



Weekly Booster

CHURCH STAFF

Pastor

David B. Clark

pastordavid@shen.church

Office Manager

Jeff Hiser

office@shen.church

Pianist

Terry Stafford

Bells & Choir Directors

Dan & Linnea Shook

Multimedia & Website

Jeff Hiser

Sunday Media Booth

Alan Hutchison

Jeff Hiser

Sunday Facebook Host

Craig Harris,

Facebook Contributors

Pastor David B. Clark,

Barb Cunningham,

Craig Harris, Jeff Hiser

Sunday Praise Team

Terry Stafford, Linda Haldane,

Margaret Brady, Deb Finlay,

Jeff Hiser, Drew Morelock,

Pastor David



The God Who Speaks

What do you think is the most repeated phrase in the entire Bible?

If you said, "Thus says the Lord," you would be correct. It appears more than four hundred times.

The God of the Bible is not the stone-cold silent god of the ancient Greeks. He is not the Stoic or Epicurean Zeus, too busy enjoying the amenities of divine bliss to bother with humanity, shaving a few strokes off his short game on some distant galactic golf course. No. The God who exists is the God who speaks.

My Personal Favorite Atheist

It is all too easy to take the fact that God speaks for granted. We need help from one of the most famous atheists of the twentieth century, the French existentialist Albert Camus (pronounced Ka-me-you).

Camus did not believe in a speaking God. Yet he is one of my personal favorite atheists. He did what so few atheists have been willing or able to do. He reckoned honestly with the implications for the human race if no speaking God exists. "When it comes to man's most basic questions of meaning and purpose," Camus said, "the universe is silent."¹ We shout, "Why are we here?" to the night sky, and the answer is crickets.

Continued page 2

“Don’t judge each day by the harvest you reap but by the seeds that you plant.”

Robert Louis Stevenson

“What lies behind you and what lies in front of you, pales in comparison to what lies inside of you.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Reminders

January 26th

PK-6 S.S.– After Children’s Message
Jr/Sr High S.S. – 10:30 a.m.
Confirmation Class – 10:30 a.m.

January 28th

Mat Making (Loom Room) 1:00 p.m.

January 29th

Bible Study – 11:00 a.m.
Praise Team - 5:00 p.m.
Choir Practice – 5:30 p.m.
Bell Choir Practice – 6:30 p.m.

January 30th

T.O.P.S.

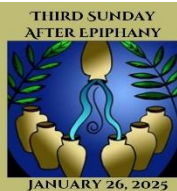
Meals-On-Wheels Deliveries

February 2nd

Clarinda Lutheran School Annual
German Dinner – 11:00 a.m.

****Worship Assistants are needed
February 2025**

**** Fellowship Volunteers needed
sign-up in Fellowship Hall**



God Who Speaks- Continued from page 1.

The Absurdity of Modern Life

The implication is that “all human attempts to answer the questions of meaning are futile. . . . In a word, our very existence is absurd.” That absurdity of life in a silent cosmos was precisely the tough pill Camus offered us in his best novels.

The Plague showed us the nobility yet utter futility of fighting death and despair in a godless universe as a pandemic strikes a French colony in 1940s Algeria. *The Stranger* chronicles a post-Christian drifter killing an Arab on a beach, yet seeking no redemption because the categories of good, evil, guilt, and grace are nonsense in the absence of God. In *The Myth of Sisyphus*, Camus rebooted the Greek tragedy of a man condemned to roll a boulder up a hill only to watch it roll back down again and again and again forever.

Camus offers a helpful, albeit depressing metaphor for modern man, the kind of ennui and unbearable absurdity that sets the protagonists of Mike Judge’s *Office Space*, David Fincher’s *Fight Club*, and Vince Gilligan’s *Breaking Bad* on their respective antihero paths to cyber fraud, corporate terrorism, and meth cooking.

‘A Disillusioned and Exhausted Man’

Something astounding happened to Camus, something that has everything to do with a God who speaks.

In the 1950s a New York Methodist pastor named Howard Mumma was guest preaching at a church in Paris. Mumma noticed a mysterious figure in a dark trench coat circled by admirers. It was none other than Albert Camus, a mid-twentieth-century international atheist celebrity, and a self-described “disillusioned and exhausted man.” He confessed that he had never read the Bible himself, and Mumma agreed to be his tour guide through the text. What followed was a friendship that lasted five years, Mumma visiting Paris and Camus visiting New York City to explore the possibility that God has spoken.

