



Pastor Kris—402-499-4993
krisbo90@gmail.com

Church Website—bethlehemdavey.org



[Bethlehem Lutheran Church - Davey](https://www.facebook.com/BethlehemLutheranChurchDavey)

October Helpers

Lector—Jeff Atkinson
Communion Assistant—Laurie Atkinson
Ushers—Curtis and Carlos Olson
Cleaners—Wk 1/2—Curtis Olson/Annie Mumgaard
Wk 3/4—Larry and LaDonna Pasco
Altar—Sharon Mumgaard

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
PO Box 96
Davey, NE 68336

Encounter Christ Grow in faith Love as Christ loved Tell the Story

What does it mean to say the Bible is true?

For those who didn't go to the first All-Congregation Sunday school, one of the activities was for people to write down questions they have about the Bible. If you weren't there and want to submit a question, you can either write it down and put it in the offering plate, or email it to me, or message me on Facebook, really at any time.

So, two people asked very similar questions. "What percentage of the Bible is "real" and what is "fake" (parables?) How do we know which stories are real (actual) compared to what stories are fiction or a paraphrase of what happened?"

First, let's say this – facts are important. We are living in a time when too many people disregard facts about current events that don't fit what they believe. But those kind of facts can usually be verified, at least to a point.

You can look at a written record, or listen to a recording or watch a video. You can look at statistics. There can be opinion and bias sprinkled in, but facts do exist and the more you try to get at them before you express an opinion, the more what you have to say will count for something.

Having said that, there are other kinds of truths that we live by all the time that aren't facts. We use metaphors. We talk about things like true beauty and true love...love and beauty aren't really facts, but when we experience them, we know they are deeply true.

I don't believe any part of the Bible is fake...I believe it all comes from a relationship between the authors and the God who inspires the writing. But I believe God's truth isn't limited to just reporting factual events.

Let's start with the New Testament. All of the New Testament is centered on one actual event – the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

We can't prove Jesus' resurrection happened, and ultimately belief in the resurrection is an article of faith. But the evidence that it did happen is much better than most people know. We can go into that deeper at some point if people are interested.

The New Testament writers, however, aren't just interested in accurately reporting an event. They are also trying to make sense of it – what did Jesus' resurrection mean for them and for the world? That isn't really fact, but it is truth – and I believe that the authors are working in close relationship with God as they sort out that meaning and write it down.

Jesus himself tried to help people understand the meaning of the Kingdom of God by using parables. Parables are stories not even meant to be fact, but rather to make clearer the deep truth of the Kingdom of God. There may be a couple things in the Old Testament that could be considered parables, but mostly, when we talk about parables we are talking about specific teachings of Jesus.

(continued on page 2)

(continued)

Now let's go back to the Old Testament. Much of the Old Testament is meant to tell about actual events. The older the story is, the less evidence outside the Bible we have that it is factually true. But events in the time of King David and later do have some supporting evidence from archeological finds and ancient history.

The stories of Abraham and Sarah and their family are so ancient, we can really only accept on faith that they actually happened. But what is true for sure is that those ancient stories tell us something profoundly true about God and God's work.

Some of the books of the Old Testament weren't even attempting to talk about facts. The Psalms are really songs, poems and prayers. Actual events may have inspired them – mostly we don't know. But we don't generally think of poetry, music and prayers as factual truths.

Proverbs and Ecclesiastes are a collection of wisdom sayings...they are true, and again I believe they arise out of the relationship between God and the person who wrote them down. But you still wouldn't really call them facts...that just seems weird.

It gets trickier with the really ancient stories – creation, the fall, the flood, the tower of babel. Creation happened, but the account in Genesis isn't meant to be a scientific account. It's meant to talk about the God who creates. And the fall, the flood and the Tower of Babel stories show God's perpetual struggle to keep evil from destroying that creation.

Often those most ancient stories are very similar to stories from other ancient cultures, but they show a God who is different from the other gods. They show a God who leans toward love and blessing rather than domination and punishment...even if just a little bit more than the other gods.

And that's how we get past the whole argument of whether something really happened or not...ask the question "What does this story say about God?" And most specifically, what does it say about the God who was most completely revealed in Jesus Christ? That's how we interpret scripture – through the lens of the crucified and risen Christ.

We take on faith that what's in the Bible tells us something about God – and frankly, when we read it through the lens of Christ, sometimes I think it tells us what God is not. When we ask what the story says about God, then we can move past the question of whether it's an actual event or not.

Let's use Jonah as an example. Jonah is probably the easiest story where you can say OK, whether it's an actual event or not, what does it say about God?

You know the Jonah story – he's the one that got swallowed by a big fish and vomited onto the shore at Nineveh.

