

THE IMMANUEL MESSENGER

SEPTEMBER 2026

Volume 41, Issue 1



From Your Pastor

I use a variety of devotional and prayer resources for my morning prayer time. Recently, I began again using a book of daily prayers called *Everyday Prayers*. The book has a Bible reading and an extended prayer by Pastor Scotty Smith. I love this resource because his prayers are so down-to-earth, and, frankly, I love Pastor Smith's use of language. Following is a text and a prayer based on this text which I read just this Monday morning, August 24.

The text is 1 Peter 1:3-7, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to His great mercy, He has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

Picking up especially on the words, "various trials," Pastor Smith then penned this prayer: "Heavenly Father, today I need a fresh supply of persevering grace, for the 'various trials' of life are sapping my strength and weighing me down. I need to be reassured that You are refining my faith and not just ignoring me. I feel tired, weary, disillusioned, and a simmering anger is emerging in my spirit. A part of me just says, 'buck up, you woozy whiner!' But I think the Gospel offers a better way.

"Honestly, I am embarrassed to even speak of my trials, because I didn't go to sleep hungry or thirsty last night, I didn't hear gunfire echoing through my neighborhood, there is no plague pillaging my community, I don't live with the fear of my children being sold into slavery, and my

home and property are not taken because I exercise my faith. These are realities with which many of my brothers and sisters in Christ live on a daily basis around the world.

"For me, it's more like swimming in a pool of tiny piranhas just nibbling away at my joy, energy, and peace. Please give me grace perfectly suited for the demands and the dailiness of normal life—in this body with aging joints and a leaking memory; among fellow sinner—saints who, like me, love inconsistently; in unresolved stories from the past and present of brokenness and weakness; in the face of minor injustices and a lack of common mercies; when cars, plumbing, air conditioners, and other stuff just break; when people don't say 'thank you,' people drive like maniacs, and pets pee on the carpet.

"Lord, in all these things, I want Your hand and heart to be at work. I want to know what a man of faith looks like, not just when I am praying for daily bread or facing a firing squad but when I'm living out the implications of the Gospel in the daily messiness of normal life. I pray in Jesus' tender name. Amen." (*Everyday Prayers* by Scotty Smith, Baker Books, 2011.)

Wow! I love it!

We know that if Satan cannot turn us away from faith in Christ, he certainly is doing all he can to take our eyes from our kind and gracious Savior. The Holy Spirit is all about just the opposite! He is constantly calling us to "Fix our eyes on Jesus, the Founder and Perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider Him who endured from sinners such hostility against Himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted" (Heb. 12:2-3 ESV). Amen!

Your fellow-servant for Christ,

Pastor Mahuken



September 1.....	Kevin Clausen Myla Streck
September 2.....	Michelle Anderson Richard Hanlin Kathryn Sands
September 3.....	Suzann Ibach
September 4.....	Colten Rogers Tyson Stoppel
September 5.....	Leroy Fredericks Pastor Merle Mahnken
September 6.....	Megan Maack Spencer Schultz Donovin Shafer Alan Weiss
September 7.....	Joel Bubke
September 8.....	Carol Neddermeyer (90)
September 9.....	Diana Schultz
September 10.....	Everleigh Mallinger
September 11.....	Jac Petersen Matt Petersen Bobbie Weber
September 12.....	Travis Aldag
September 13.....	Gaylen Jepsen Trevor Ransom Landon Struble Cristine Velasquez
September 14.....	Lois Rothe
September 15.....	Linkin Beeck
September 17.....	Jill Andresen Tayten Kline Marie Peters
September 18.....	Anne Abbe Heather Aldag Stacy Lindgren
September 19.....	Tara Jepsen Marian Stockfleth (92)
September 20.....	Karlton Bubke
September 22.....	Marlene Bachman
September 23.....	Tiffany Friedrichsen Randy Jensen Neal Nahnsen
September 24.....	Larry Jensen Todd Schultz
September 25.....	Kyle Andresen Ryan Jepsen DeWayne Schultz Maverick Walker Brian Zavitz
September 27.....	Roger Schneider Sandy Wittorf
September 29.....	Beckham Caldwell Cody Segebart Cory Thies Troy Voss
September 30.....	Jazlyn Beeck Jeremy Jepsen



