



Weekly Booster

CHURCH STAFF

Pastor

Kelly W. Peavey

pastorkelly@shen.church

Office Manager

Jeff Hiser

office@shen.church

Pianist

Terry Stafford

Choir Director

Sue Jones

Bell Choir Director

Volunteer Needed

Multimedia & Website

Jeff Hiser

Sunday Media Booth

Kris Anderzhon,

Alan Hutchison,

Jeff Hiser

Sunday Facebook Host

Craig Harris,

Facebook Contributors

Pastor Kelly W. Peavey,

Barb Cunningham,

Craig Harris, Jeff Hiser

Sunday Praise Team

Terry Stafford, Linda Haldane,

Margaret Brady, Deb Finlay,

Jeff Hiser, Jodi Anderzhon



Many of the challenges against the Old Testament begin with an attack on the character of God. One of the most ferocious is from Richard Dawkins:

The God of the Old Testament is arguably the most unpleasant character in all fiction: jealous and proud of it; a petty, unjust, unforgiving control-freak; a vindictive, bloodthirsty ethnic cleanser; a misogynistic, homophobic, racist, infanticidal, genocidal, filicidal, pestilential, megalomaniacal, sadomasochistic, capriciously malevolent bully. ¹

Assessments like those of Richard Dawkins are understandable when coming from someone outside the Judeo-Christian faith community who has not committed himself to the entire revelation of the character of God in the Old and New Testaments. Dawkins doesn't have a balanced view of God and all His attributes, especially the perfect balance of God's love and holiness as demonstrated in both the Old and New Testaments. These kinds of appraisals also come from a lack of appreciation for the original historical and cultural context out of which the Bible emerged. But for those who accept the entire Bible, characterizing God in this way could not be further from the truth.

Let me address just one of the charges above, that God is unjust.

Who defines what is just? If Richard Dawkins were to say that we human beings define what is just, then there is no valid definition or standard of justice, since most people would define justice differently. ² Was Stalin just to exterminate twenty million of his people and rob the Ukrainians of their harvest to build his empire and leave them to starve? Stalin would have said yes.

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“You will survive if the fire inside of you burns brighter than the fire around you.”

Reminders

April 6th

Women's Bible Study
11:30 a.m.
Praise Team - 5:00 p.m.
Choir Practice – 6:45 p.m.

April 7th

T.O.P.S.
4:30 p.m.

April 9th

Men's Bible Study 8:00 a.m.

April 14th

Maunday Thursday Supper
6:00 p.m. Fellowship Hall

April 15th

Good Friday Service – 6:00 p.m.

**Worship Assistants needed
for April

** Fellowship Volunteers needed
sign-up in Fellowship Hall

**Choir members are needed to join
us on Wednesday nights at 6:45
p.m.

“The Story” Study Groups

Women-Wednesday-11:30 a.m.
All-Wednesday-6:15 p.m.

Books & Study Guides are still
available. Contact the office.

God – Continued from page 1

Biblical theology does not teach that there is a universal code of justice under which God submits himself, because that would mean there is something greater than God. When I was teaching in graduate school, I remember Dr. Greg Beale discussing this topic in the cafeteria, pounding the table and declaring, “Justice is what God does!” He could not have been more right. Only God determines what is just, and whatever he does is just, because what he does is an expression of his just character.

Believe this is a faith position, but it's a position that makes sense and is internally consistent, even if we don't always understand the specific implementation of that principle in time. Is it just to punish people for their sins? Yes, because God punishes people. Is it just for God to forgive sins? Yes, because he does forgive sins. Is it just for someone to die as a substitute for another? Yes, because that's what Jesus did on the cross. From a human standpoint, there was no greater act of evil than for God to kill his own Son because of human sin, but doing so was just because God did it.

Let's associate the biblical understanding of justice with the doctrines of the love and holiness of God. One of the most important affirmations in all of Scripture is God's declaration to Moses in [Exodus 34:6-7](#):

“The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion, and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation.”

