

Sign Post

**January –
February, 2022**

In This Issue...

- 1, 2 – Pastor’s Article
- 2 – Birthdays
- 3 – Bible Study
- 4 – Prayers
Bible Study answers
- 5 – January Calendar
- 6 – February Calendar
- 7 – Word Search

Sign Post is online at
www.iowaeastdeaf.org.
It is the newsletter for:

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“Never take advantage of any widow or orphan.” Exodus 22:22

Sometimes dates or times are interesting just because of the numbers. One of the best was on June 7, 1989, at 1:23 a.m. and 45 seconds. Why? If you write out the time and the date, it looks like this: 1:23:45 on 6/7/89. You see how the numbers line up, 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9. This February, we’re going to have a lot of 2s, especially 2/22/22 at 2:22 a.m. (or p.m.).

That led me to wonder what Exodus 22:22 says. (Exodus is the 2nd book in the Bible.) “Never take advantage of any widow or orphan.”

If you pay attention to the news and what is going on in the U.S. and in culture, you will see a lot of words like social justice, woke, equity, oppression, privilege, and others. A lot of people are talking about social justice and a lot of people are confused about social justice and what that means. I will explain how justice in the Bible and social justice are two very different ideas. We believe and support true justice, but we cannot agree with social justice.

Justice vs. Social Justice

The Bible shows that justice means doing what is right for other people. Deuteronomy 16:18-20 says,

Appoint judges and officials for each of your tribes. Do it in every town the Lord your God is giving you. They must judge the people fairly. Do what is right. Treat everyone the same. Don’t take money from people who want special favors. It makes those who are wise close their eyes to the truth. It twists the words of those who have done nothing wrong. Do only what is right. Then you will live. You will take over the land the Lord your God is giving you.

In the Old Testament, widows and orphans didn’t have anyone to defend them. Exodus 22:22 shows that God’s people should not do wrong to them. We protect people who are not able to defend themselves (Proverbs 31:8-9). We protect, care for, and defend anyone who needs help. Judges should do that, but also all people are responsible to do right for other people.

Most people will agree with that. But who defines what is right? Christians say God defines right and wrong. Unbelievers say they can define what is right and wrong. That is the main difference between social justice and justice. Some people will disagree with this, but here are my definitions.

Justice: Doing what God says is right.

Social justice: Doing what the world says is right.

You know that what God says is right and what the world says is right are two very different things. There is also a difference in how you do what is right. Some

Pastor's Article (continued)

people in the world say if you don't get what you want, then fight for it. Life is about power and you need to get power for yourself. If someone won't agree with you, then you fight and force them to do what you want. You make your own rules and do what you think is right for you. Many people behave that way.

What God says is very different. Jesus said the Law means to love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength, and love your neighbor the same as you love yourself. When you love your neighbor, you will not use push them down to get what you want. Love is not about power. True love means doing what is best for someone else. That includes showing mercy to people who are in need, even giving up something you want so you can help someone else.

God's justice means He saves us. Jeremiah 33:15-16 says this about Jesus:

In those days and at that time, I will make a righteous branch grow up for David. He will do what is fair and right in the land. In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live securely. Jerusalem will be called The Lord Is Our Righteousness.

We Have Failed Justice

There is not enough justice today in the world. Why? Sin has ruined everything. People are self-centered. We think about ourselves, not other people.

Even Christians have been self-centered. The world accuses the church of discriminating and oppressing people. Some of their accusations are false, but some are true. We could make a long list of problems in different churches: racism, discrimination, loving money, ignoring people's needs, failing to speak the truth, and others. We haven't cared for each other the way we should.

In John 13:34-35, Jesus said, "I'm giving you a new commandment: Love each other in the same way that I have loved you. Everyone will know that you are my disciples because of your love for each other." Do we love each other that way? Does the world see Christians loving each other? In the early church, in the New Testament, Christians often gave a good example of love and justice. Christians today, especially in America, are not always a good example.