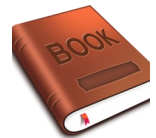
Ronnie & Evelyn Streck.....	September 2, 1969
Michael & Dianna Jepsen.....	September 4, 1971
Ross & Malory Wood.....	September 4, 2004
Ryan & Rhonda Kragel.....	September 5, 1981
Randy & Lori Segebart.....	September 5, 1987
Jeff & Sandy Hummel.....	September 6, 1980
Jason & Angela Nielsen.....	September 6, 1997
Jeff & Cori Kragel.....	September 7, 2013
Brad & Sarah Lundell.....	September 8, 2001
Curtis & Angela Korner.....	September 11, 1999
Darwin & Julie Petersen (50th).....	September 18, 1976
Scott & Stacy Lindgren.....	September 24, 1994

Please notify the office of any
omissions or corrections.

Omitted from August anniversaries: **Caleb & Emily Schroeder
on August 4, 2018. We apologize for this mistake.

✕ ✕ ✕ ✕ ✕ ✕ ✕

From the Church Record Book



Baptized: *"Let the little children come unto Me...."*

Layken Lee Zetino, son of Ricky Zetino and Bobbi Jepsen,
baptized on August 28, 2026.

Marriages: *"...and the two became one."*

Arrick Clausen and Larissa Hollinger were married at
Immanuel on August 15, 2026.

Ryan Boettger and Jodi Bruhn were married at Immanuel
on August 21, 2026.

Deaths: *"I am the Resurrection..."*

Dane Treiber, age 29, died August 11, 2026, and was buried
August 19, 2026 in the Ida Grove Cemetery, Ida Grove, Iowa.



Thanks to at least ten
members of Immanuel
donating \$10 or more to
Lutheran Family Service,
Chris Mahnken was gifted
a \$100 gift card from LFS
in honor of being a
pastor's wife!

Immanuel Lutheran Congregation
501 Glad Street, Schleswig

INVITES YOU TO THE ANNUAL

Calf Show Dinner

Saturday, September 19, 2026

After the Parade — until 1:00 p.m.

Schleswig Community Building



Age 11 to Adult: \$15.00
Children 10 and under: \$10.00

Serving:

**Staley's Broasted Chicken Dinner
 with Homemade Desserts**

**Carry-outs can be picked up
 in the City Building next to the Community Building.**

**For deliveries, please phone the Church Office before Saturday,
 at 676-2235 during regular office hours.**

Crossroads
 of Crawford County

Ultrasound Giving Tree

Help us raise **\$900** for our ultrasound machine warranty check this September.

Choose a leaf.
Give any amount.

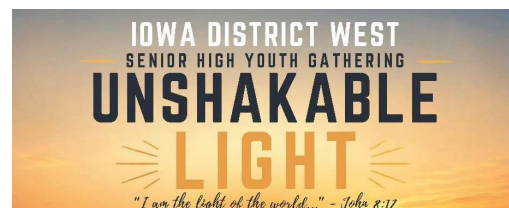
Every gift helps keep this service available for expecting moms in our area.

Visit crossroadsofcrawfordcounty.org for more information about giving

Scan here to donate online

Venmo: [crossroadsofcrawfordcounty](https://venmo.com/crossroadsofcrawfordcounty)

Registration deadlines are fast approaching for both gatherings. For more information, please contact Pastor Mahnken or the Church Office.



Senior High Youth Gathering

October 2-4, 2026

Camp Okoboji

Theme: Unshakable Light

Bible Verse: John 8:12

Deadline to register: September 13, 2026



Junior High Youth Gathering

October 24-25, 2026

The Sheraton-West Des Moines

Theme: Love God, Love People

Deadline to register: September 16, 2026



Appointment Assistance for Lutheran Family Services

We encourage members seeking professional counseling services to first contact Lutheran Family Service (LFS) of Iowa.

At our July Voters' Meeting our Voters approved \$1,000 to be set aside and available to Immanuel members needing financial assistance for such appointments. LFS is a Recognized Service Organization of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS), providing Pregnancy Support, Adoption Services, Marriage and Family Counseling, Mental Health Counseling, church worker wellness, and Congregational Outreach.

To make an appointment, please call 1-515-573-3138.

Dear members of Immanuel Lutheran Church,

Thank you all so much for your generous gift in support of my seminary education! I am humbled by your kindness, and I thank God for you! Please continue to keep me and all the seminarians in your prayers as we prepare for the coming year. God's Blessings!