God is compassionate, gracious, and not angry but loving and faithful. God's love leads him to act. God does not have to forgive, but his love leads him to forgive. He removed Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden lest they live forever in their sin. His love led him to send his Son to earth to die so that through his death all his children could live forever with him.

But God is also a holy God. He is not more loving than holy, and not more holy than loving. He is as holy as he is loving; both qualities are held in perfect balance. Because God is holy, he cannot tolerate sin. Sin is a mindset or activity that is contrary to the character of God. Because God is holy, anything contrary to his character is sin, and his holiness, often expressed as “righteousness,” requires punishment of sin. I don't think the Bible ever tells us why this is true, but it's the clear teaching of the Bible. God doesn't punish because he enjoys it; he punishes because to do otherwise would render him less than perfect. This is why Jesus had to die. If God had simply ignored sin, he too would be unrighteous.

God is loving, which leads to forgiveness. God is holy and just, which leads to punishment of sin. Both of these divine attributes of love and holiness are true, but it's in the balance of both that we gain the clearest picture of who God is.

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“When you are hanging on by a thread, make sure it is by the hem of His garment.”

Book Your Appointment Online



Would you like to chat with Pastor Kelly, maybe over coffee, tea, or soda? Need to get something on the church calendar or need something brought to our attention? You can book an appointment online with Jeff or Pastor Kelly by going to the following link <https://bit.ly/3sm5lyY> (click on the link or copy and paste it into your browser). You may also use a QR reader.



Church Office Hours

** Children & Jr.-Sr. High
Sunday School 10:15
Questers (Adults) 10:30

****Bell Choir** – Volunteer needed

****Chancel Choir** –
Wednesdays, 6:45 p.m.
Sunday 8:30 a.m.

The front door to the church will be unlocked during office hours and closed only for errands and lunch.

Monday
9:00-11:00
12:00-3:00

Tuesday
9:00-11:00
12:00-3:00

Wednesday
CLOSED

Thursday
9:00-11:00
12:00-3:00

Friday
9:00-11:00
12:00-3:00

Please continue to call in advance if you need in the church to make sure someone is in the office. If you reach the answering machine please leave your name, number, and a brief message and your call will be returned. Calls after 2:00 p.m. may be returned the next business day.



To what did Jesus compare his disciples?

- a) Peppers
- b) Mint
- c) Salt
- d) Cinnamon

Whose weapons were taken away while he was sleeping?

- a) Saul
- b) Gideon
- c) Samson
- d) Jephthah

In the book Ezra, during whose reign was an accusation written against the inhabitants of Judah & Jerusalem?

- a) Ahasuerus
- b) Artaxerxes
- c) Osnapper
- d) Darius

Check page 4 for answers in next week's booster

Birthdays and Anniversaries



Anniversaries and Birthdays

3rd – Colin Powles, Richard & Carleen Perry
5th – Mary Lou Rexroth
8th – Blake & Bowen Burdorf
9th – Barb Lundgren, Cindy Nelson, Kent & Sherri Hiser

**See a wrong birthday or anniversary, or need one added, please call the office, or send an email to office@shen.church

**Shenandoah First United
Methodist Church**

200 Church St.
Shenandoah, IA 51601

Phone 712-246-2081

Church E-mail
office@shen.church

Same address – a new
look at
<https://shen.church>



United Methodist Church,
Shenandoah, IA

www.facebook.com/methodist.
church.shenandoah



Click on the link below by holding
down the Ctrl button and click on
the link <http://bit.ly/3skF0p9>

*Prelude/Postlude/Accompanist: *Terry Stafford*

Call to Worship

Leader: *When all we have hoped for and trusted in has let us down;*

People: *There is Christ who reaches out to us.*

L: *When the world seems dark, and despairs threatens to close in upon us;*

P: *There is Christ, reaching out for us.*

L: *Come and let us worship the Lord who is always ready to reach out to us.*

P: *We humbly come before the Lord in hope and faith.*

All: *Let us worship the Lord.*

“Filled With the Fragrance”

Old Testament Scripture: Isaiah 43:16-21

New Testament Scripture: *Philippians 3:4-14*

Gospel Reading: *John 12:1-8*

Songs

Turn Your Eyes/Something Beautiful (screens)

Hope of Promise #707

Sweet Hour of Prayer #496

Shine, Jesus, Shine #2173

Last Week's Attendance

In-Person Worship – 73

Online Worship – no online streaming

Our Mission:

“Know & Serve God by Sharing Christ's Love.”

