

# Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church



## June 2021

- Page 2- Pastor's Message
- Page 3- Message from Bishop Eaton
- Page 4-5- Website Tutorial
- Page 6- Food Pantry
- Page 7- Thank you's, Sympathies
- Page 8- Nami, NATH Wish List
- Page 9- Blood Drive, Lawn Care
- Page 10- Congrats High School Graduates
- Page 11- Congratulations, Stewardship
- Page 12- Youth Bowling Night
- Page 13- Taking Faith Home , World Hunger
- Page 14-15 - Council Minutes
- Page 15- Congratulations
- Page 16-21 - Caring for Creation Corner
- Page 22 - Calendar
- Page 23 - Birthdays, Financial Summary, Attendance, Anniversaries
- Page 24- Join us for worship

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Member of the ELCA Churchwide [elca.org](http://elca.org) &  
the Northern Great Lakes Synod [nglsynod.org](http://nglsynod.org)



Visit us on our Website @  
[Immanuelrhinelander.org](http://Immanuelrhinelander.org)

*"Inspired by God's grace to love and serve all"*

## Pastor's Message ~ God will be with us in the Change

### Psalm 46:2

***“Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change,  
though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea;”***

I have been pondering about change recently and how change continues to happen, whether we plan on it or not. I have searched scripture to see how often things changed then and how often God continued to change God's mind when God saw that the people repented. **In Exodus 32:14** ***“the Lord changed his mind about the disaster that he planned to bring on his people.”*** And in **Jonah 3:10** ***“God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it.”***

Change is inevitable! Either we can go with the flow or fight the current (wave).

Change has been a part of our reality from the moment we were born, yet we do not always know how to deal with change, especially if the change is unplanned, unwelcome, or just really big.

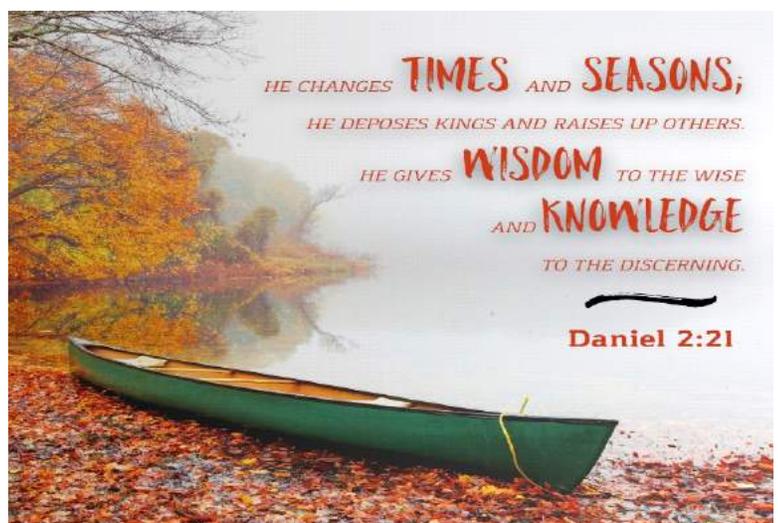
“All changes, even the most longed for, have their melancholy, for what we leave behind us is a part of ourselves; we must die to one life before we can enter into another.” - Anatole France  
A little over a year ago, our lives changed dramatically, and in ways most of us probably never would have imagined or chosen. The way we shop, what we can (or can't) buy, how and where we worship, what family gatherings and holidays look like, how we socialize, how we grieve and how we comfort those who are grieving are some of the experiences that have looked and felt different in the past year.

When you look back at the past 13 months, how much has changed in your life? What have you learned about yourself through the changes of this pandemic? What do you wish to leave behind? How well have you been able to deal with all the changes? Do you have new priorities?

