



Weekly Booster

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Let Not Your Heart Envy

*Do not let your heart envy sinners,
but always be zealous for the fear of the Lord.
There is surely a future hope for you,
and your hope will not be cut off.*
– Proverbs 23:17-18

Two of the biggest questions this generation grapples with are, “What is sin? And how are we affected by it?”

Sin is crafty. It’s not always as obvious as stealing, lying, or even murder. Sin can easily seep into our lives and rob us of the joy God promises us.

One of the severe yet subtle sins we deal with daily is envy.

Let not your heart envy.

How often do we look at others’ lives and think, “How can they be allowed to get away with that?” or “I wish I had their life.” We get sucked into the vortex of social media, and we compare our lives to someone

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“Don’t condone what God condemns.”

“Worrying is believing God won’t get it right.”

Reminders

December 3rd

Men’s Bible Study – 8:00 a.m.

December 4th

Sunday School All Ages, 10:30 am

Confirmation – 6:00 p.m.

HS Youth Group – 7:00 p.m.

December 7th

Advent Study - Noon

Praise Team - 5:00 p.m.

Choir – 6:45 p.m.

December 8th

T.O.P.S. – 5:30 p.m.

December 8th

Baptism – 6:00 p.m.

****Worship Assistants are needed on December 24th & January**

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

“This is a ch ~ ch. What is missing? (UR)”

Envy - Continued from page 1

else’s perfectly curated feed and think, “Man, I’m missing out!” That’s when envy and all other kinds of unhelpful emotions seep in. This is truer today than ever, and one of the greatest contributing factors to mental illness. Oh, believer – these are the foxes that truly spoil the vine (see Song of Songs 2:15). Cease allowing these thoughts to consume you for your good and well-being.

We are not less than.

To compare ourselves and our lives to others to the point of being envious, jealous, and covetous would imply that we feel less than or incomplete in some way. More importantly, we are saying that the Lord missed the mark and that he is not enough! This is a lie from the enemy, who would love nothing more than to see our faith deteriorate.

Always be zealous for the fear of the Lord...Your hope will not be cut off.

Keep in the faith! I know at times it is easier said than done, but when we sow to the Spirit, reverently submitting to him in worshipful fear (respect, adoration, awe), the Word says we will reap the Spirit, and our hope will indeed not be cut off (see Galatians 6:8; Proverbs 23:18).

Prayer:

Father, thank you for promising to never leave me or forsake me. Help me get to know you better and be content with what I have (see Hebrews 13:5). I believe what your Word says, “Let [me] not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time [I] will reap a harvest if [I] do not give up” (Galatians 6:9). Then, as your Word says, “[My] hope will not be cut off” (Proverbs 23:18). In Jesus’ name, Amen.

To read more about what the Bible says about who you were created to be, read Genesis 1 and 2, Psalm 139, Romans 8, Ephesians 2, and 1 John 3.

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“Lord help me when I fall. The falling I can do by myself.”

Volunteers Needed



“Singers wanted. Inchoir within.”

Church Office Hours

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

****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.



What did the people plan on threatening Jeremiah with?

- a) a stick
- b) their words
- c) a whip
- d) their hands

Which was the 9th plague to strike Egypt?

- a) locusts
- b) darkness
- c) pestilence
- d) death of every newborn

On which day of creation did dry land first appear?

- a) first
- b) second
- c) third
- d) fourth

Check page 4 for answers in next week's booster

Birthdays and Anniversaries



- 4th Jonathan DeLong
- 6th – Nancy Bonefas
- 7th – Jim Baldwin
- 8th – Emma Robison
- 10th – Todd Ashenfelter

****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**

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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 Spirit has led us here.

People: And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is PEACE.

L: God's Spirit has led us here.

P: And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is HOPE.

L: God's Spirit has led us here.

P: And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is JOY.

L: God's Spirit has led us here.

P: And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is LOVE.

L: The Spirit is in this place,

P: And we know that it's the Spirit of the Lord!

“Are We There Yet? Hope”

Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 11:1-10

New Testament Reading: Romans 15:4-13

Third Scripture Reading: Matthew 3:1-12

Songs

Angels from the Realms of Glory #220

Lo How a Rose E'er Blooming #216

O Little Town of Bethlehem #230

Angels We Have Heard on High #238

Last Week's Attendance

In-Person Worship 87

Online Worship – 11

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 Nov. 27th are a) Sons of Levi c) flame b) swarming locust

Quiz Hints – Q1) Jeremiah Q2) Exodus Q3) Genesis



Hat & Mittens Collection – we are collecting hats, mittens, scarves, and gloves for children in need. They can be placed on or around the hat & mitten trees located in the Welcome Center area.



In the season of giving, the preschool-sixth grade Sunday School class is currently collecting donations for the Shenandoah Food Pantry. There are grocery bags around the sanctuary and Welcome Center where you can place your Food Pantry items. Thank you in advance for your donations and for helping those in our community as our Sunday School class continues to look for ways to help others. *Jamie Burdorf, Michelle Morelock, & PK-6 Sunday School class members.*

Join Pastor David each Wednesday through the Advent Season, and journey in the footsteps of Mary, Joseph, and Jesus on a virtual pilgrimage through the Holy Land. Utilizing resources from St. George's College in Jerusalem, we will engage with the gospels in a new and fresh way.



Please join us Christmas Eve

**CANDLELIGHT
SERVICE**

**December 24
7:00 PM**





Our Advent journey has begun. We are on the way to where God would have us be, and we're not there yet. But how shall we go? We shall go together, as one body, living and trusting in one another. We shall go as this community of faith, working side by side, and leaning into the grace of God every step of the way. Are we there yet?

