

IR Religion

“With me”

“With me.”

That’s one of the between 30 and 40 commands Keren Comfort Dog obeys.

There are others, including familiar ones like sit, stay, and come, and others such as lap or rise.

Keren is a Lutheran Church Charities Comfort Dog based at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Ellsworth. She has been at work locally for more than two months and has been very busy getting to meet people and know her community.

Besides being at the hospital, Villa Grace and Prairie West, Keren was at the summer lunch program and is often at the library letting children read to her and has visited Mosaic. She has also been in several other communities and has helped children at Natoma deal with their devastating flood.

She has a Facebook page and you can follow her adventures nearly every day. She is glad to visit and there is no charge.

Carol Kratzer is the Top Dog and can be contacted at jkkratzer@yahoo.com for visits or more information.

There are about 130 Comfort Dogs in the LCC program throughout the United States, and these are among the most excited, ambitious,



Pastor Luke Brown

Pastor's Podium

outward-focused churches in our denomination. It is good to associate with them. It is hoped that Immanuel will find new and imaginative ways to serve the community.

Many know about the amazing and wonderful things dogs can do — helping those who need physical help, detecting medical problems, detecting things that can harm others — and a wide variety of other benefits. Keren provides comfort, peace and a calming influence while proclaiming the mercy, compassion, presence and proclamation of Jesus Christ.

Getting an LCC Comfort Dog was a major initiative that was supported tremendously by people outside Immanuel. Grants and donations by organizations made it possible and Keren will be a great benefit to the community, region and state. The Ellsworth Independent-Reporter was an early and consistent friend and supporter of this aggressive project and that help is greatly appreciat-

ed.

So, why “with me?”

Keren, like most young dogs, has a tendency to wander off. She likes to pull ahead of her handler, or be distracted by something to the side and want to investigate, or go places she wants to go. However, those usually take her places where she can get into danger.

She also goes places that are unfamiliar, which can be upsetting to a dog. The handler is looking ahead and is aware of the surrounding environment to keep her away from possible danger. The handler also has a specific purpose or object for Keren and when she wanders off, she isn’t fulfilling that objective.

So the handler says, “with me” and Keren is supposed to get back where she belongs, by the handler’s leg where she is safe and protected and going where she is supposed to go. The closer Keren stays to her handler, the safer she’ll be.

As humans, we have a tendency to wander off. We are easily distracted and can go places that can be dangerous or not in our best interest. One of the earliest and most common statements of encouragement in the Bible is “with me.” God promises to be with us.

As Moses was getting ready to lead Israel to the Promised Land, he

prayed “Lord, if you won’t go with us, please don’t send us.” You remember Psalm 23 — “Yeah, though I go through the very valley of the shadow of death itself, I will what? Fear no evil. Why? Because you are With Me.”

Jesus’ last promise was that we could go through life confidently because he would be with us to the very end of the age. The closer we stick to Jesus, the safer and more productive we will be, and the more confidence we can have.

Just like Keren.

Pastor's Podium

The Pastor's Podium column is offered each week by a different pastor or lay person representing an Ellsworth County church.

The week's columnist is Luke Brown, pastor at the Immanuel Lutheran Church, Ellsworth.



Church Services In Ellsworth County

BROOKVILLE
United Methodist
Bill Gies, pastor
114 W. Anderson, (785) 225-6875

St. Joseph's Catholic
Msgr. James E. Hake
West Third

BUSHTON
Holy Name Catholic
Fr. Rick Kotrba
296 Third Rd., (620) 562-3427

United Methodist
Diana Webster, pastor
213 Third, (620) 562-3393

Salem United Methodist
Tom Reazin, pastor
517 Ave. E, (620) 562-3334

CARNEIRO
Carneiro Fellowship Center
Sunday worship: 9:30 a.m.
Bill Bristow, speaker

DORRANCE
First Lutheran – ELCA
Brenda Rodger PMA,
417 Coleman
Sunday service: 8:30 a.m. Jan.-June; 11 a.m. July-Dec.

St. Joseph's Catholic
Fr. Tony Kulandajesu

GENESEO
Geneseo United Methodist
Guy Rendoff, pastor
407 8th, (620) 824-6498
Sunday Worship: 10 a.m.
UMW: 3rd Thursday - 7 p.m.

ELLSWORTH
Harvest Bible Church
Marc Compton, pastor
907 Evans, (620) 562-0168.
Sunday service: 10:30 a.m.