With the help of the Holy Spirit we can grow and move forward with each change. Each change that has happened in our lives made us who we are today. Do you have something happening in your life that is changing things from what you used to know? Do you go to the Lord for help? Jesus will send you the Holy Spirit to help you through your changes, just like he sent the Holy Spirit to the disciples. May each change in your life have the Holy Spirit with you helping and guiding you. *(part of this article includes excerpts from St. Anthony's eblast – from writers Marge Lindell and Sr. Barb Knauft)*

Yours in Christ +

*Pastor Tammy*



## PRESIDING BISHOP

# MUSIC IS PERSONAL *AND* UNIVERSAL

By Elizabeth A. Eaton

I had a friend in high school who said, “Wouldn’t it be great if our lives had a soundtrack and we could hear it?” That way we would always know what was coming at us. Suspenseful music, ominous music, joyful music, sorrowful music, heroic music—all would alert us to what is just around the corner and would accompany us on our way. There is something intriguing about the idea. And it could work if your soundtrack were the only one and everyone and everything else were just the supporting cast in your musical.

But God didn’t create us that way. We aren’t solitary lives played out on an isolated stage. God created us by love and for love. We were meant to be together. The Trinity is relationship and God welcomes us into that holy company.

Like God’s love, music is at the same time deeply personal, sounding deep within an individual’s soul, and universal, ringing out to an entire community. Like God’s love, music sings to us in all of our marvelous diversity. Just as the beauty of creation is apparent not in monochrome but in Technicolor, so also must music be polyphonic. This is why we have a variety of worship resources that include a variety of musical styles from many cultures and in many languages.

One of the great harms done by Western missionaries was to equate proper, acceptable and God-pleasing worship with Western music, dress and even instrumentation. The problem wasn’t the introduction of their music. The problem was the replacement of Indigenous expression with Western music and the labeling of Indigenous music, language, dance and dress as pagan and worse.

One of my greatest honors in this call was being asked to preach on Easter Sunday at a Lutheran church in Yunnan Province, China. The Chinese characters that convey “Lutheran” actually mean “Justification Church.” On that Easter morning, high up in the mountains, we sang our praise and thanks to God for the victory of the Resurrection. These were Lisu people. They are an ethnic minority pushed out of the fertile valleys by the Han people.



Then the missionaries came. As the Justification Church, we believe and teach that the gospel is the message of redemption, reconciliation and liberation for all people. Instead, the Western missionaries took away the Lisu people’s music and culture. An elder of the community explained to us that this service would be the first time in a century that the Lisu people worshiped God with their own music, their own instruments, with their own dance, in their own traditional clothing.

I didn’t understand the language (sermons could take three times as long—I preached in English, which a second person translated into Mandarin and then a third person translated into Lisu) and the music didn’t resonate with me at first, but I recognized the song. It was the song of Resurrection. The style was unique to the Lisu people, but the music was universal.

Martin Luther, a musician and hymn writer, wanted his people to hear the universal message of the gospel in their own language. We Lutherans take a great deal of pride in Luther’s translation of the Bible into the vernacular. How is it that we are not so ready to hear the gospel in the musical vernacular of the thousand tongues that sing our great Redeemer’s praise? Music, in all its many forms, sings for us even when we can’t find the words. I like to think that, when the Spirit intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words, the Spirit is singing and, in that distant melody, just beyond our comprehension, our longing and God’s love meet.