Love in Christ, Jonathan Schulz

~ THE LWML INVITES ALL LADIES ~



Our August meeting included a Bible Study led by Pastor Mahnken, business meeting to discuss upcoming events, lunch and a time of fellowship.

Immanuel's Calf show dinner will be September 19th. Chris reported on a planning meeting that was attended by Anne Abbe, Barb Ernst, Chris Mahnken and Coleen Bruhn. More information will be coming on ways you can help.

The Pastors' Conference will be held here at Immanuel on October 13th. LWML will be serving a breakfast and lunch.

December 6th is the date set for the dinner observing Pastor's 30 years of service at Immanuel. It will also be our Farewell dinner for Pastor and Chris. We are discussing plans for that.

~Submitted by Donna Harm, Secretary



On Thursday, July 30, this crew of hard workers met at Beeck Farms and froze sweet corn to be used for our congregational meal this fall. We can't wait to sample their work!

From Your library . . .
"Have we got a book for you!"



Ordinary Grace by William Kent Krueger

This is a book that, once you have read the first 3 or 4 pages, you don't want to put it down.

Back in the summer of 1961 in New Bremen, MN, only the rich had air conditioning. This story is told by a 13-year-old boy, Frank Drum, a preacher's son. It's a grim summer in which death visited frequently and assumed many forms. Accident. Nature. Suicide. Murder.

Frank has an older sister, Ariel, who has a great musical talent; a younger brother, Jake, who stuttered; a father who took care of three congregations; and a mother who also possessed both a beautiful voice, played the piano and the ability to organize musicals.

Every Sunday started with an 8:00 service in another small town; a 10:00 service in the next town and finally the service where they lived. They went as a family to each of them. As a pastor, he was often called to the police station to help settle certain problems. People would call on him to help them solve some of their own problems.

God was a very important person in their lives. Before decisions were made, the question was asked "Would God approve?"

—Submitted by Carol Neddermeyer



Pictured (standing): Lowell Lee, Dennis Gierstorf, Destry Beeck, Garrett Beeck, Loren Lee, Mark Beeck, Jac Friedrichsen, Keenan Beeck, Jerry Ernst, Lodean Voss, Dave Friedrichsen, Daryl Pedersen, Sandra Voss, Leroy Hight and Mike Beeck.

(front row): Pastor Mahnken, Barb Quandt, Janice Jepsen and Marlene Lee.

Also helping but not pictured, Tracy Beeck.



We did it! We ushered in the new year with minimal tears and a lot of new shoes. There were little girls who arrived in dresses and boys with their hair all slicked back. Thanks to your prayers, the anxiety level seemed low and the eagerness high as we kicked off our year with Jesus as the forefront. I could sense Holy Spirit in the room and there was a lot of "Jesus' love" being shared.

We have been blessed with 28 little people with whom we will share the next nine months. It is already evident that God has gifted our classroom with an array of personalities and giftings. He has taken the time to form and create each one of these special children and with the help of your prayers and generosity, we will do our very best to assist them in falling in love with our Savior.

Home visits for the afternoon class have been completed and Open House was a great time of connecting with parents and grandparents. I cannot say thank you enough to the board and staff for volunteering during Open House and the days leading up to it. Lisa spends hours organizing files and checking paperwork. It is appreciated from the bottom of my heart! (Paperwork is not my favorite thing in the world.) We have begun the year by introducing who Jesus is to both classes. The afternoon students will tip their toes in the Trinity next week while the morning class will dive into God creating the world. It is such a favorite time when you get to watch children's eyes light up and ask questions when they're hearing about Jesus. There are those who have a great deal of knowledge at the early ages of three and four, and there are others who may be discovering His love and hearing His name for the first time. Elijah prayed it would not rain and God answered that prayer with a

three year plus drought. I can only imagine how He will answer the prayers of the congregation as we take the spiritual growth of these children to His throne and watch Him pour out His grace.

Thank you all for your incredible generosity. Julie invested a lot of time and effort in setting up the Apple Tree. Thank you! The outpouring of your gifts to the preschool are incredibly appreciated. Last year's afternoon class was a bit smaller than some (this happens), but it also means our budget will be a little tighter. Your investment each year in varied ways truly blesses the children and staff, and I believe brings joy to the Lord's heart.