Assembly of God
Exie Barber, pastor,
106 W. Eighth, (785) 531-0067
Discipleship Develop.: 9:45-10:30 a.m.
Worship: 10:45 a.m.-12 p.m.
Evening: 6 p.m.
Wednesday Children/youth: 7-8 p.m.

Holy Apostles Episcopal
Father Harvey Hillin, pastor
104 W. Fourth
Sunday service: 10 a.m.

First Presbyterian
Amy Jo Hawley, pastor
405 N. Lincoln, (785) 472-5557.
9-9:45 a.m. Sunday, First service.
9:50-10:20 Sunday School.
10:30-11:15 a.m. Sunday,
Second Service including live on Facebook at Ellsworth First.

Immanuel Lutheran LC – MS
Luke Brown, pastor
905 Stanberry, Church: (785) 472-4045
Bible Study: 9 a.m.
Sunday Worship Service: 10 a.m.
TV ministry: Sun. 4 p.m. and Thurs. 7 p.m.

DiVine Hope Nazarene
Hoeger Chapel,
300 Bickerdyke Blvd.
(785) 472-1744
Sunday service: 10 a.m.

St. Bernard's Catholic
Fr. Joshua Werth
10th and Kansas, (785) 472-3136
Sunday Mass: 10 a.m.
Visitors welcome, must contact church by Friday to attend.

St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran LC – MS
Keith Emshoff, pastor
(713) 906-8003
Sunday school: 8:30 a.m.
Adult Bible Class: 8:30 a.m.
Church service: 9:30 a.m.

Smoky Hill Baptist
1007 Evans. Contact Gary Oller, (785) 252-3263.
9:45 a.m. Sunday school
10:45 a.m. Sunday Church service
6 p.m. Wednesday Bible study

First United Methodist
Dennis Carter, pastor
322 N. Douglas, (785) 472-3870
9:30 a.m. Sunday School
10:45 a.m. Sunday service
TV ministry: 10:30 a.m. and 12:45 p.m. Sunday

Refreshed and Redeemed Church
Mary Somrak, pastor
Church: 307 Webb St., (785) 472-9300
Sunday service at 10:30 a.m. live @rarnaz on Facebook

LORRAINE
First Baptist Church
Zach Ullom, pastor
320 W. Wichita, (785) 472-5334
Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.
Sunday Worship: 10:30 a.m.
Children's Bible Club: 6 p.m.

HOLYROOD
St. Paul United Church of Christ
Debby Rains, pastor
301 E. Nassau, (785) 252-3410

St. Peter Lutheran
Dan Harders, pastor
209 S. County Rd., (785) 252-3275
Sunday Service: 9:00 a.m.
Sunday School follows.

St. Mary's Catholic
Fr. Tony Kulandajesu
Concord Street
Masses broadcast on Facebook Live under St. Wenceslaus Church — morning masses at 7:30 a.m. Tuesday-Friday, 6 p.m. Monday, 10 a.m. Sunday.

KANOPOLIS
United Methodist
Dennis Carter, pastor
103 S. Missouri, (785) 472-4984
9:15 a.m. Sunday service
10:30 a.m. Sunday school

St. Ignatius Catholic
Fr. Joshua Werth
127 N. Missouri, Rectory (785) 472-4874
Saturday Mass: 5:30 p.m.
Guests welcome, must call (785) 472-3136 by Friday to attend.

WILSON
Excelsior Lutheran – ELCA
Angie Sundell, pastor
(785) 452-1959
Nine miles NE of Wilson at 888 Ave. C
Sunday service: 8:30 a.m.

First Baptist
Brett Denham, pastor
Old Highway 40,
(785) 658-2499
Sunday service: 10:30 a.m. at the church and on Facebook page. Wednesday evening: 7 p.m. on Facebook Live.

First Presbyterian & United Methodist
Mike Trow, pastor
319 24th St. or 2424 Ave. F
Church: (785) 658-2191
Facebook Live at 9 a.m.
Sundays, Wilson 1st Presbyterian and United Methodist Churches.

Immanuel Lutheran – ELCA
Vicar Jacqueline Thornton, interim
2819 Ave. F
Church: (785) 658-2252
9 a.m. Sunday service
10:15 a.m. Sunday School

St. Wenceslaus Catholic Church
Fr. Tony Kulandajesu
2807 Ave. D, (785) 658-3361
Masses broadcast on Facebook Live under St. Wenceslaus Church — morning masses at 7:30 a.m. Tuesday-Friday, 6 p.m. Monday, 10 a.m. Sunday.

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