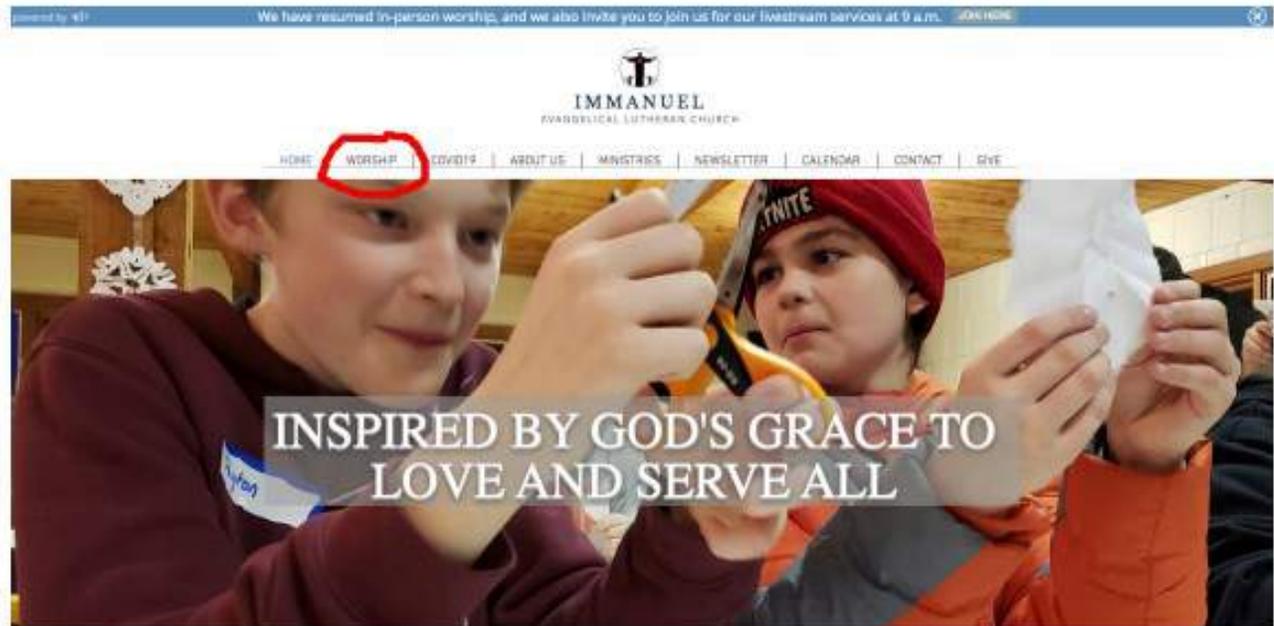
*My life flows on in endless song; above earth’s lamentation, I catch the sweet, though far-off hymn that hails a new creation.*

*No storm can shake my inmost calm while to that Rock I’m clinging. Since Christ is Lord of heaven and earth, how can I keep from singing? (ELW, 763). †*

A monthly message from the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Her email address is [bishop@elca.org](mailto:bishop@elca.org).

## Website Tutorial

**Step 1:** Go to our website, [www.immanuelrhinelander.org](http://www.immanuelrhinelander.org). You will see some menu items at the top. If you click right where it says WORSHIP (circled in red below) at the top you will be brought to our Worship page.



**Step 2:** This Worship page is where, on Sunday mornings, you can watch the live stream beginning at 8:55 a.m. (or slightly earlier in some cases). After Sunday and until Friday you'll be able to watch Sunday's service. At the left you will find links to that week's bulletin, lessons, the children's bulletin and a link to previous worship services. We save the previous six weeks.



**Step 3:** Looking at the top again where you had clicked on “WORSHIP.” If you just hold your mouse over the top of that word (hover over it without clicking anything), a drop-down menu will appear showing “SERMONS.” If you click on that menu item you will be brought to our archive page for our sermons:



**Step 4:** Once you arrive on the sermons page you will see the last six worship services. Each service will have a YouTube video of service, an audio-only version of just the Gospel and Sermon, the bulletin for that week and the lessons for that week. These can be viewed anytime while they are on that page.





Thank you to all our Food Pantry Volunteers!!



# Thank you's

**Thank you** to Glenn Johnson for mowing the lawn in May.

**Thank you** to all those who help at the Food Pantry.

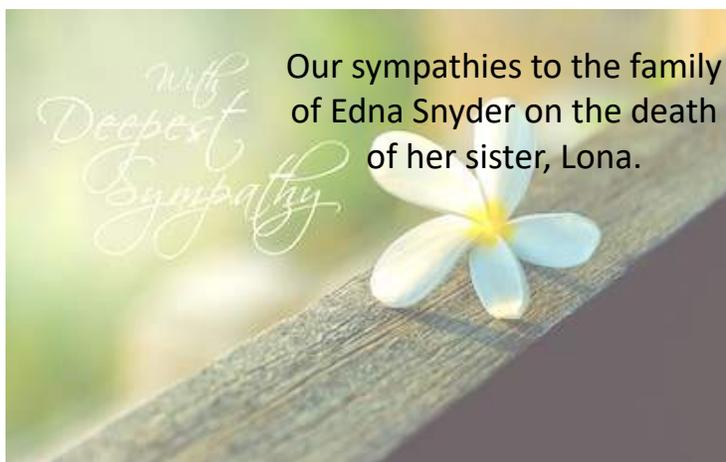
**Thank you** to Cory Dellenbach and Charlie Strong for getting live stream up and running for worship in May.