Camus confided in Mumma,

Continued page 6.

Volunteers Needed



LAST PERSON LEAVING
PLEASE TURN OUT LIGHTS
AND LOCK DOORS

First United Methodist Church

**Please wear your
name tag on
Sunday mornings**



Church Ad Board Members

Michelle Morelock - Chair
Mary Peterson - Secretary
Margaret Brady - Vice Chair & Trustee
Roger Jones - Trustee
Bob Lynn - SPRC
Open - Finance
Dave Lashier - Treasurer
Craig Harris - Lay Member to Annual Conference
Connie Anderson - Memorials
Linda Haldane - Membership
David Clark - Pastor

Church Office Hours

**** Children & Jr.-Sr. High
Sunday School –
PK-6 during service,
Jr/Sr High 10:30 a.m.**

Wednesday
****Choir –5:30 pm**
****Bell Choir –6:30 pm**

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.



How many prongs did
the priest's servant's
fork have, which he
used to hunt?

- a) one-pronged
- b) two-pronged
- c) three-pronged
- d) four-pronged

Fingers of a hand appeared
that wrote on a wall. Which
king witnessed this?

- a) Belshazzar
- b) Nebuchadnezzar
- c) Manasseh
- d) Jeroboam

Who from the Old Testament
wore a garment of hair with a
leather belt?

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

**Check page 4 for answers from
the previous week.**



27th – Mary Ann Goodrich Keep,
Pat O'Hara
28th – Shelly Hamilton
29th – Kathy Bayless
31st – Erika Stevens
1st – Rena Richardson

****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>



<https://shenchurch.onechurchsoftware.com/>



United Methodist Church,
Shenandoah, IA

<https://www.facebook.com/methodist.church.shenandoah>



Services are now on our YouTube
channel only.

<https://www.youtube.com/@shen.church8192/streams>

***Prelude/Postlude/Accompanist: Terry Stafford**

Call to Worship

Leader: God's words are perfect; turning lives around.

People: They are reliable and true; giving wisdom to open minds.

L: The heavens tell of God's greatness.

P: All creation shows God's handiwork.

L: May the words that come out of our mouths and the stirring of our hearts,

P: Be pleasing to you, O God.

"THE MISSION OF JESUS"

Scripture Reading: Luke 4:14-21

Songs

How Great Thou Art #77

Mighty to Serve #3038

The Summons #2130

Last Week's Attendance

In-Person Worship – 62

On-Line Worship – 20

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 January 19th are c) because they shall be called sons of God
b) like Emery harder than Flint c) 40**

Quiz hints – Q1) 1Samuel Q2) Daniel Q3) 2 Kings



Food Pantry Monthly Needs

February 2025

Soda Crackers, Peanut Butter & Jelly, Corn, Green Beans, Pineapple, Mandarin Oranges, Cinnamon Applesauce, Chili & Chunky Style Soups, Microwave Popcorn, Hot Chocolate Mix, Any Type of Pasta, Oatmeal, Cereal, Shampoo, Conditioner, Bar Soap.

There are times when people who use the Food Pantry come to the pantry on foot. They are then forced to walk home carrying, pushing, or pulling several pounds of food. Southwest Iowa Transit, for a very reasonable fee of \$5.00, will take individuals with their food items home. If you are interested in helping pay for these fees, simply seal your cash (whatever you would like to give) in a plain envelope and add it to your donated food items.

Thank you to everyone who continues to support the Community Food Pantry. We exist totally on donations - we couldn't assist those in need without your help!

If you or know of anyone who would be interested in volunteering at the Food Pantry, please have them contact Jeannine K. Liljedahl, at 712-215-2488.



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Two Volunteers Needed each Thursday

to Deliver Meals

**Sign-Up Sheet is on the
Welcome Center Counter**

Go Who Speaks- Continued from page 2.

“[When] I wrote the *Myth of Sisyphus* . . . [and] my first novel, *The Stranger*, I tried to show that all human attempts to answer the questions of meaning are futile. . . . In a word, our very existence is absurd. . . . So, what do you do? For me, the only response was . . . to commit suicide, intellectual suicide, or physical suicide. . . . To lose one’s life is only a little thing. But, to lose the meaning of life, to see our reasoning disappear, is unbearable. It’s impossible to live a life without meaning.”

