

Grace and peace be with you!

Be well! Be courageous! Be loving! Be the Church! There is a big difference between “perception” and “recognition”. We may perceive something or someone to be present, but not actually recognize the importance of that presence in our lives. In this time of isolation and confusion, Jesus is here among us; and we are not left alone to be anxious and despairing. As Jesus opens our eyes to recognize his presence, may we see, through faith, that our futures are in the hands of One who is greater than us - the crucified and risen Lord Jesus! Read and reflect on Acts 2: 22-24, 34-42 and Luke 24: 13-35 this week and pray...“open the eyes of my heart, Lord.”

In Christ's Love,
Pastor Dennis Hanson

I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened...

Ephesians 1:18a

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ◆ Effective until further notice, the Nazareth building and all offices will be closed. Blessed Beginnings will remain open unless the Iowa Governor issues a mandate to close all daycares. Naz Food and Essentials Pantry clients will continue to be served, and donations can be dropped off at Door #1 from 12:00-3:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday. For all Nazareth Covid-19 updates, please go to www.naz.org/coronavirus.
- ◆ “Naz At Home” Worship Services will be recorded by our leadership team each week. We want to see you worship! Send videos/photos/stories of your “Worship At Home” experience to laura.sohl-cryer@naz.org.
- ◆ Would you like to learn more about how our Children and Student Ministries are utilizing technology to reach out and connect at this time of social distancing? Email:
 - ◆ kim.albertsen@naz.org for Kidz
 - ◆ kristin.sauerbrei@naz.org for CHAOS
 - ◆ kristina.mcburney@naz.org for BIGhouse
 - ◆ sara.sladky@naz.org for BASIC
- ◆ Hospitalized: Pat Spake and Russ Druvenga

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

As we deeply desire to continue to do the ministry God has called us to here at Nazareth, your continued generous support – of prayers, service, and financial gifts – is so important. **Even while we are apart physically, giving is still possible online at www.naz.org/give. You can also mail your donation to the church office or use the free GIVE+ Mobile App (by searching “GIVE PLUS CHURCH” in the app store).** We truly cannot do this without you and are deeply grateful for your continued partnership!

CONNECT WITH US

Address: 7401 University Avenue, Cedar Falls, Iowa 50613
Phone: 319-266-7589 Email: info@naz.org
Website: www.naz.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/MyNazareth
Instagram: www.instagram.com/mynazchurch

SUNDAY'S WORSHIP SERVICE IS ONLINE!

Each week, our Sunday Worship Service will be posted online at 9:00 a.m. You can watch by going to our Facebook page or by clicking the “WORSHIP ONLINE” icon at www.naz.org.

FIND NAZ WORSHIP SERVICES ON TV!

Nazareth's Online Worship Services (from the previous Sunday) will now be rebroadcast on Cedar Falls Public Access Channel (Channel 18 on CFU) on Saturday evenings at 5:00 p.m. and on Sunday mornings at 8:00 a.m.

WE ARE FAMILY.

MAKING CHRIST KNOWN.

LET'S CELEBRATE THE LORD'S SUPPER!

Let's Celebrate Communion together! Next Sunday, May 3, as part of Nazareth's online worship service, we invite you to join us for "Communion at Home"! Even though we need to be apart physically at this time, we truly look forward to celebrating the Lord's Supper TOGETHER with you online. So, as you join us for worship online next week, we invite you to be prepared with bread/crackers and wine/juice so that we can - as a family of faith - gather around the Lord's Table. Would you and your family like to make Communion bread together this week to prepare? Take a look Page 3 for more information and to find Pastor Brian's Communion Bread recipe.

COMMUNION

Do this in
REMEMBRANCE
OF ME



JESUS, KEEP ME NEAR THE CROSS

In the three summers in the 1970's when I was a counselor at Ingham Lake Lutheran Bible Camp, I remember a banner hanging in the chapel that read, "Those Who Sing Pray Twice". Hymns and songs shape our faith and life. One of the options we give our ninth grade Confirmation students as they compose their 'faith statement papers' in preparation for publicly affirming their faith in Jesus is to write about a Christian hymn or song that has brought them encouragement and inspiration. Their testimonies are powerful. Even though I can't sing well, I have countless Christian hymns and songs in my mind and heart that speak to me. One that has been especially meaningful to me the past several months is "Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross", written by the prolific hymn writer, Fannie Crosby. The lyrics/refrain are:

***Jesus, keep me near the cross; there, a precious fountain,
Free to all, a healing stream flows from Cal-vry's mountain.***

(refrain)

In the cross, in the cross be my glory ever;

Till my ransomed soul shall find rest beyond the river.

