



THE SERVANT

The monthly newsletter of Servants of Christ Lutheran Church, a congregation of The North American Lutheran Church serving the Cedar Rapids area

Meeting at Robins City Hall Community Room, 265 South Second St., Robins, Iowa 52328
Worship: 9:00 am; Fellowship & Coffee: 10:00;
Bible Class and Sunday School: 10:15
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***** **May 2021**

Dear Servants of the Christ,

The story is found in the 24th chapter of Genesis. It is a story that may or may not be familiar to you, and even if it is familiar, it is doubtful that Genesis 24 is a passage you turn to frequently (unlike the Psalms or perhaps the gospels). Although I have taught this chapter many times in my ministry, a recent devotion based on this story gave me new insight into a how a faithful follower of the Lord acts, trusts, and serves. Portions of Genesis 24 are below; read carefully.



Abraham was now very old. He said to the senior servant in his household, "I want you to return to my home country, to my family and find a wife for my son Isaac. I do not want him to marry a Canaanite woman." So the servant left, taking with him ten of his master's camels loaded with all kinds of good things from his master. He made his way to the town of Nahor where he rested and had the camels kneel down near the well; it was toward evening, the time the women go out to draw water. The servant prayed, "LORD, God of my master Abraham, make me successful today. See, I am standing beside this spring, and the daughters of the townspeople are coming out to draw water. May it be that when I say to a young woman, 'Please let down your jar that I may have a drink,' and she says, 'Drink, and I'll water your camels too'—let her be the one you have chosen for your servant Isaac. By this I will know that you have shown kindness to my master."

Before he had finished praying, Rebekah came out with her jar on her shoulder. The servant hurried to meet her and said, "Please give me a little water from your jar." "Drink, my lord," she said, and gave him a drink. Then she said, "I'll draw water for your camels too, until they have had enough to drink." So she quickly emptied her jar into the trough, ran back to the well to draw more water, and drew enough for all his camels.



An ordinary story, yet a story bursting with reminders about how we are to live out our faith. Let's focus on three of these reminders. next page

1. Isaac was Abraham's only son born of the covenant promise. The right marriage was vitally important. Abraham did not look for a big dowry, consult the local matchmaker, or log on to findamate.com. He trusted God to lead him to find a good wife for his son and that meant returning to his family roots.
2. Although the servant sent to find a wife for Isaac traveled with a wealth of gifts for a future bride's family, the servant did not rely on the size of the purse but rather on the power of prayer. When the servant arrived at Nahor, he prayed that God would "point out the right girl." The servant even asked that God give him a sign—an offer of water—to make sure the servant knew the correct choice.
3. Rebekah displayed true servanthood, gracious hospitality (above and beyond the call of duty) when she offered to water the servant's camels.

Let's take a closer look at each lesson from this story. First, Abraham. Remember, Abraham was a very wealthy man, he was a leader, he was a man who had earned the respect of his community. "Good families" would have been delighted to see their daughter married to the patriarch's son, Isaac. But Abraham did not rely on any earthly "benefits" he possessed; he **kept faith with the covenant** promise of God.

Secondly, the servant. This traveling man must have created quite a stir when he entered town with camels burdened with goodies. He could have done a bit of strutting, trusting in his own shrewd mind. Instead, he **prayed**. "Show me the way, O Lord."

And finally, Rebekah. It would be "That was sure nice of Rebecca the incident. But I learned an in-read: camels can hold 25-30 gal-camels; that's up to 300 gallons held three gallons. You do the math. This "watering" was not about setting down a bowl for a thirsty dog; this was real work **servant work**.



easy to read this account and say, to water the camels" and dismiss teresting fact from the devotion I lons of water! The servant had ten of water. A woman's water jug

Although we might not remember the names or details of this story, I pray that each of us will keep the truths presented close to our minds and hearts. Several weeks ago we celebrated the resurrection of our Lord The BIG Day. In several weeks, we will celebrate the giving of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. And then follows the weeks and months of "a slower pace," a time when many Christians feel a need for a "breather" for all the hectic celebrations in previous months. But let's keep on keeping on. Let's be faithful to the covenant our God established with Abraham and brought to fulfillment in the birth, death, and resurrection of His Son. Let us *daily* turn to the Lord in prayer, prayer for the big things, prayer for the small things, simple prayers that cry "help me" or "thanks, God." And as Galatians 6 tells us, "never grow weary in doing for others." Be a living example of the name of our church: a servant of Christ (even if it means providing water for a lot of camels!).

In Christ,
Ron

Mission Giving for May

NALC General Fund: \$667 (2021 support for this outreach is \$8,000)

NALC Seminary: \$1,000

Mission Endowment Fund: \$1,000

Our 2021 Mission Spending Plan has been expanded to \$24,550, a \$10,000 increase from 2020.

The NALC 2020 Vision: a 10-Point Plan

The NALC is a mission-minded, mission committed church.

The following represents a 2020 Vision for the North American Lutheran Church. The development of this Vision has included input from NALC Staff, Executive Council, Mission District Deans, the NALS President and Board of Regents, and other appropriate parties. This was approved by the NALC Convocation this past August.

This plan supports the Four Core Values of the NALC. It also represents the commitments we are striving to accomplish withing the nest four years. By the year 2023, we see . . .

5. A Strategy for Continental Restructuring that is able to expand with denominational growth. Review recommended structuring strategy prior to implementation and commit to a comprehensive restructuring effort by/no later than the 2021 Convocation.

The Gospel of Mark

Study continues in May

Topics include:

The Messiah Arrives
Who Speaks for God?
Fruitful and Unfruitful Soil
Fear and Faith
The Training of the Twelve
Unclean?
The Unexpected Mission
The Right Question
The Fruitless Tree
What Matters Now
Betrayal
End and Beginning



Join us following worship each Sunday.

MISSION ENDOWMENT SUNDAY

The 4th Sunday of each month is designated Mission Endowment Sunday. An envelope, placed in the bulletin, will allow members to donate to the endowment which provides long-term resources for outreach efforts beyond the regular mission budget.

Jesus' final words to His disciples were: GO PREACH TEACH BAPTIZE. In a culture that grows more secular each day; in America where now fewer than 50% of people claim to be Christian; in an environment where the Christian faith faces increasing intolerance and ridicule, Christ's command takes on new and needful adherence. Spread the Gospel, be active in mission. Generously support the Mission Endowment Fund.



Worship Resumes at Emory Place

In early April we were contacted by Emory Place, asking if we could resume Tuesday afternoon worship services. Emory Place is an assisted living facility in Robins. Servants of Christ pastor and members held the first service on April 14 at 2:00. Ron, Cliff Waugh, and Lenore Heckert will alternate leading the service. We welcome the opportunity to return, to worship with old friends, and to invite new residents to worship with us.



Remember in prayer our missionaries in Madagascar, Tsaramana: Daniel and Josoa Omena.

Be Faithful In:

Worship

Daily reading of Scripture

Inviting others to worship with you

Tithing

Responding to the needs of others