Striving for the Faith

Then came a moment no one saw coming. Camus, a famed atheist, asked Mumma if he could be baptized. Given his celebrity status, Camus had only one condition. The baptism must be private, behind closed doors. That way no paparazzi, no protesting atheists, and no opportunist Christians could exploit Camus’s sacred sprinkling.

Mumma kindly explained that the very concept of a private baptism was a contradiction in terms, of an oxymoron like “jumbo shrimp,” “crash landing,” or “soft rock.” Baptism is a public sacrament, a visible declaration of one’s new identity in the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Camus said he would consider it. They parted ways. Camus died a couple of weeks later in a car crash. His final words to Mumma were, “I am going to keep striving for the Faith.”

The man who wrestled so desperately with the silence of the universe saw a ray of hope that the God who made the universe was not silent.

“Thus says the Lord.”

Dear friends, do not take those four words lightly. Don’t miss their life-or-death profundity. Run the depressing thought experiment. If there is no speaking God, then what have you got? How would you begin to answer the existential questions that seize us in our most sober (and often in our least sober) moments?

Science can answer questions about *how* the universe works. But science cannot answer a single *why* question. Thank God for science, but no amount of science, much less entertainment, alcohol, orgasms, income, or obsessive self-analysis can extinguish the burning *why* questions.

Don’t Sell Your Soul

We might be tempted to delegate the answers to *why* questions to the politicians. Yet the twentieth century’s hundred-million-plus casualties of totalitarian megalomaniacs unite like a chorus of ghosts to shout, “Resist! Don’t sell your soul!”

We might then be tempted to take an inward turn. The universe may be silent and the ideologues may lie, but our hearts can show us the way. “The answers are within” is the kind of advice offered either by those selling something by stroking your ego or those who have never plunged deep enough within to behold the contradictions and corruptions that lurk in our depths. The human heart is “deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?” (Jer. 17:9 NIV).

Thankfully, “God is not man, that he should lie” (Num. 23:19 ESV). “Your word, Lord, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens. Your faithfulness continues through all generations” (Ps. 119:89–90 NIV).

Because God exists and God speaks our quest to answer *why* questions does not leave us cosmically alienated and pondering a noose in Camus’s silent universe. Deep trust becomes possible, a trust in something or rather *Someone* infinitely more trustworthy than scientists, politicians, and everyone else, including ourselves.

Camus was right that “human attempts to answer the questions of meaning are futile.” Yet, your existence is not absurd. Your quest is not doomed. You *have purpose* because you were created *on purpose* by a *purpose-driven God*. “All things,” which would include you, “were created through him and for him” (Col. 1:16 ESV).

God’s purpose-illuminating words can be accessed whenever you want and with greater ease than at any time in human history. Bibles are no longer under lock and key in the Latin Vulgate that average folks couldn’t understand. Today at least some Scripture can be found in 3,589 languages (and counting). A ten-second app download can put hundreds of translations at our fingertips.

Revere God

We revere God when we take his word seriously. Such reverence has a proven positive impact.

When researchers Arnold Cole and Pamela Caudill Ovwigho polled forty thousand people ranging from eight to eighty years old, they made some unexpected discoveries. People who read their Bibles once or twice a week experienced no benefit over those who never read their Bibles. At three times a week, some minor gains were detected. But with at least four times of reading Scripture per week, everything seemed to spike.

- Sharing their faith skyrocketed 200 percent.
- Discipling others jumped a whopping 230 percent.
- Feelings of loneliness dropped 30 percent.
- Anger issues dropped 32 percent.

- Relationship bitterness dropped 40 percent.
- Alcoholism plummeted by 57 percent.
- Feelings of spiritual stagnancy fell by 60 percent.
- Viewing pornography decreased by 61 percent.

Do you battle a sense of purposelessness as Camus did in his silent universe? Do you feel lonely, lost, or stuck? Thankfully, God is not silent. Open a Bible and hear your Maker speak.