Time to Repent and Do Justice

The world needs true justice, not social justice. The world needs to know God's justice in Jesus – that He shows mercy because He put all our sins on Jesus, and He makes us free. Because of that, we can show God's true love for people. We need to repent and confess that we have not cared about other people the way we should. Remember God's love and forgiveness for you, so you can show that same love and forgiveness for others. God has equipped you. He's given you all the tools you need. He baptized you and brought you into His kingdom so you live in true justice and mercy. Live in God's justice in the way you talk and do everything for other people. Don't only do that on 2/22/22. Live in God's true mercy and justice every day of your life.

Pastor Eckert

January

- 3 Dalton Anderson
- 14 Janelle Legg
Susan Sacco
- 15 Diane Yotter
- 30 Rosie Glime



February

- 3 Neita Dommer
Gerald Mitchell
- 5 Evelyn Powell
- 8 Brady Olsen
- 12 Curtis Bethurum
- 14 Roselyn Schultz
- 19 Lorne Schultz
Sarah Eckert
- 29 Melody Eiben

Dive Into God's Word

The Table of Duties

What are the responsibilities of the pastor?

Lutherans know about the Small Catechism. Martin Luther wrote that for parents to teach their children the Christian faith. A catechism is a teaching book. The Small Catechism teaches the Ten Commandments, Apostle's Creed, the Lord's Prayer, Baptism, the Lord's Supper, and Confession and Absolution (forgiveness). If you are a member of the Lutheran Church, you studied those six things before you became a member.

There is another part of the Small Catechism that we don't talk about as much. It is called the "Table of Duties." The Christian faith isn't only for Sunday morning. We live the faith every day in everything we do. The Table of Duties shows how pastors, church members, husbands and wives, parents, children, the government and citizens, employees and others can live their faith. In 2022, we are going to look at some of these duties to see how faith in Jesus applies to our lives. First up – pastors. *Answers are on p. 4.*

A. In 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Paul talks about what kind of man can become a pastor. The verses below are from *God's Word* translation.

2. A bishop must have a good _____. He must have only one _____, be sober, use good _____, be _____, be hospitable, and be able to _____.
3. He must not _____ excessively or be a violent person, but he must be _____. He must not be quarrelsome or love _____.
6. People who are not _____ must speak well of him, or he might become the victim of disgraceful insults that the devil sets as traps for him.

B. Titus 2:1 says, "But for you, teach what agrees with right doctrine (teaching)." 2 Timothy 1:13 says, "With faith and love for Christ Jesus, consider what you heard me say to be the pattern of accurate teachings."

1. What does that say about what pastors can teach? Can they teach anything they want?

C. 1 Timothy 4:13 says, "Until I get there, concentrate on reading Scripture in worship, giving encouraging messages, and teaching people." 2 Timothy 4:1-3 says, "I give you a command in the sight of God and Christ Jesus. Christ will judge the living and the dead. Because He and His kingdom are coming, here is the command I give you. Preach the word. Be ready to serve God in good times and bad. Correct people's mistakes. Warn them. Encourage them with words of hope. Be very patient as you do these things. Teach them carefully."

1. How does a pastor use God's word in his work?
2. Does a pastor preach only law (bad news. Punishment)? Only gospel (good news, salvation)? Both?
3. What if people don't want to listen to God's word? What should a pastor do?

D. 2 Timothy 4:5 says, "But I want you to keep your head no matter what happens. Don't give up when times are hard. Work to spread the good news. Do everything God has given you to do." 1 Timothy 4:12 says, "Don't let anyone look down on you for being young. Instead, make your speech, behavior, love, faith, and purity an example for other believers."

1. What should a pastor's life look like? How is he an example for other believers?

E. John 20:21-22 says, "After He had said this, He breathed on the disciples and said, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. Whenever you forgive sins, they are forgiven. Whenever you don't forgive them, they are not forgiven.'"