**Thank you** to all our ushers, readers, counters and opening and closing people for serving the Lord in May.

**Thank you** to all our musicians and singers for their beautiful music.

**Thank you** to those who provide meals for Frederick Place and those who donate items from their Wish List.

**Thank you to all members of Immanuel who continue to use their gifts and talents to further the kingdom of God. (Especially those who work behind the scenes and are not seen.) You are appreciated!!**



Thank you to everyone for the prayers, cards and get well wishes during my surgical recovery. My new knee and I are "still adjusting" to each other. With love and gratitude, Barbara Frane

Thank you to everyone for all the cards and prayers this last year when I was at Friendly Village. I am home and well. Romy Ewert

## Pastoral care

Pastor is willing to visit you in your home, wearing a mask and social distancing. If you would like to have her give you a home visit, please call the office to schedule a time.



National Alliance on Mental Illness

## NAMI Northern Lakes

Providing support, education and advocacy for people living with mental illness and their families in Forest, Oneida, and Vilas Counties. Monthly meetings: open to anyone; 4th Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. at First Methodist Church, Rhinelander. Northern Lakes Center located in Trinity Lutheran Church, Rhinelander. Closed until further notice.



# Wish List

## Frederick Place Most Needed Items

1. Notebooks
2. Benadryl (Generic)
3. Coffee
4. Casserole Dishes
5. Food Sharing Containers (5 to 7 Cups)
6. Food Strainers
7. Triple Antibiotic Ointment
8. Band-aids
9. Hydrocortisone Cream



Household Items are given to residents when they leave Frederick Place



Providing Safe Housing & Basic Needs ♥ Promoting Self-Sufficiency & Independent Living



204 West Frederick Street  
Rhinelander, WI 54801  
Office Phone: (715) 369-3777  
FAX: (715) 369-3174  
nathnorthwoods@gmail.com  
www.nathnorthwoods.com



**IMMANUEL  
LUTHERAN CHURCH  
BLOOD DRIVE**

21 W Timber Drive, Rhinelander, WI 54501

**TUESDAY, JUNE 22  
2:00 PM - 6:00 PM**

To schedule your donation, please contact Jackie Waldorf at (715) 482-0513. In order to space apart our donors, we kindly request you schedule by appointment.

4406 W. Spencer St., Appleton, WI 54914 | (800) 260-4102 | [communityblood.org](http://communityblood.org) | [cbc@communityblood.org](mailto:cbc@communityblood.org)

**Lawn Mowing**

We are looking for volunteers to mow lawn at church in August, September, and October.

If you are interested, please call the church office @ 715-362-5910 or email Brittany @ [immanuelsecretary2015@gmail.com](mailto:immanuelsecretary2015@gmail.com)



## Congratulations High School Graduates

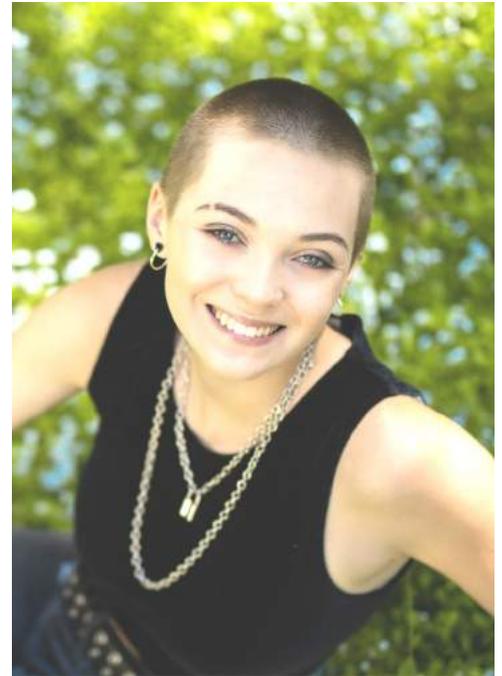
### **Kathryn Elizabeth Borski**

Kathryn is going to Nicolet this fall under the University Transfer Program.

