



Christian Fellowship Church Of Eldora



Sept/Oct 2025

**A Newsletter of the
Christian Fellowship Church
1415 12th Street, Eldora, IA**

**Pastor Susan Schnieders
cfcpastorsusan@gmail.com**

**Pastor Patrick Schnieders
cfcpastorpatrick@gmail.com**

**Church Office: 641-939-2057
eldoracfc@heartofiowa.net**

**FB: Eldora IA Christian
Fellowship Church**

Web: eldoraiacfc.org

Wrestle, Don't Walk Away

By Pastor Susan

Have you ever read a passage in the Bible that seems to contradict other biblical truths? An encounter like this can make us squirm, and because we don't know how to reconcile the difficult passage with other scriptures, we tend to dismiss it or ignore it. For fear, laziness, or other reasons, we walk away rather than wrestle with it. Most of us avoid conflict with difficult people, and we can do the same with difficult texts. Case in point:

Today I read Judges 11:29-39 about Jephthah, the son of Gilead and "a prostitute," who was driven away to the land of Tob by his father's legitimate sons and became a "mighty warrior," a raider around whom many other outlaws gathered. When the Ammonites made war against Israel, the Gilead elders came begging for Jephthah's prowess as a warrior and commander to fight the Ammonites. Jephthah agrees; and being an apparently faithful follower of God, it says the "spirit of the LORD came upon Jephthah" as he went to battle against the Ammonites, and God gave him victory. No problem there. The difficult part of the passage? Jephthah had made a vow to God to sacrifice as a burnt offering whatever came out of his house first upon his victorious return. You know what came out first to greet him? His only child, a daughter. He laments to her his rash vow, and what she seems to say is, "Well, dad, you gotta keep your vow to the LORD, so give me two months with my girlfriends in the mountains to grieve my virginity, then I'll come back, and you can do with me as you've promised." The passage ends saying that when she returned, Jephthah "did with her according to the vow he had made." It seems that Jephthah offers his daughter as a burnt sacrifice to God while God says nothing. Whaaaaaat?

Is God sanctioning human sacrifice (!) though we know God despises it (see Deuteronomy 12:31, Jeremiah, 19:5, Leviticus 20:2)? What are we to do with this? Though tempted to simply ignore the passage as too difficult to understand, my personal knowledge of God's character and nature drove me to find a resolution. That is, the text didn't override the loving God I knew revealed in Jesus; I simply didn't read it knowledgeably. A few taps on my keyboard brought up a commentary on the passage (Bible Hub offers good commentaries), which resulted in the "Oh, now I get it/that makes sense" moment. I don't have space to explain, but the resolution involved a knowledge of Hebrew, more obscure texts about vows and sacrifices in Leviticus, and other examples throughout the Old Testament. Thank God for Bible scholars!

The point is, don't walk (or run) away from hard texts in the Bible that seem at odds with a good God. God is, has always been, and always will be good; He's Love itself. If what we read seems to contradict that, then we need to wrestle with the text—not shrug our shoulders and walk away. Walking away deprives us of the blessing of a deeper faith and understanding of God, ourselves, and the biblical story. Get some help, like I did; ask questions, seek answers from others. Jesus said if you seek, you'll find. Wrestle with hard texts like Jacob wrestled with God and like Jacob, receive the blessing of a deeper faith from God.

UPCOMING EVENTS

September brings with it lots of new opportunities to get involved, learn, and fellowship with other believers. We'll kick things off with Bread of Life/Communion Sunday on 9/7, followed by a brunch potluck (bring your best dish!). Also beginning in September: Sunday school for kids aged kindergarten through 4th grade beginning Sept. 14th; adult book study (*Good and Beautiful Life* by James Bryan Smith) Thursday evenings, 5:30 at the church beginning Sept. 11th; youth connection on Wednesday nights beginning Sept. 10th; and possibly even adult Sunday school after services later this fall. We continue to need greeters, fellowship hosts/hostesses, and volunteers with Sunday school and youth activities. We need everyone's talents and gifts to make this body of Christ flourish—talk to Pastor Patrick or Susan if you're not sure where you can help. Mark your calendars for Sunday, September 21st. Joan and Denton Kettles will be sharing their musical gifts and talent with the community as a fundraiser for the Pine Lake Food Shelf. Donations encouraged. 4pm in the CFC sanctuary. *Pastor Patrick A. Schnieders*

