

Nazaria Kaderabek
Selma Schrader
Myrna Gosch
Lavonne Witzel
Alan Bruhn

Bud Dose
Elnora Dose
Delores Gosch
Kathy Trucke

Carol Dose
Jerry Albers
Hans Witzel
Marla Hogan

Family / Friends of Members with Special Needs and Concerns

Sheri Heilman— Sue Oberg's sister; **Ron Kraffle** friend of Marla & Joe Hogan; **Richard Swain**, neighbor of Karen and Jeff Krusen; **Jim Kueny**, Karen's husband **Lynn Smith** friend of Marla and Joe Hogan; **Jazmin Mauch**, granddaughter of Marla and Joe Hogan; **Penny Mauch** friend of Marilyn & Duane Hamann; **Tammy Jean Bramley**, mother of

Please drop them a line or two, they love getting mail and they would love hearing from their church family.

Bonnie Banks 86 yrs. Jun 2, 1934
Main Street Apartments
516 Main Street Apt 2
Mapleton, IA 51034

George Koithan 88 yrs. Sept. 2, 1932
1726 Marcella Heights
Carroll, IA 51040

Elnora Dose 85 yrs. May 11, 1935
Embassy Rehab & Care Center
206 Port Neal Rd

Delbert Kroll 87 yrs. Jun. 1, 1933
Ring Street
Mapleton IA 51034

Myrna Gosch 79 yrs. Jan 9, 1941
Pleasant View Care Center
200 Shannon Dr. Rm #108
Whiting, IA 51063

Delores Boysen 81 yrs. Mar. 5, 1939
31153 Juinter Ave
Hinton, IA 51024

Phyllis Fick 92 yrs. Jun 3, 1928
Willow Dale Care—Assisted Living
404 1st St.
Battle Creek, IA 51006

Carol Dose 86 yrs. Jan. 22, 1934
Sunrise Ave.
Maple Heights Nursing Home

*** indicates a new address*

Spread the Fruits of the Spirit:

Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Gentleness, Kindness, Self-Control, Goodness, and Faithfulness. You will be rewarded

**ADDRESSES FOR OUR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS NEEDING PRAYERS: BE A KIND CHRISTIAN
AND SEND THEM A CARD I'M SURE THEY WOULD ENJOY!**

Nazaria Kaderabek
310 S. 6th St.
Mapleton, IA 51034

Hans Witzel & Lavonne
36252 Co. Hwy E 34
Castana, IA 51010

Selma Schrader
21 Ohm Drive
Mapleton, IA 51034

Richard Swain
407 S. 5th Street
Mapleton, IA 51034

Delores Gosch
202 S. 2nd St.
Mapleton, IA 51034

Jim Kueny
707 Oak St.
Mapleton, IA 51034

Charles (Bud) Dose
302 N. 2nd Ave.
Anthon, IA 51004

Alan Bruhn
14535 Walnut Ave
Mapleton, IA 51034

Sheri Heilman
(Sue Oberg's sister)
1721 Lincoln Street
Great Bend, KS 67530

Tammy Bramley
42715 210th St.
Ute, IA 51060

Elnora Dose
Embassy Rehab & Care Center
206 Port Neal Rd
Sergeant Bluff, IA 51054

Lynne Smith: chose to not publish

Jerry Albers
1313 Maple Street
Onawa, IA 51040

Jazmin Mauch: chose to not publish

Carol Dose
1 Sunrise Ave.
Maple Heights Nursing Home
Mapleton, IA 51034

Ron Kraffle: chose to not publish

Myrna Gosch
Pleasant Care Center
200 Shannon Dr.
Whiting, IA 51063

Kim Whitton chose to not publish



Give the office a call or the Pastor...

Before going to hospital

Private communion

Desire to serve your Lord through the Church

Need a ride to a Dr's appt

Address or name changes

Entering armed services

Death in the family

Need of a visit

Birth of your baby

Making wedding plans



St Matthew Lutheran
Church
504 Walnut Street
Mapleton, IA 51034



OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOU TO CONTINUE TO FILL UP WITH JESUS BY READING AND LISTENING TO THE BIBLE:

LET'S STAY CONNECTED: St. Matthew Lutheran Church Service at 9:30 am e very Sunday am at the church.

Facebook page-.St. Matthew Lutheran-Mapleton— Our services at 9 am every Sunday website:

www.stmatthewmapleton.org – Our services posted weekly Mission Central... www.missioncentral.us Lutheran

Family Service: www.lfsiowa.org **WEB SITES:** Iowa District West—www.idwlcms.org Camp Okoboji –

www.campokoboji.org“**THY STRONG WORD**” is a daily devotion airing at 6:25 am Monday through Saturday on KDSN (104.9 FM) “**THE LUTHERAN HOUR**” can be heard every Sunday on radio station—KDSN-FM (104.9) at 6:30 am and 1530 at 10:30 am. It is available 24 hours a day on the internet in Real Audio. Visit www.lhm.org and click on the Lutheran Hour on the left side of the page "**THE GOOD SHEPHEARD HOUR** airs on the following stations every Sunday: 8 am Fort Dodge-KVFD 1400 AM; 8 am Sioux City—KSCJ 1360 AM; 10:30 am Storm Lake—

KAYL 101.5 FM **Lutheran Family Services:** www.lofsiowa.org **MainStreet Living**— is a Television Program that is endorsed by the Iowa West District of the LCMS This program is broadcast on KCAU, the ABC network affiliate in Sioux City on Sunday morning, starting at 10:00 AM. The first 30 minutes are remastered episode of “This is the Life” The second half of the program is a modified Lutheran worship service that features a different Pastor each week, from the area.



Father, today I celebrate the reality of Your presence in my life. I celebrate Your birth, Your life, Your death, and Your resurrection. And as I celebrate, Lord, help me to be "God with skin on" to those in need around me. Open my eyes and let me see them as You see them! I love You. Happy birthday Jesus! In Jesus name, Amen.