An additional shout-out to the preschool board! They have invested a lot of time updating handbook policies and working to align them with the most recent laws passed by Iowa lawmakers.

Again, your prayers are appreciated as we continue to seek God for a spirit of wisdom and revelation.

Blessings to each of you,
Mrs. Gustafson



"Happy the Clown" greeted students to their first day of the new preschool year and handed out cross necklaces. What a fun surprise!

AFRICAN RADIO MINISTRIES—NEWS

Dear Mission friends,

—Ethiopia Updates—

Grace Upon Grace in Jinka: Jinka, Ethiopia is experiencing exponential, sustained growth. Recently seeded new congregations are filled with young people, stepping up to lead. Cheerful givers are supporting the evangelist training and church building construction.

- A widow donated part of the land she depended on for her own livelihood so a house of worship could be built.
- The growth of churches from simple grass huts to larger worship centers built through the sacrificial giving of local believers and hands of the youth.
- Remarkable young people are not merely attending church but building and leading in.

Ambo Prison: 6 baptized, 58 confirmed & 64 Bibles distributed: Inmates wanting to worship the Lord had to sit outside—the worship space in Ambo Prison was filled beyond capacity! The Gospel is transforming lives, resulting in baptisms, confirmations, and recognition from the prison authorities.

—West Africa Updates—

Man Puts Islam Aside to Follow Jesus: Mr. Fallah, the town chief of Kpormbu town, stated, “I was a Muslim, but the messages you preach on the radio have moved me. I want to become a Christian. Further, I am kindly asking you start a church in my town that I can join the church to leave the Islam for good. I want to share Christ in my town.”

The Ripple Effect: How ARM is Transforming Local Churches: The impact of the ARM program is sending waves of transformation through local communities, catching the attention of pastors leading churches of other denominations, across the region. Recently, pastors from 4 different churches reached out to Rev. Tengbeh, eager to express their deep gratitude to everyone who makes this ministry possible. They shared a unified message: ARM is actively reviving and shaping their congregations. The hunger for this program is growing rapidly, but reaching these isolated areas remains a battle. Rev. Tengbeh shared: *“These pastors are urging me to bring our teaching directly into their communities. However, the physical terrain is challenging, and the travel costs are high. This time, they didn’t just call—they traveled all the way to Foya to make a personal appeal for our help. We are praying fervently for the resources to make this happen.”*

Your partners in the harvest,

Missionary Linda Kurtz and
John & Kathy Duitsman

Funds are needed and can be sent to:
African Radio Ministries
9811 W. Charleston Blvd. Ste 2-209
Las Vegas, NV 89117



Dear friends, A teddy bear name Hezekiah was given to Kathy as a reminder that our God has the power to save and to heal. Thank you for your love and prayers.
~ John & Kathy D.

¡AMIGOS EN CRISTO and GRACIA!

News from Las Iglesias Evangélicas Luteranas
Amigos en Cristo in Denison and Gracia in Storm Lake
Pastor Pedro Lopez

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. This has been a wonderful summer and I am grateful to share the many ways God is working through our ministry.

Community Outreach and Service

In July and August, we began volunteering with Timothy Lutheran Church in Council Bluffs through its Swaddling Clothes program. We are also gathering the names of Spanish-speaking community members interested in learning English through our upcoming ESL classes.

- St. Paul, Carroll

Our Saturday evenings of praise, prayer, and Bible study continue to provide a meaningful time together. We also enjoy monthly fellowship gatherings that strengthen our community.

- St. John, Storm Lake

We continue to support the Swaddling Clothes program on the second Saturday of each month. The program serves an average of 50 families each month and is making a meaningful difference in the community. Through this outreach, we meet families and invite them to Sunday worship at Grace.

- Holy Trinity, Farnhamville

We have met with the congregation at Holy Trinity and are planning an ESL program to serve Farnhamville and the surrounding area. This outreach will help us connect with Hispanic residents and people from other ethnic communities and invite them to church.

Hispanic National Convention

On July 27th, six of us traveled to Irvine, California, to participate in the Hispanic national Convention. It was an inspiring opportunity to learn and connect with people who share our faith, language, and traditions. Fili and Adrian also spoke with the director of the Center for Hispanic Studies and we pray they will soon begin their studies.