She will receive a 2-year Associate's Degree in Applied Science at Nicolet with transfer to UW Platteville to complete a Bachelor's in Forensic Investigation with a Crime Scene Emphasis.

This summer she will continue to work as an associate at Kohl's and also with her dad two days a week.

She looks forward to a summer with friends, tennis, work and possibly some travel.



### **Alex Fortier**

Alex plans to attend UW-Stevens Point this fall majoring in business and entrepreneurship and will be playing baseball for the Pointers.

### **Gabby Denis**

Gabby plans on attending University of Wisconsin-Green Bay. She's planning on going to school for a bachelors in Nursing and specializing in Pediatrics and working at a children's hospital.



## *Congratulations*

Congratulations to Shaunna and Travis Drossart on the birth of their daughter Haylin Rae (and to grandparents Sheree and Devon Vanden Heuvel)

Congratulations to Megan and Josh Helgeson on the birth of their son Reginald “Reggie” Robert Helgeson (and to grandparents Robert and Lois Wallace)

Congratulations to Jonathan and Katlyn Kroll on the baptism of Evelyn Grace Kroll.  
(Grandparents Lisa & Dave Kroll)



### Did you know?...

We have been talking about caring for creation. This concept puts human beings in the top position. Maybe we should begin to acknowledge the real truth: *Creation cares for us*. We are dependent on the gift of God's creation for all of life. We depend on the air we breathe and the miracle that our respiration happens without much thought. We depend on water that sustains life, nourishes crops and carries nutrients to every cell in our bodies. We depend on the soil that nurtures seeds and produces harvests that strengthen and fuel our bodies.

Think about how we take air, water and soil for granted. And haven't we settled into a resource-depleting way of life that is dependent on domination, extraction and consumption? We express our dominion recklessly and without regard for future generations. For example, burning fossil fuels results in a warming planet. This means global temperatures are rising, oceans are warming, glaciers are melting, sea levels are rising and out of control fires, extreme weather events, receding forests, dying coral reefs and extinction of species are occurring.

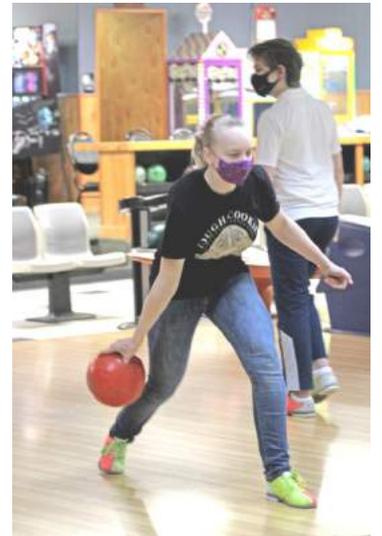
Environmentalist Gus Speth said: “I used to think that the top environmental problems were biodiversity loss, ecosystem collapse, and climate change. I was wrong. The top environmental problems are selfishness, greed and apathy. To deal with these we need a cultural and spiritual transformation, and we scientists don't know how to do that.”

Cultural and spiritual transformation *are* solidly within the purview of the faith community. Our earth is in distress. The causes are rooted in spiritual sickness, so the solutions must be spiritual solutions. This is when we, as the church, are called to action. How will you rise to the occasion?

**...This is Stewardship!**  
~JoAnne Barrix



## Youth Group Bowling





## Taking Faith Home: A Guide for Faith-Filled Conversations

Taking Faith Home (TFH) is a resource that provides a weekly guide for faith-filled conversations during the church year. This resource will be in your bulletin each week, or if you are worshipping from home this resource can be picked up in the bin outside of the parking lot entrance.