1. All quotes are taken from Howard Mumma, *Albert Camus, and the Minister* (Brewster, MA: Paraclete, 2000).

Adapted from Revering God: How to Marvel at Your Maker by Thaddeus J. Williams. BibleGateway News & Knowledge. January 20, 2025

**22nd Annual Clarinda Lutheran School
German Dinner
Sunday, February 2, 2025
Starting at 11 a.m.**

Menu

Marinated Pork Loins
Bratwurst
Bavarian Sauerkraut
Hot German Potato Salad
Green Beans with Bacon
Escalloped Apples
Homemade German Breads
German Chocolate Cake
Peach Kuchen Lemon Streusel
Black Forest Cake Banana Rum Cake

**Clarinda Lutheran School
707 W. Scidmore
Clarinda, Iowa**

Silent Auction opens at 10:30 a.m. until 1:15 p.m.

**This is a benefit dinner for the operational expenses of
the educational ministry of Clarinda Lutheran School.
Cost of the meal is a free will donation.**

**Make your Reservations on our website:
clarindalutheranschool.com/german-dinner**

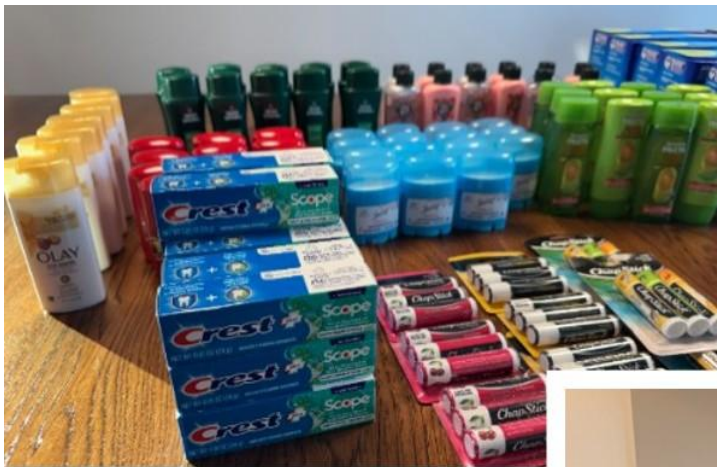
Questions? Please call (712) 542-3657



**YEAR END
GIVING**
STATEMENT

The end-of-the-year giving statements have been sent electronically by email. Those without email were included in your weekly booster. If you would like your copy to be mailed to you, please contact the office, at 712-246-2081, to make sure that your mailing address is correct. If you live in an apartment the address must include your apartment number for mailing purposes.

The Noisy Change Offering for January is going to Sleep In Heavenly Peace! There are 350 chapters in the United States, Canada, Bermuda, and the Bahamas building and delivering beds for kids in need. The goal is to make sure no kid sleeps on the floor. The goal is to help children get the safe, comfortable sleep they deserve. Please bring your change on Sunday mornings and help make sure kids have a bed instead of sleeping on the floor.



**Noisy Change
Offering
September 2024**

**Hygiene Products
For the
School Nurses**



Embracing Servant Leadership: Jesus' Power Rooted in Love and Sacrifice



The Gospel of John offers us vivid pictures of Jesus' leadership and power. As the Word, Jesus is the creator and light of the world (John 1:1–5). He is the Son of God, sent from the Father (John 1:14–18), the Lamb of God who takes away the world's sin (John 1:29), God's Chosen One (John 1:34), the King of Israel (John 1:49), and the Son of Man (John 1:51).

As creator, Jesus has power over the universe and chooses to bring light into darkness. Being God's Chosen One, He is empowered by the Holy Spirit, using that power to heal and uplift the oppressed. As King of Israel, He reigns alongside the Father in glory, yet He rejects the oppressive rule of the Roman emperor.

Instead, Jesus' kingship is as the Lamb of God who willingly gives his life for others because of his great love for them. As the Son of Man, Jesus is more than just the one sitting enthroned with God with all authority; he is a bridge between heaven and earth, and the one who will be raised up on a cross.

These characteristics of Jesus' kingship and power redefine what all leaders should do: reject tyranny, violence, and power for its own sake, and instead embrace love, sacrifice, and care for those in the greatest need.

Let's look deeper into Jesus' model of servant leadership from the book of John.