Upcoming Bilingual Outdoor Worship will be held September 13, 2026 at 11:00 am located at Graham Park in Carroll, Iowa (weather permitting). The bilingual service will bring together Hispanic brothers and sisters from across Iowa District West, along with friends and members of local congregations. Please share this invitation with your contacts. Additional information will be provided soon.

Prayer and Thanksgiving

Please continue to pray for the Hispanic Ministry of Iowa District West and for the communities we serve. The prayers and faithful service of our volunteers are a great encouragement, and we thank the Lord for each of you. We also ask for your continued prayers for my wife and I, that the Lord would graciously guide, strengthen, and equip us for the work He has entrusted to us.

Bendiciones,
Pastor Pedro Lopez



MISSION CENTRAL

LCMS Mission Advancement
40718 County Highway E-16
Mapleton, Iowa 51034

Why Do We Tell Other People About Jesus?

Every Sunday, we rejoice in the forgiveness of sins that our Lord Jesus delivers to us in Word and Sacrament. We celebrate the eternal life that is given to us as a free gift because of the death and resurrection of Jesus. But what if there were no Jesus?

What if there were no Savior who lived a perfect life in your place, as your Substitute? What if there were no Redeemer who bled and died on the cross to take the horrible punishment for all your sins? What if there were no victorious Lord who rose from the dead to give you a new life with Him that will last forever? What if you had never heard about Jesus?

There are only two kinds of people in this world: Those who trust in Jesus and those who trust in something else. Satan doesn't care what the "something else" is; he just doesn't want you trusting in Jesus. There are millions of people in this world who are trusting in something else that brings them nothing but doubt and fear, hopelessness and despair. They need Jesus!

That's why we tell other people about Jesus. We tell our children and grandchildren, our friends and neighbors, about Jesus! We send and support missionaries around the world to tell people about Jesus because we want them to have what we have! We want them to have the comfort and joy, hope and peace, that we have in Jesus. That's what Mission Central is all about. It's all about Jesus! This blessed assurance is ours, so let's share it!

Rev. Steve Schulz—Assistant Director—Mission Central
steve.schulz@lcms.org



CAMP OKOBOJI FALL VOLUNTEER WEEKEND OCTOBER 9-10

Fall Volunteer Weekend is a great way to share your time and talents while you enjoy God's Creation at Camp Okoboji. Help prepare Camp Okoboji for the upcoming winter. Room and board will be provided for volunteers. Please save the date and make plans to come and help!

For room and board accommodations, please call the office at (712) 337-3325!



Jerry said to his friend Paul, "I just came from the doctor. I don't like conversations at the doctor's office. I get so tongue tied. I forget about what I wanted to ask the doctor. I'm trying to think about what certain words mean and before I know it, I'm being ushered out of the office without talking about everything I needed to discuss."

Paul replied, "I know what you are talking about. It's the same reason that I have not been getting my estate plan updated. When I get around legal people, I hear words like codicils, per stirpes and in vivo. I get so stressed about keeping it all straight that I put it all off for another year."

Legal terms and carefully crafted documents all have very important purposes in our estate plans. Sometime, the difference between a contested estate and non-contested estate may come down to the proper use of these words. In truth, that may be stressful for you. That's why it is important to start talking about your goals, thinking and praying, before facing that stress head on. That is where working collaboratively with an LCMS Foundation Gift Planning Counselor can help. Your counselor is a fellow believer who wants to stand alongside you, to assist and encourage you in expressing your wishes clearly. Once that is achieved, the counselor will assist in sharing that with your attorney so you can be confident that all your desires are known. In the process, you can gain a new friend, sharing life in Jesus. To get started, contact Leon Schoenfeld at 712-830-7481.



National POW/MIA Recognition Day was established in 1979 through a proclamation signed by President Jimmy Carter. Since then, each subsequent president has issued an annual proclamation commemorating the third Friday in September as National POW/MIA Recognition Day.

POW/MIA Day and Capitol Run: Each year on the third Friday of September, Detachment 250 commemorates National Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Day. The entire day is dedicated to honoring and remembering those men and women who have yet to return home. Early morning of POW/MIA day, a group of cadets travels to the Iowa statehouse in Des Moines to begin the memorial POW/MIA run. During the run, our national flag and the POW/MIA flag will be continuously carried nearly 35 miles from the capitol to Iowa State University.