### Here are some of its key features:

- Based on the Revised Common Lectionary
- Gives examples of each of the Four Key faith practices (*caring conversations, devotions, service, and rituals and traditions*)
- Includes a weekly prayer, Bible verse, mealtime prayer, and blessing.
- Offers suggested daily Bible readings and Hymn for the week

**Who is the audience?** Everyone.

### How can one resource serve such a diverse population?

Not every part of TFH needs to be used by everyone. Here's how people tend to use it:

- Adults tend to use the daily Bible readings
- Parents and grandparents use the weekly blessings and mealtime prayers with their children. Sometimes they even add the weekly prayer at bedtime.
- Children like to use the conversations and devotions to hear and discuss how God's love is with them always.
- People on the go grab a prayer, a Bible reading or something that connects them with God's living Word as part of their journey of faith.
- Couples, parents, and teen mentors are drawn to the Caring Conversations to bond relationships in faith
- Most everyone can take a glance and wonder how to use something from Devotions during the week

### **Synod World Hunger Appeal**

We raised \$2,205 for world hunger!!

Thank you so much for your generosity!!

# IMMANUEL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Council Meeting Minutes: April 14, 2021

Council Members Present: President: Matt Johnson, Vice-President: Becky Eades, Secretary: JoAnne Barrix, Glenn Johnson, Darlene Machtan, Bill Mattson, Jackie Waldorf, Charlie Strong, Keith Snyder, Mary Wolf, Deb Rinka, Pastor Tammy Barthels. Guests: Cory Dellenbach, Allie Johnson  
Treasurer: Brian Willoughby, Gene Frane – excused

## Opening

President Matt opened the virtual meeting at 6:01 PM.

Prayer by Matt: St. Francis prayer for exuberant faith

**Action – Motion/Second/Carried...**Approved the minutes from the March 24, 2021 Council Meeting

**Pastor's Report:** Reports were submitted for February and March as the previous meeting did not include the Pastor's report.

## Long Term Items: (Great Commission Schedule and Constitution article C12.04)

Worship: Discuss effectiveness and quality – The general feeling is that the on line services are always improving. Music is better and even with adversity we do the best that we can.

Administer/oversee financial affairs/budget: Finances are going well. The months of March and April usually see higher giving as retirees use their MRD for their annual donation.

Procure and ensure proper insurance: The property insurance gets paid in May from the General Fund. Brian keeps watch.

## Short Term Items:

A. Old Business: None

B. New Business:

Ceiling damage: There was ceiling damage in the gathering room due to a roof leak. The leak was caused when the heat tape was inadvertently turned off. There was suggestion of a lock box over the switch to regulate the heat tape. **Action – Motion/Second/Carried...**Purchase and install lock box over heat tape switch with money of an appropriate amount from the building fund.

Parking Lot: Discussion of getting a quote from Finish Line Seal Coating for crack fill and seal. Repaving is not recommended at this time. John or Gene will contact.

Building Security: Currently the Timber Drive entrance and Parking Lot entrance have different keys. Also, many keys are out without a log of who has them. Do we need to re-key the locks...install a doorbell...video camera? Item tabled until we can get information of costs of these options. Brittany will check on prices. Gene will check on price to re-key.

Virtual option: Zoom vs. live-stream – The goal is to make sure that everyone has access to worship. Pros for live-stream – easier for guests to find, audio and video is better quality, cuts back on extra recording time on Thursdays. Cons for live-stream – must have internet to access, no call-in feature, no interaction. Allie Johnson has worked with both and it is difficult to juggle both Zoom and live-stream at the same time. After much discussion, it was decided to do a practice on April 25<sup>th</sup> with both Zoom and live-stream. Cory, Darlene and Deb volunteered to help. We would need another camera, computer and administrator for Zoom. There was also discussion of preserving the Zoom coffee hour. The interaction and sense of community are important. This will need to be processed further.