Jesus' Profound Humility: John 13:1-30

As the time of his death approaches, Jesus is aware of Judas's impending betrayal (John 13:1-2). Yet when Jesus washes the disciples' feet, he includes Judas. Foot washing was an activity that servants did. Upon entry, guests would have their feet washed by a servant before they were served a meal. We hear why Jesus chooses to do this: "Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power and that he had come from God and was returning to God" (verse 3). Jesus' show of humility is his power over all things. Opting for humility underscores His power, not weakness. He actively surrenders his power to serve and purify his people.

After he washes their feet, Jesus eats with his disciples. He sits near his betrayer, Judas, giving him food to eat as a sign of who will betray him. Not only does Jesus serve his betrayer by washing his feet like a servant, but also by feeding him.

Jesus shows that true humility is not grounded in powerlessness, but in a demonstration of what true divine power is—serving those who do not deserve our grace. Jesus lays down his prestigious status to serve the person who he knows will betray him. This is Jesus' shocking undoing of the expectations of

his time and ours. He does not execute vengeance on his betrayer; instead, he cares for him. He does not wield his power for selfish gain but instead uses his power to love others. This picture of humility in power can transform how we serve each other if we embrace it.

True Power and Authority: John 14:5-11

If we want to know what God's power looks like and how the Father uses his authority, we look to Jesus. What do we see? Jesus uses his power in service to others: healing the sick, freeing those oppressed by demons, and washing his disciples' feet. When the disciples ask him to "show us the Father," Jesus explains seeing Him is seeing the Father (John 14:8–9), emphasizing their unity.

This passage shows us that we misunderstand true power and authority if we believe it should be used to dominate others. God the Father and Jesus the Son are one in their actions to heal, free, and serve. They show us what true power and authority look like—sacrificially serving others with humility. Every Christian leader should emulate this kind of Christlike leadership.

Lead with Love and Sacrifice: John 21:1-19

In restoring His relationship with Peter, Jesus imparts a lesson on kingdom leadership (John 21:15–19). Peter has shown his impulsive and effervescent love for Jesus and his hesitancy to believe that Jesus must suffer; he has also denied his relationship with Jesus three times. Restoration requires time with Jesus, who charges Peter with leadership—feeding His sheep.

The exchange between Peter and Jesus is filled with tension and with love. Three times Jesus asks Peter whether he loves him; three times Jesus receives an affirmative answer, and three times Jesus responds by giving Peter a task of leadership. Using the metaphor of shepherding, Jesus's final charge prophesies Peter's death, symbolizing a love-filled, sacrificial death that glorifies God (verses 18–19).

The tension Peter feels during Jesus's repeated questions about his love is essential for the kind of leader he will become. Today, we need this repeated reminder and the tension it creates. "Do you love me?" Jesus asks us. When we say "yes," we must also be willing to take on whatever task he assigns us. John's Gospel and letters frequently show us that Jesus believes that love involves action rather than only words. He calls each of us to care for his people as proof of our love for him.

Drawn from study notes in the *NIV Upside Down Kingdom Bible*.

Adapted from Wendy Halloun, Creative Communications Officer MENA, Biblica. NIV Weekly Blog, All Rights Reserved 501 Nelson Place, Nashville, TN 37214, USA, January 20, 2025.



Thank you to everyone who brought in plastic bags to use to make mats. At this time we no longer need plastic bags. We have enough bags to last for some time. We appreciate your willingness to donate bags. If we run short in the future we will let you know if more is needed. – The Mat Makers

The Shenandoah FUMC is partnering with Midwest Mission to host a Blessing Bag Event on Sunday, January 26, 2025, at 3:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall. We will be using an assembly line process to fill 360 bags with ingredients to feed over 2100 people in need. It should be a fun time working together for a worthy cause. Everyone is welcome to come to work or just watch the process. A light meal will be provided after the event.





Over the next few months, Shenandoah Medical Center will be working together with other area community leaders to update the Page County, IA 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). We are requesting Page County community members' input regarding current healthcare delivery and unmet resident needs. The goal of this assessment update is to understand progress from past community health needs assessments conducted in 2022, 2019, and 2016, while collecting up-to-date community health perceptions and ideas.

All community residents and business leaders are encouraged to complete this online survey by February 3rd, 2025. You may use the direct link below, use the QR code, or follow the link to our website below to access this survey.

Direct Link- https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CHNA2025_Shenandoah_PageCoIA

SMC Website- <https://www.smchospital.com/community-health-needs.../>

Thank you for your participation!