Back at the university in the Gold Star Hall in the Memorial Union, members of the honor guard will stand guard at a memorial display throughout the day, reminding students of the sacrifices of previous servicemen and women. Finally at the close of business, all of Detachment 250 forms up on central campus to conduct a Retreat ceremony at the campus flag pole. POW/MIA day is an important way for us to ensure that our country's missing heroes are never forgotten.



Area POW/MIA List

WWII

Herman C. Kiepe
Ute
March 28, 1944

Lyle W. Stepanek
Dow City
March 9, 1944

Korea

James L. Houston
Dow City
February 14, 1951

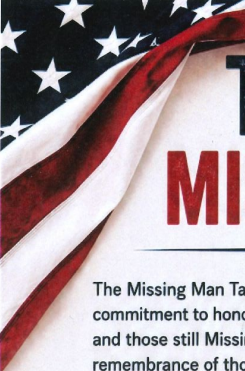
Freeman D. Satterlee
Denison
May 14, 1952

Vietnam

Robert F. Rex
Odebolt
March 9, 1969

Donald Sparks
Carroll
June 17, 1969

Daniel W. Thomas
Danbury
July 6, 1971



THE POW/MIA

MISSING MAN TABLE



★★★★★

The Missing Man Table is a powerful symbol of our nation's commitment to honor and remember America's Prisoners of War and those still Missing in Action. This solemn table is set in remembrance of those who cannot be with us.

EACH ITEM HAS A MEANING











THE TABLECLOTH – White is for the purity of their motives when answering the call to serve.

THE SINGLE ROSE – Reminds us of the loved ones and family who keep the faith while awaiting their return.

THE CANDLE – Symbolizes the light of hope that lives in our hearts to illuminate their way home.

THE LEMON – Represents the bitter fate of those captured and missing from a grateful nation.

THE BIBLE – Signifies the strength gained through faith to sustain those lost from our country.

THE INVERTED GLASS – They cannot toast with us today. It is turned upside down to show their absence.

THE EMPTY CHAIR – They are not here. This chair is reserved for our missing brothers and sisters.

THE BLACK NAPKIN – Stands for the emptiness these warriors have left in the hearts of their families and friends.

THE SALT UPON THE BREAD PLATE – Represents the tears of their families.



A PROMISE WE WILL KEEP

“We will never forget our missing men and women.
We will never stop working toward their return.
We will never cease to remember.”

★★★★★

When you see the Missing Man Table, take a moment to reflect on the sacrifice of those who served and never made it home. They are not forgotten.



All gave some.

SOME GAVE ALL.

YOU ARE NOT FORGOTTEN.

Violated and Sidelined!

It was the first wrestling tournament of her sophomore season, but that's not what would make it memorable. To kick off the final match, 15-year-old Kallie Keeler shook hands with her opponent and took the mat during the Washington state high school girls' wrestling tournament.

Then things took a turn. A horrible, *life-changing* turn.

Without telling Kallie or her mother, the school allowed a male wrestler to compete in the girls-only competition. During the match, he sexually assaulted Kallie, pushing his fingers through her spandex and penetrating her private area.

Visibly distressed, Kallie let herself be pinned so the match would end, then rushed off the mat in tears to her mother.

Kallie's mom quickly reported the sexual assault in writing, with video evidence, to the coaches and school staff. Washington law treats the male wrestler's behavior as a serious crime, and it is also illegal in wrestling. Yet state officials refused to take their own law seriously.

Despite Washington state's mandatory 48-hour reporting law, officials ignored the incident until it became a national news story almost two months later.

But the sexual assault Kallie suffered is a direct result of laws and policies that reject reality for a lie. State and Washington Interscholastic Activities Association rules require schools to let boys who identify as girls compete in girls' sports. And the school district interprets its policies to prohibit staff from even telling parents that their daughter will face a male opponent.

By allowing a boy in a girls' match, then ignoring her sexual assault report, Washington state officials denied Kallie the protection she deserves. In addition, Washington state's policy sidelines parents from being able to make decisions about their own children's safety. When the district hid from Kallie's mother that her daughter would be matched against a boy, it took that decision away from her and, with it, the ability to protect her daughter.

When we reject the truth that God uniquely created us male and female and you can neither choose nor change your sex, the harm is real, widespread, and devastating.