Finance COMMITTEE

July 2025

	YTD	BUDGET 2025	2024 YTD
Income			
Pledges, Offerings and Donations	\$101,993		\$88,325
Expenses			
Staff Expenses	\$74,639	\$132,628	\$60,266
Buildings and Utilities	\$20,744	\$43,150	\$20,111
Worship	\$720	\$5,600	\$977
Ministries and Misc	\$1,492	\$4,275	\$2,351
Total Outflows	\$97,595	\$185,653	\$83,705
<hr/>			
Fund Balances as of 7/31/25			
General Fund	\$44,992		\$38,117
Building Fund	\$12,683		
HOPE Fund	\$3,652		
Savings Account	\$7,022		
Memorial Fund	\$13,911		
Youth Fund	\$9,460		
Mission and Nurse Funds	\$2,720		
Trust Fund	\$129,309		
Davison Scholarship Trust	\$76,371		
<hr/>			
NON-BUDGET ITEMS	YTD		
HOPE expenditures	\$795		
Missional Giving	\$8,415		
Misc projects	\$500		

Members present: Pastor Susan, Pastor Pat, Val Soesbe, Scott Swartz, Rosanne Foster, Steve Foster, Jim Johnson, Dave Dunn, Trista Nelson, Vic Reist, Blaire Donaldson, and Jim Brown.

Dave Dunn called the meeting to order, and Pastor Susan began with a prayer.

The minutes were reviewed. Jim Johnson moved to accept last month's minutes; Pastor Susan seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

TRUSTEES –

- It was reported that Randy Tjaden has fixed the leaks in the church's roof.
- It was decided to replace the toilet in the hallway.
- Jim Brown will check out the tree in the parking lot, which is hanging over the lot and a house.

FINANCE – All the bills are up to date. Total income for the year is \$101,993 which is over \$13,000 more than last year at this time. Scott reported that the mission giving for this year is up, which is a very good sign. Trista Nelson moved to accept the financial report, Rosanne Foster seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS –

- Pastor Susan explained that she thought planters would improve the face of the church on the west side. Rosanne said there would be money in the memorial fund for this.
- The signs coming into Eldora from the West, South, and East of Eldora all advertise the Eldora Methodist Church. Mark Hobson has stated that he would replace the signs if they were purchased. The Byrtie Allen family memorials were used for the new church sign. Carol will talk to Dave Allen to see if they approve using the remaining funds for these new signs. Scott will talk to Tracy about making the signs.
- Adding the worship time to the outside sign was discussed.
- Pastor Pat discussed beginning a worship program for the youth (middle and high school). This would be held on Wednesday evenings beginning in September.
- Book study will begin again the second week in September on Thursday evening.
- A book study is also being discussed to follow or precede Sunday service.
- Gary Schnieders, Pastor Pat's brother, will be the guest speaker on August 10.
- Denton & Joan Ketels have agreed to perform for a fundraiser on September 21 beginning at 4 or 4:30. Several ideas were discussed for what the money will go to.
- Fall rummage sale dates are October 10 & 11 with goodwill pick-up on the 17th.

OLD BUSINESS –

- September 7 is the plan to start children's church/Sunday school.
- September 7 is the scheduled date for a quarterly potluck.
- Pastor Pat explained that he is still waiting to hear back from the AV guy on a proposal to fix the sanctuary lighting and sound.
- Direct mailing is still being discussed, and we would like to have it sent out in August.

Trista Nelson moved to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Strait, Secretary



September Birthdays

- Sept. 01 - Hannah Lloyd
- Sept. 02 - Robin LaVelle
- Sept. 06 - Adam Clemons
- Sept. 08 - Jill Grego
- Sept. 10 - Logan Roling
- Sept. 10 - Hattie Walther
- Sept. 11 - Mike Strait
- Sept. 12 - Holden Hillmer
- Sept. 12 - Richard Soesbe
- Sept. 13 - Mark Hobson
- Sept. 18 - Harper Izer
- Sept. 21 - Sophie Anderson
- Sept. 21 - Rachel Inks
- Sept. 21 - Norene Johnson
- Sept. 24 - Matthew Allbee
- Sept. 24 - Tyler Minter
- Sept. 24 - Ava Warren
- Sept. 25 - Avery Lafrenz
- Sept. 25 - Brandon Lafrenz
- Sept. 26 - Patricia Magnuson
- Sept. 29 - Larry Cranston
- Sept. 30 - Michael May, Sr.