Some people are convinced that the Story of Jonah and the big fish describes an actual event....that it really happened.

I don't. You might call it a parable. I actually think it's meant to be satire – it's meant to be funny. Again, I believe it's a story inspired by God in the relationship between God and the author. It is God's truth. But as I said earlier, I don't believe God's truth is limited to factual events.

I think the point of the Jonah story is to reveal our own human pettiness and our frustration with a God who is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love – even for the people we hate. That's a powerful truth and it doesn't matter whether the story is satire or a description of an actual event.

In Christ's peace...and truth,

Pastor Kris

September Calendar

October 7	9:15—All-Congregation Sunday school 10:30—Worship with Holy Communion
October 10	6:45 pm—Confirmation
October 14	10:30 am—Guitar worship
October 17	9:00 am—Quilting
October 21	9:15—All-Congregation Sunday school 10:30—Worship with Holy Communion
October 28	Worship
October 31	9:00 am—Quilting

Bubba's Closet

During October we will be collecting new and gently used winter coats, hats and gloves for Lincoln Public School's Bubba's Closet. All sizes are needed.

Service through the ELCA

Hurricane season is a busy time for Lutheran Disaster Response. Plus, there was the earthquake and tsunami in Indonesia. Please consider a gift to the ELCA's Lutheran Disaster Response. Here is the link:

<https://www.elca.org/Our-Work/Relief-and-Development/Lutheran-Disaster-Response/>

Thank yous

Thank you to everyone who helped with the Potato Bake. We raised \$1351. \$450 will go to the Village of Davey toward Christmas Lights. The rest will go toward youth activities and church facility needs.

Delores Erickson would like to thank everyone who sent cards and memorials in honor of Cliff.

People

Mary Grendahl died on Monday, October 1. Her service won't be until early spring. If you would like to send a card, here is Clarence's address:

Clarence and Elissa Grendahl
6405 W. Glenrose Ridge Rd.
Crete, NE 68333

On September 16, about 20 of us met to talk about ideas for service and outreach in the coming year. Based on that conversation, here is our proposed service/outreach plan for the year. There were other ideas offered as well which we'll hang on to for future use.

Year round

Individual volunteer service as you feel moved and have time for

A question was raised at the meeting about getting at the root of causes of poverty – here is just a short list of possible volunteer options that get at that – many will be aimed at children, education, and neighborhood development in low-income areas:

Head Start or other early childhood education program

Teammates

The Lighthouse after school program in Lincoln

City Impact - Lincoln

There is Bingo the 3rd Thursday at St. Mary's – not service, but it is a chance to meet some of the people who live in Davey

Attend other events in Davey – St. Mary's soup supper, fireworks, etc

Continue worship at care center quarterly – I'll talk to the enrichment coordinator to find out ways to expand how we serve there

September

Potato Bake with part of proceeds to Davey Christmas Lights

October

Judy will attend Village Board meeting to see if there are other ways we can engage and/or serve in the community

Possible pet blessing – Theresa to contact St. Mary's to see if there's interest in doing this jointly

Gather new and gently used winter clothing – coats, hats, gloves for Bubba's closet. Bubba's closet, which serves students in LPS, is probably the most in need. The event is in conjunction with National Education Week in early November. Last year they got a \$30,000 grant from Walmart plus donations and still ran out of coats and had a waiting list. We have given to Raymond Central and Waverly over the last couple years, so we'll go with LPS this year.

Not sure if there's as much need at Raymond Central and Waverly but we will find out as we think about how best to serve the schools with which we relate in the future

November

Gather toys/gifts and diapers for CPIN Toyland which is Dec. 8 – 10. Based on past experience, it seems like gifts for older kids/teens are what they don't get enough of

The Freed for Life dinner, which supports prison ministry, is November 9. I have reserved one table

The next time we lead worship at the Care Center is Nov. 25, the Sunday after Thanksgiving. We will again make that our morning worship. Before then, I'll talk to the Enrichment Coordinator and see what else we might do to make the holidays brighter – things mentioned at the meeting were visiting, bringing gifts, especially for those who don't get gifts, caroling, etc. But won't limit to Christmas time if that's not the biggest need. Valentine's Day was also listed as an option for taking roses, other small gifts and cards and visiting.

December

CPIN Toyland – we'll volunteer as a group. Volunteer sign up is open now, so the sooner we know when we want to do it the better. We've typically gone with early Saturday.

Saturday December 8th from 9:00-3:00

Sunday December 9th from 1:00-4:00

Monday December 10th from 3:00-6:00

January or February

Worship at Followers of Christ at the Nebraska State Penitentiary

Lent Project (Lent starts March 6)

Collect food items for Matt Talbot and serve there

Theresa and Jerri offered to be backup planners/callers and help plan when needed