Our Vision:

“We will grow in holiness, our community will thrive, & we will make a difference in our world.”

Answers for March 27th b) Samuel d) Song of Solomon b) Daniel

There is now a new way to watch our live stream of the Sunday Worship Service. You can still watch through our Facebook page but you now can also watch on our church website, shen.church, under the heading “Worship.” You will also notice the Facebook and Youtube icons on the right side of the main page of the website that you may click on for the service.



Pastor's Reflections

The grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be within you,

I don't know about you, but I need the Lord's grace and peace right now. I am so grateful that Holy Week is just around the corner. I am looking forward to that special time of reflecting on what Jesus did for us leading up to and including, his crucifixion. Then, there's the resurrection to celebrate!

But we're not there, yet. We still have some time for soul-searching. To consider what we will do, what changes we'll make, in how we will be disciples of Jesus Christ. To consider where we will open ourselves up to pruning so that we can grow more like Jesus and bring more glory to God.

It is by doing that, by becoming more holy – not “holier than thou” – that we will bring others to Jesus Christ. The best witness we have for others is for them to see the difference that Jesus has made in our lives – his grace and peace evident in our lives. Then, by the power of the Holy Spirit and prevenient grace, they will be open to the Gospel message of God's love and the repentance that leads to eternal life.

All for God's glory,

pk

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As we'll see when we look at the flood and the killing of the Canaanites, as well as at the cross of Christ, these events should be understood as an expression of the balance of God's perfect love and his absolute holiness, leading to both forgiveness and punishment.

But accepting God's love and his holiness certainly involves faith in him.

¹Richard Dawkins, *The God Delusion* (New York; Houghton Mifflin, 2008), 51. ²When the Bible ceases to be the standard of truth, there can be no standard of truth; see David F. Wells, *No Place for Truth: Or Whatever Happened to Evangelical Theology?* (Grand Rapids; Eerdmans, 1993).

The article is drawn from *Why I Trust the Bible: Answers to Real Questions and Doubts People Have about the Bible*. NIV News, HarperCollins Christian Publishing, 2022, 501 Nelson Place, Nashville, TN 37214

CAT Survey



With the recent and coming changes, the Ad Council requested that the conference provide us access to the Congregational Assessment Tool (CAT). It is a survey for every invested and able person in our church to complete. The purpose of the tool is to enable us to make better decisions in less time and with more confidence. The results aren't good or bad in themselves, but they should be helpful. The survey will be available starting April 10. It is preferred that you complete the survey online, but we will also have printed copies available. The survey does not require your name or identifying information.

- **How long does the survey take to complete?** Depending on your reading and response speed, it'll take around a half-hour.
- **May I stop and come back to the survey later?** There is no way with the online survey to save and come back later.
- **Why are there so many questions about the pastor? Or is this a job evaluation of our pastor?** The CAT asks questions about the breadth of a church's ministry, including questions about pastoral ministry. The CAT survey can indicate areas of unique focus of importance for your church, which can include an area of pastoral ministry.
- **May more than one person in a household complete the survey? May more than one person use a computer?** Yes. Each person in a household is encouraged to complete the survey. Simply start the survey again for the next person.
- **Is it possible to "stuff the ballot box" by having someone complete the survey multiple times?** Holy Cow Consulting monitors the survey for unusual activity and contacts the Interpreter.
- **What if I don't have a computer or am apprehensive about using a computer to complete the survey?** If you have a computer, we encourage you to use it to complete the survey. If you don't have a computer or are apprehensive about using one to complete the survey, we will see that you receive a paper survey to complete.