Near the cross, a trembling soul, love and mercy found me;

There the bright and morning star sheds its beams around me. (refrain)

Near the cross! O Lamb of God, bring its scenes before me;

Help me walk from day to day with its shadow o'er me. (refrain)

Near the cross I'll watch and wait, hoping, trusting ever,

Till I reach the golden strand just beyond the river. (refrain)

Many Christians after Lent and Holy Week appear to put the cross aside once Easter arrives, moving away from the cross and suffering and solely focusing on the alleluias. Fanny Crosby is faithful to the New Testament post-Easter witnesses that testify to Jesus as 'the Crucified and Risen Lord'. She sees and testifies that the events of the cross and resurrection are inseparable. As we have our eyes on the cross of Jesus, what do we see? We see the Son of God, true human and true God, entering human suffering, battling darkness, sin, pain and evil to redeem and save the likes of you and me. Near the cross, we experience:

- ◇ the perfect fountain where a healing stream flows
- ◇ the place where love and mercy has found me, a trembling soul
- ◇ the center from which the bright and morning star sheds its beams around me
- ◇ where I see the 'Lamb of God' helping me walk from day to day with its shadow over me
- ◇ the vantage point from which I'll watch, wait, hope and trust forever, knowing where it took Jesus and will take the believer, to the golden strand just beyond the river

In these times of anxiety, uncertainty, pandemic, death and isolation, I (we) need God's healing stream, love and mercy for my (our) troubled soul, the assurance Jesus helps me walk from day to day, and the knowledge that even though so much is out of my control, I (we) can watch, wait, hope and trust forever, because the Lord is our refuge and strength and has overcome sin, darkness, adversity, the power of the evil one and death!

Jesus, keep me near the cross! As we are near the cross and see what Jesus, crucified and risen, has done for us, a shift happens. Note this change in the refrain. The "near" is replaced by an 'in'. In the cross, through the miracle of faith and trust as I (we) daily journey through life's ups and downs, I (we) see my (our) glory ever (every day) - till my (our) ransomed soul shall find rest beyond the river.

HOME COMMUNION AS PART OF OUR NAZ AT HOME WORSHIP EXPERIENCE

Since the middle of Lent, we have fasted from Holy Communion at Nazareth in response to the need for physical distancing and according to the best practices of preventing the spread of the coronavirus. Given the fact that we are in extraordinary times, I believe that we need the Sacrament of Holy Communion more than ever as we receive the gifts of God's love, grace, and mercy in a tangible way and hear Jesus speak to us once again promising: "This is my body... This is my blood... given for you for the forgiveness of sins..." Just the same way we trust that God joins us in the Worship Center or Chapel for the sacrament, I trust God will join us in our homes through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Home Communion is a long-standing, pastoral way of bringing the sacrament to those who can no longer gather on a Sunday morning. We are all in that position now. Beginning the weekend of May 2-3, we will return to our normal rhythm of offering Holy Communion of the first and third weekends of each month by including the Words of Institution in our online and broadcast services on those weeks. All you need to do is provide your own bread/crackers and wine/grape juice and gather for our weekly broadcast and online worship services at 5:00 p.m. on Saturdays or at 8:00 a.m. on Sundays on CFU Channels 18 or 95.5, or on Sunday mornings at 9:00 for our online service at naz.org

Once this pandemic has abated, we will discontinue "virtual" communion to gather again in person for Holy Communion as has always been our practice. But until then, we invite you to join with your brothers and sisters in Christ in celebrating and sharing in this means of grace that meets us as we are and where we are offering forgiveness and new life.

ANY TYPE OF BREAD OR CRACKER CAN BE USED WITH THE WINE OR GRAPE JUICE! However, as an *optional* activity, perhaps you would like to make communion bread together with those in your household this week to prepare? Pastor Brian shares this recipe which yields four loaves of approximately eight ounces each:

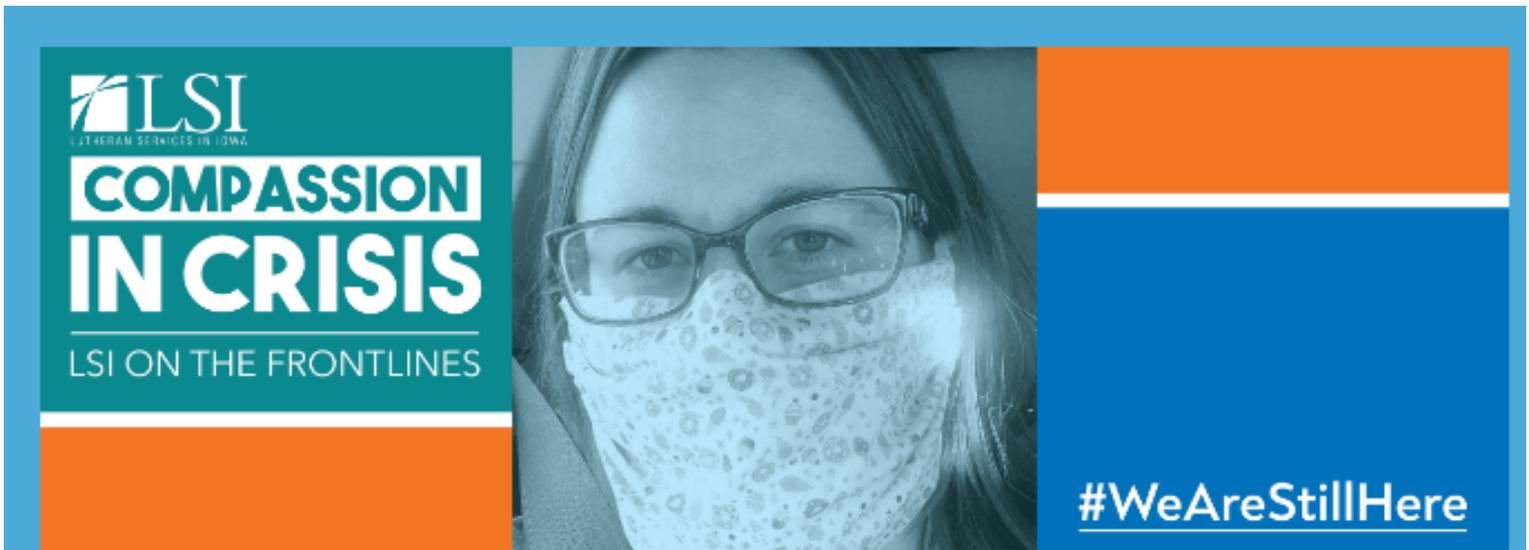
COMMUNION BREAD RECIPE:

Sift dry ingredients 3 times
2 cups whole wheat flour
1 cups white flour
1 ¼ tsp. baking powder
1 ¼ tsp. salt
Cut in 4 tsp. oil
Mix water and sweeteners together.
Add to dry ingredients and mix well.
¾ cup + 2 Tbsp. very hot water
3 Tbsp. honey
3 Tbsp. molasses
Dough should be a bit sticky
Divide and roll ¼" thick circle
Mark with a cross
Bake at 350 degrees for 10 minutes

Remove and brush with oil, bake an additional 5-8 minutes, remove and cool.

Note: a bread machine is used to mix the dough – if mixing by hand, mix well.





An Urgent Message from LSI: Our daily lives have been turned upside-down in recent weeks, but the work LSI does around the state has not stopped. While COVID-19 has brought unanticipated expenses and created great financial strain on our organization, nothing will stand in the way of our mission of hope and healing.

But we need your help. Our goal is to raise \$50,000 in 30 days to support our frontline staff. Before COVID-19, LSI Care Coordinator Samantha met every day with Iowa families in crisis who were at risk of child abuse or neglect. She visited them in their homes to ensure parents had the tools, resources, and education they needed to create safe, healthy environments for their children. When COVID-19 safety precautions went into effect, Samantha and her coworkers on our family safety team had to get creative about how to keep families stable.

COVID didn't stop the critical service LSI gives to families in need of someone to lean on. Despite the fact that our staff could no longer visit with families in their homes, Samantha actually increased her communication with families. For those she saw once per week, she set up video conferences two to three times per week. She makes sure she sees or speaks with all members of the family to ensure everyone is safe and healthy.

In recent weeks, Samantha has gone above and beyond her job description. She has helped several clients sign up for unemployment. She went shopping for an 80-year-old caregiver of two young children who could not risk leaving her home. She helped set up a laptop for a young child who wanted to connect with his teachers and classmates online. She signed up multiple families for meal programs in their communities. And she's providing online resources for families who struggle with addiction, so they can continue attending the critical meetings they need to aide in their sobriety.

For especially precarious abuse situations, Samantha and her team still must perform in-person child-safety checks. LSI is collecting protective equipment like masks and gloves so our teams can safely enter a family home if a child is at imminent risk. "I am scared of bringing this virus back to my own family," Samantha says. "I am tired, and I am stressed. But child abuse does not stop, even when the world does."

Our top priority is to keep Samantha and her team – as well as the families we serve – safe. But the increased investment in the medical supplies and technology Samantha's team needs to effectively do their work has created an unanticipated financial strain on LSI. We need you. Our goal is to raise \$50,000 to help LSI cover the additional expenses needed to respond to COVID-19 safety precautions. Please consider making a financial gift to our Compassion in Crisis Campaign today.

TO MAKE A DONATION OR TO LEARN MORE, GO TO WWW.LSIOWA.ORG AND CLICK "DONATE".