December 18, Sunday Morning Worship

The children's Sunday School class will be leading our service.

December 22 at 6:30 pm | The Longest Night

We will host a contemplative service for those who are in a place of loss, pain, loneliness, and doubt.

Christmas Eve Service at 7 pm

Join us for this celebration of the birth of Christ through song and communion.

Christmas Day

There will be no in-person worship on Christmas morning. Worship resources and videos will be available for use at home.

Grace and peace,
Pastor David B. Clark
308-258-7749

Do you have winter coats and winter clothing you no longer wear and are taking up space in your closet or storage? If you answered yes, consider donating them to the Hispanic Center. All sizes are accepted. "Share the Warmth!"



Next Saturday, December 10th at 6:00 p.m. Evan Lee Kelso will be baptized at the church surrounded by his family and friends. Evan is the son of Andrea Robison and Wyatt Kelso.



Our hearts are formed by what we worship. Excitement, anticipation, hope—each of these emotions swell around the object of our dearest affection. We spend our time and energy on what matters most to us.

What do we worship during Advent? “Jesus” is the right answer, of course, but is it the true answer? Does the way we spend our time, money, and energy testify that we worship God incarnate? Season after season, many churchgoers have learned to say the right things without allowing their words to reach their hearts. Simply saying that Jesus is the desire of our hearts doesn’t make it so. Proper, expected words can sometimes hinder true worship by keeping our lips and hearts apart.

Looking honestly at the desires of our hearts is scarier than simply saying what people expect or demand. Kids don’t suffer from this fear. Ask a child what she is excited about at Christmas, and it’s doubtful she’ll exclaim with passion, “Jesus’ birthday!” Before she’s been indoctrinated with the proper religious mantra, she’ll tell you about that shiny blue bike that she can’t *wait* to ride on Christmas morning.

The things we desire are the things we worship. During Advent—a time of conspicuous consumption—we need to look closely at what we want and desire. Let’s think beyond the well-rehearsed responses and strive to discover what is really in our hearts.

We spend hundreds of billions of dollars during the holiday season, hoping—whether we admit it to ourselves or not—that the latest and greatest gift will fulfill us and those we give gifts to. This (we think) will bring us joy. This will make our Christmas memorable. We sprint through store after store or, these days, scroll through page after page on Amazon, trying to find the perfect gift to express our love because we crave to be loved in return. We long for peace in place of the annual holiday family soap opera. We shop till we drop so we can finally rest. We go into debt and assume we’re entitled to whatever we want.

We sit in church drained and exhausted—but still restless because we’re too far from the stable to see much of anything.

The heart of what we’re truly searching for—hope, peace, love, rest, worship—is buried in the seasonal chaos. Each step we take toward an overstuffed schedule and an overextended budget is one step further away from the nativity.

The time of year when focusing on Christ should be the easiest is often the hardest. The invitation to join the Advent Conspiracy is a call to remain at the side of the baby Jesus and worship him—no matter how strongly the cultural demands of Christmas pull at us. Mary, like many of the other characters in the biblical account of Jesus' birth, shows us the way.

Mary was a teenage girl engaged to marry a poor carpenter named Joseph. She lived on a dusty fringe of the mighty Roman Empire, just another powerless peasant in another backwater town. Yet she was the woman to whom God extended the invitation to be the mother of the Messiah Jesus.

In Luke's account, Gabriel, God's archangel, announces to Mary that she has found favor with God—she will give birth to a child, and she will name him Jesus. Mary's response—"Here I am, the Lord's humble servant. As you have said, let it be done to me"—is as simple as it is inspiring. She doesn't protest or let her fear sway her from following God.

Mary joins the rich tradition of Jewish poets and prophets as she composes a song of devotion to her Lord:

My soul lifts the Lord! My spirit celebrates God, my Liberator! For though I'm God's humble servant, God has noticed me. Now and forever, I will be considered blessed by all generations.
For the Mighty One has done great things for me; holy is God's name! From generation to generation, God's lovingkindness endures for those who revere Him. God's arm has accomplished mighty deeds. The proud in mind and heart, God has sent away in disarray. The rulers from their high positions of power, God has brought down low. And for those who were humble and lowly, God has elevated them with dignity. The hungry—God has filled them with fine food. The rich—God has dismissed with nothing in their hands. To Israel, God's servant, God has given help, As promised to our ancestors, remembering Abraham and his descendants in mercy forever.
(Luke 1:46-55, *The Voice*)

Mary's song is known as the Magnificat because she magnifies God, pointing to him as she worships and confesses his great love for and future deliverance of the oppressed.

How can we join Mary's Magnificat? Is the warm feeling we get when we sing "Silent Night" fitting worship for our King? Of course. But perhaps Advent can elicit even more than warm emotions. What do we owe a God who entered our world to bring justice to his children? With Mary as our model, let poets pen odes, musicians compose songs, and prophets stand and call us to see what God sees: the birth of his Son signifies the beginning of the end of injustice.

Let our worship be an outpouring of our hearts. Let us take God's self-revelation seriously as we begin to desire the same things that move his perfect heart. Let our worship drive us from the enclosure of church walls and out into painful places that cry out for God's liberation.

Adapted from *Advent Conspiracy: Making Christmas Meaningful (Again)* by Rick McKinley, Chris Seay, and Greg Holder, now revised and updated!