Even now, officials have the audacity to tell Kallie that they're not going to do anything to protect her—or other young girls in the state—from this happening again in the future. Faced with no guarantee of her safety, Kallie made the difficult decision to withdraw from wrestling for the rest of the season. She hopes to wrestle next year but needs to know that she will not be forced to wrestle a male athlete again.

How many girls like Kallie must be violated and sidelined before we end this assault on our daughters' privacy and safety?

Consider another young athlete, Adaleia Cross of West Virginia, who also had to leave the sport she loved because her school allowed a boy to compete against her. This male athlete not only took her spot in a track-and-field championship meet but also sexually harassed her in the girls' locker room. That same boy defeated more than 470 different girls over 1,400 times. And just last month, he took first place in the state championship for girls' shot put.

When we reject the truth that God uniquely created us male and female and you can neither choose nor change your sex, the harm is real, widespread, and devastating. Across the country, girls are losing medals, roster spots, titles, opportunities, privacy, and their right to safe competition.

Washington state failed to protect female athletes like Kallie, and 22 other states could be in the same legal hot water for refusing to protect women's sports and spaces. Thankfully, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled on June 30 in *Little v. Hecox* and *West Virginia v. B.P.J.* that states are free to ensure justice for female athletes.

This is a victory for every girl who refused to stay quiet in the face of injustice. Idaho Attorney General Raúl Labrador and West Virginia Attorney General JB McCuskey showed great courage in defending their states' laws that uphold equal opportunity, fairness, and safety for women and girls in sports. Alliance Defending Freedom was honored to serve as co-counsel and to also represent female athletes in the two cases.

Now Washington state and the other 22 states still on the sidelines have run out of excuses. To them I say: Protect women's sports and spaces. Kallie, and thousands of other young girls like her, are waiting.

Kristen Waggoner

Kristen is CEO, president, and chief counsel at Alliance Defending Freedom.

***The Simple Habit
That Most Apologies are Lacking.***

Most apologies fail long before the other person decides whether to accept them. ***They fail in the wording.***

"I'm sorry if you were offended." "I'm sorry, but you have to understand where I was coming from." "I'm sorry you feel that way." Each of these sounds like an apology. None of them is one. Each quietly relocates the problem into the other person—their offense, their misunderstanding, their feelings. ***A real apology has two parts, and both are simple.***

First, name the offense specifically.

Not "I'm sorry about last night," but **"I am sorry I hurt you by raising my voice in front of the children."** The word **hurt** is doing important work there. It acknowledges that your action landed on a real person and caused real pain. And using the word **hurt** demonstrates compassion.

Second, ask directly for forgiveness.

"Will you please forgive me?" Those five words are the ones almost everyone leaves out, and they change everything. An apology tells someone what you did. A request for forgiveness hands them something to do. It moves the conversation from your guilt to **reconciliation of your relationship.**

Forgiveness has its own two options, and this is where many people get stuck. Sometimes you can say, ***"I forgive you,"*** and mean it fully. Other times the wound is too deep for that to be honest. For those moments, there is a second and equally valid response: ***"With God's help, I will work at forgiving you."***

That sentence, ***"With God's help, I will work at forgiving you,"*** is not a lesser form of forgiveness. It is often the braver one. It refuses to perform a healing that has not happened yet, and it commits you to the work anyway. Saying it out loud is itself an act of grace.

A true apology requires humility. Genuine forgiveness requires courage. Both can be difficult. ***Apologizing and forgiving open the same door. Without them, a truly fulfilling life and healthy relationships are nearly impossible*** — because every unrepaired hurt or disappointment stays exactly where you left it. "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you" (Ephesians 4:32).

Build the Habit: Think of one person you owe an apology. Not the largest one — the one you have been putting off longest. Say both sentences to them this week. Name the hurt specifically, then ask for forgiveness directly.

May the Lord grant you His peace, patience, and wisdom today!

Dr. Randy Schroeder

Marriage & Parenting Expert | Author | Pastor | Counselor

Why Supporting the Local Church Matters Today

I've heard the question more than once, sometimes over coffee after Sunday worship or in a quiet moment with a friend: Does giving to the local church still matter? With so many needs in our world, is this where our support should go?

Scripture certainly commends generosity in many forms. But there is something distinct about the local congregation. Here the Lord gathers His people around His gifts—His Word and Sacraments—delivering forgiveness, life, and salvation in Christ. Here we are fed, formed, cared for, and sent in love toward our neighbors.