1. What job did Jesus give the apostles (and pastors) to do?

Prayers

Please remember these people in your prayers:

- ✦ Pray for all Christians to be strong in faith in Jesus and eager to live their faith, especially to show love for God and for other people.
- ✦ As the Omicron variant of COVID spreads, pray that God will protect people and keep them safe. There are many people who have a lot of stress from the pandemic. Ask God to give them His peace and remind them that He is still in charge.
- ✦ Betty Ahls passed away Dec. 22 in Seymour, Indiana. We thank God for the life He gave her here and also eternal life. Pray for God's comfort for her family.
- ✦ Pray for our leaders, that they will learn to work together peacefully and for the good of our nation. Pray that they will look for what God wants and not what will make them popular.
- ✦ Ask God to bless people with trust and health: Mollie Schmitz, Doris Harris, Shirley Green, Barbara Zimmerman, James Weber, Lisa Oelberg, Jerry Hanson, Curtis Bethurum, Kathy Anderson, Rosie Glime, Gary Lewis, Gerald Mitchell, Chris Wrage, Sharon Pope, Paula Slavin, Jeanette Kern, Terry Ann Check, and many family members and friends.
- ✦ Pray for Becky Jungklaus (deaconess student) and for Vince Mroz and Dan Wallis (pastoral students) as they continue their studies.
- ✦ All shut-ins to keep strong faith in Christ Jesus.



Answers to Dive Into God's Word, p. 3.

- A. 2. A bishop must have a good reputation. He must have only one wife, be sober, use good judgment, be respectable, be hospitable, and be able to teach.
4. He must not drink excessively or be a violent person, but he must be gentle. He must not be quarrelsome or love money.
7. People who are not Christians must speak well of him, or he might become the victim of disgraceful insults that the devil sets as traps for him.
- B. Pastors can only teach what is right. They cannot teach what they feel like teaching. They can't teach what is popular or will make people happy. Pastors are responsible to preach and teach the truth and only the truth.
- C. 1. A pastor uses God's word to preach and teach. Paul told Timothy to read Scripture in the worship service. That meant he should read it and also preach and explain God's word.
2. Pastors preach both law and gospel. Paul told Timothy to correct people's mistakes and warn them. That is the law. The law shows us our sin and shows that we need a Savior. Paul also said to encourage the people with words of hope. That is the gospel, because the gospel is the good news that God forgives us. That gives us hope and encouragement.
3. If people don't want to listen to a pastor, a pastor continues to speak the truth of God's word. Paul said, "Preach the word. Be ready to serve God in good times and bad." During good times, when people want to listen to God's word, pastors are busy preaching. During bad times, meaning people don't want God's word, pastors are still busy preaching. A good pastor will serve God and His word and will always speak God's truth, no matter people want to listen or not.
- E. Jesus told the apostles to forgive and not to forgive. In other places (Matthew 18), Jesus explained that when a person is sorry for his sin and repents, then the pastor forgives him. But if a person is not sorry and refuses to repent, then the pastor must say that God doesn't forgive his sin. Jesus gave pastors that responsibility.

January 2022

2	3	4	5 7:00 WL – Worship	6	7	1/8 10:00 QC – Worship/Study
9 * See below for worship and Bible study times. 2:00 DU – Bible Study	10	11	12	13	14	15 10:00 QC – Worship/Study
16 * See below for worship and Bible study times.	17	18	19 7:00 WL – Study	20	21	22 10:00 QC – Worship/Study
23 * See below for worship and Bible study times.	24	25	26	27	28	29 10:00 QC – Worship/Study
30 * See below for worship and Bible study times.	31					