Sunday, Sept. 07

Communion/Bread of Life

9:30 Worship Service

Sunday, Sept. 14

9:30 Worship Service

Thursday, Sept. 17

3:00 Prayer Ministry

Sunday, Sept. 21

9:30 Worship Service

Wednesday, Sept. 24

9:30 am Coffee Fellowship

Sunday, Sept. 28

9:30 Worship Service



Sunday, October 5

Communion/Bread of Life

9:30 Worship Service

Sunday, October 12

9:30 Worship Service

Thursday, October 16

3:00 Prayer Ministry

Sunday, October 19

9:30 Worship Service

Wednesday, October 22

9:30 am Coffee Fellowship

Sunday, October 26

9:30 Worship Service

October Birthdays

- Oct. 02 - Julie Peters
- Oct. 04 - Ellen Przybyszewski
- Oct. 05 - Janice Piper
- Oct. 06 - Phillip Prosser
- Oct. 10 - Brittany Warren
- Oct. 11 - Ivan Miller
- Oct. 12 - Jean Gehrke
- Oct. 13 - Caleb Humphrey
- Oct. 14 - Ann Raisch
- Oct. 15 - Tisha May
- Oct. 15 - Karen Reece
- Oct. 24 - Barbara Ketels
- Oct. 25 - Kristin Tidman
- Oct. 26 - Renee Minter
- Oct. 26 - T.J. Warren
- Oct. 27 - Barbara Neymeyer
- Oct. 28 - Pastor Pat
- Oct. 30 - Jodee Hess

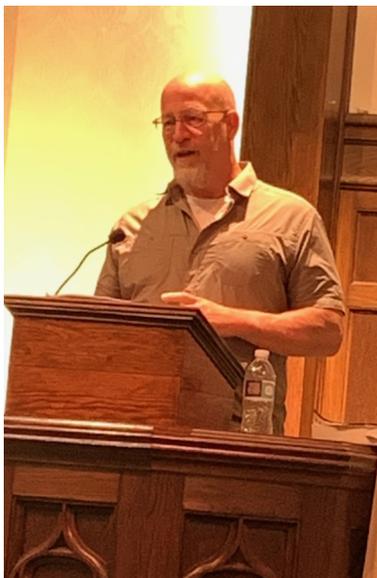
Special Blessings



Greg, Emma, Loree, & Ava Salvo



Linda, Willie, Nathan, & Lacey Coffman



Guest speaker,
Gary Schnieders, Pastor Pat's brother,
delivering the message.



Bible stand crafted by Steve Foster.
Wood donated by John Dennis.



Anita LaVelle on keyboard.

OUR MISSION IN UKRAINE



Roman writes that 160 children were served in the day camps and 40 youths in the evening camps that occurred from June 30th to July 5th. The children were receptive to the bible lessons and many parents joined on the 6th day for a special family day. Because of our gifts they were able to buy folding tables and an inflatable slide for the camps. It provided a refreshing break from the constant stress and anxiety of the war allowing kids to be kids.

Roman included many testimonies from parents and children about the importance of camp. He thanked us for supporting all the families who attended the Crossroads Children's Camp. The next camp is scheduled for August 11th through the 16th. Roman asks, "Please pray that it will take place, that we will be safe, pray for our team and camp participants, and pray for an end to the war in Ukraine."

Rick Shaw

4

Mini - Wordsearch



Find these words from the first 3 verses of

Psalm 1.

They may be going in any direction, including diagonal.

BLESSED	PROSPERS
DELIGHT	SEASON
FRUIT	STAND
LEAF	STEP
LORD	STREAMS
MEDITATES	TREE
PERSON	WALK
PLANTED	WATER



(All Bible references from NIV)