Consistently giving to the church in your community:

- ✚ Strengthens the local body of believers gathers around Word and Sacrament
- ✚ Sustains the public ministry of the Gospel in your neighborhood
- ✚ Supports pastoral care, catechesis, mercy, and the formation of the next generation
- ✚ Fosters faithful participation in the place where God serves you with His gifts.

Supporting your local congregation is one tangible expression of faith active in love. It ties your stewardship to the very place where Christ continues to serve you with His Word, His Sacraments, and His care.

Ultimately, putting money in the offering plate is one expression of a much larger, life-encompassing stewardship. In Christ, we recognize that our time, talents, treasures, and very lives are gifts entrusted to us by the Creator and redeemed by our Savior.

When we stop seeing giving as a demand and start seeing it as a response to Christ's generosity, everything shifts. It is no longer a burden to be carried, but a privilege received in freedom, faith, and joy.

Submitted by Rev. Dr. B. Keith Haney, Assistant to the President for Missions, Human Care and Stewardship.



SEPTEMBER 2026

Immanuel Lutheran Church,
Schleswig, Iowa



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat																																			
October S M T W T F S <table border="1"> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td></tr> <tr><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td></tr> <tr><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td></tr> <tr><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td></tr> </table>						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1 Preschool	2 6:30 Bible Study p.m. Preschool Confirmation	3 Preschool 1:30 p.m. LWML	4	5 5 p.m. Worship w/HC
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6 9 a.m. Worship w/HC 10:15 SS & BC 8 p.m. Adult Instruction Class	7 Labor Day Church Office Closed No Preschool 	8 Preschool	9 6:30 Bible Study p.m. Preschool Confirmation	10 Preschool 9 a.m. Quilting	11 Patriot Day 	12 5 p.m. Worship w/HC																																			
13 Rally Sunday Grandparents Day 9 a.m. Worship 10:15 SS & BC 8 p.m. Adult Instruction Class 	14 Preschool 1-4 p.m. Bloodmobile	15 Preschool <i>Messenger</i> Deadline for October issue 	16 6:30 Bible Study p.m. Preschool Confirmation	17 Preschool	18 19 ←Calf Show Weekend→ Craft Fair 10:00 am Parade Immanuel's Dinner til 1:00 pm 5 p.m. Worship w/HC																																				
20 9 a.m. Worship w/HC 10:15 SS & BC 8 p.m. Adult Instruction Class	21 No Preschool Pastor @ Fall District Pastors' Conference, Gloria Dei-Urbandale	22 Fall Begins Preschool 6 p.m. Board of Ed Meeting 	23 6:30 Bible Study p.m. Preschool Confirmation	24 Preschool 9 a.m. Quilting LWML Fall Rally 9-9:30 registration 9:30 Rally begins	25	26 5 p.m. Worship w/HC																																			
27 9 a.m. Worship 10:15 SS & BC 8 p.m. Adult Instruction Class	28 Preschool	29 Preschool	30 6:30 Bible Study p.m. Preschool Confirmation	Preschool Mon., Tues., Thurs.: 8 a.m.—3 p.m. Wed.: 11:45 a.m.—3 p.m. Confirmation: Wednesday's 5th & 6th grade: 3:30 p.m.—5:15 p.m. 7th & 8th grade: 6:30 p.m.—8:15 p.m.																																					

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Sunday School and Bible Classes at 10:15 a.m.

+++++

E-mail: immansch@iowatelecom.net
or: markey@iowatelecom.net
Website: www.immanuel Schleswig.com
"Like" us on Facebook

Pastor: Merle F. Mahnken
Home Ph.: 712-676-2242 Cell Ph.: 712-269-6364
Assisting Pastor: Kurt Kaiser
Cell Ph.: 712-269-8452

Office: Amanda Bruhn and Jodi Lorenzen
Preschool: Leslie Gustafson
Organist: Nancy Bielenberg

Snow Removal and Lawn Care:
Ryan Jepsen 712-790-1603
Loren and Janice Jepsen

THE IMMANUEL MESSENGER



**OUR MISSION
STATEMENT:**
"Together in Christ,
we grow through the
Word and
Sacraments, serving
our Lord and
sharing His saving
grace with all
people."