BR – Burlington. Concordia Lutheran Church, 2901 Cliff Rd., Burlington. 4th Sunday worship at 3:00 p.m.
 CR – Cedar Rapids. Word of God Lutheran Church Deaf, 1515 - 29th St. NE, Cedar Rapids. Every Sunday, Bible Study at 10:00 a.m., Worship at 11:00 a.m.
 QC – Quad Cities. Holy Cross Lutheran Church, 1705 E. Locust St., Davenport. Every Saturday, Worship at 10:00 a.m., Study at 11:15 a.m.
 WL – Waterloo/Cedar Falls. Immanuel Lutheran Church, 4820 Oster Parkway, Cedar Falls. 1st Wednesday worship at 7:00 p.m., 3rd Wednesday study at 7:00 p.m.
 DU – Dubuque. Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, 2145 John F. Kennedy Rd., Dubuque. 2nd Sunday Study at 2:00 p.m.

February 2022

		1	2 7:00 WL – Worship	3	4	5 10:00 QC – Worship/Study
6 * See below for worship and Bible study times.	7	8	9	10	11	12 10:00 QC – Worship
13 * See below for worship and Bible study times. 2:00 DU – Bible Study	14	15	16 7:00 WL – Study	17	18	19 10:00 QC – Worship/Study
20 * See below for worship and Bible study times.	21	22	23	24	25	26 10:00 QC – Worship/Study
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The Transfiguration

From www.armoredpenguin.com/wordsearch

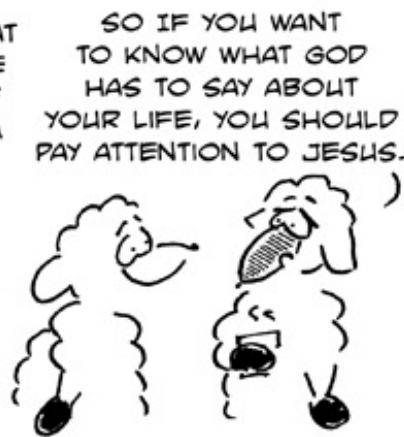
“Transfiguration” means to change what someone looks like. That describes what happened to Jesus one time on a mountain in Galilee. Jesus went up on a mountain with Peter, James and John. Moses and Elijah appeared and talked with Jesus about Him dying on the cross soon. At that time, Jesus became bright and shining in His glory. This reminds us that Jesus, the Son of God, came to suffer and die to save us. Jesus is true God and full of glory, but He also loves us enough to humble Himself and die on the cross for us. That is the glory He wants all of us to see. The reading is from Luke 9:28-35.

E N N E D U O L C G G J A E E
 T S N E C P E C I O V E L N E
 E G V Y A N R G R S A E E R S
 I O S E M C A A L S T W D J P
 T I H E G L O R Y R H E C G A
 E T T M O U N T A I N C N S A
 P F G O G E M S T E N I A T O
 A G T S E J R E T E P G D N S
 J W G E G J R H S E T P E N E
 T A E S E N G E E L I J A H J
 E R M H E I S L C U G G T O G
 C U J E R U S A L E M E H S S
 E O J F S L E C S E N N S T E
 H R N E I E U E O N U E M T O
 T S J J G C R M E L R I E E E

About eight days after He had said this, Jesus took Peter, John, and James with Him and went up a mountain to pray. While Jesus was praying, the appearance of His face changed, and His clothes became dazzling white. Suddenly, both Moses and Elijah were talking with Him. They appeared in heavenly glory and were discussing Jesus’ approaching death and what He was about to fulfill in Jerusalem.

Peter and the men with him were sleeping soundly. When they woke up, they saw Jesus’ glory and the two men standing with Him. As Moses and Elijah were leaving Him, Peter said to Jesus, “Teacher, it’s good that we’re here. Let’s put up three tents—one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” Peter didn’t know what he was saying.

While he was saying this, a cloud overshadowed them. They were frightened as they went into the cloud. A voice came out of the cloud and said, “This is my Son, whom I have chosen. Listen to Him!”



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MATTHEW 17:1-9

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