Opening church to in-person gathering: May 2<sup>nd</sup> is the opening date. The congregation will be divided alphabetically. May 2<sup>nd</sup> and May 16<sup>th</sup> will be A to Kress and May 9<sup>th</sup> and May 23<sup>rd</sup> will be Kroll to Z. Letters with the guidelines will go out next week. Letters will also go to ushers, counters and altar care volunteers to see who is willing to come to church. There is room in the sanctuary for about 70

people with social distancing. Council will reevaluate after the first 2 weeks to perhaps open to entire congregation and remove the alphabetical restriction. **Action – Motion/Second/Carried...** Letter to the congregation and guidelines for ushers, counters and altar care are approved and will be sent to appropriate people. Darlene, Deb and Glenn volunteered to open and close in May.

Care for Creation challenge: Discussion of how to implement. It is important to integrate caring for creation into every committee and every facet of worship, education, outreach, music, building, etc. The newsletter will have a Care for Creation Corner and members will be invited to contribute ideas about reducing, reusing and recycling. The ELCA has many resources available on line. The accompaniment edition of “All Creation Sings” will be purchased for \$60.00 from the worship and music budget for special music about creation.

Council Retreat: Possibilities are A) Overnight at Fortune Lake Camp, B) One day retreat at a closer retreat center, or C) Gather over a meal. Most members showed interest in either B or C. With that information, more will be discussed later.

### **Committee Actions:**

Stewardship: Appreciation gift to Cory for his IT work. **Action – Motion/Second/**

**Carried...**Approved a \$1,000.00 gift for Cory to be taken from undesignated memorial funds.

A Synod Grant for \$500.00 is available for hunger ministry. Matt will complete the application and the money will be split between the Food Pantry and NATH house.

**Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 8:03 PM after the closing devotion.

**Closing Devotion:** Matt provided a beautiful devotion about Agape Love and God's love for each individual on the council. It was a very spiritual, moving devotion. Thank you, Matt.

Next meeting: May 12, 2021

May Devotion: Jackie

Respectfully Submitted,  
JoAnne Barrix, Council Secretary

**CONGRATULATIONS** to our Council president Matthew Johnson who was elected at Synod Assembly to be the Lay Male Representative for Churchwide Assembly.  
We are so proud of you Matthew!

We recognize these individuals who serve at the Synod level -  
Bill Mattson - Lutheran Office of Public Policy of WI  
Cory Dellenbach - chair of World Hunger Committee  
Matthew Johnson - chair of Life Long Faith Formation, Lay Male Representative on Synod Assembly and newly elected Lay Male Representative for Churchwide Assembly

## Care For Creation Corner

### Do You Hear What I Hear, Creation's Hymns?

The songs of a river and the songs of the sea are obvious as water plays its tunes on rocks, and roots, and logs and against itself in crashing rapids and thundering waves. Ecologist Aldo Leopold goes further and suggests that if you are very quiet, very still and very patient, like a monastic, you may be able to hear the ancient hymns of the hills. He describes them as vast pulsating harmonies written by the winds and storms, and the lives and deaths of its unassuming plant and animal denizens. On the other hand, in the coming weeks Mother Nature will perform one of its largest, loudest, and longest lasting musical performances ever played. Its immense size, duration, and primitive origins have even inspired some musicians to want to jam with it. This symphony will be offered nearly simultaneously and nearly everywhere, if you live in one of 15 east-central states, by the 17-year cicada after the adults erupt from their silent, monastic underground confinement of 17 years. From sunny treetops they will compulsively sing out their hearts for 2-4 weeks. Males do a fast tempo, high pitch version of Gregorian chants by employing pulsating, buzzing tymbal drums to attract females in order to renew their fragile cycle of life. These extraordinary chanters otherwise secretly sip sap from the roots of trees in dank, darkness for 17 years, growing slowly to become short-lived, noisy musicians for just one lifetime hymn. Nobody yet understands why an insect emerges to sing and mate only once in 17 years. Most other cicadas, like our common dog day cicada, emerge without fanfare annually and hum-buzz chant to us on warm summer days. All of Creation's mysterious hymns are precious and sacred gifts. Let's celebrate and give thanks.



### AWESOME WEBSITES!!!!!!

1. [Package Free](#)
2. [Terra Cycle](#)
3. [Biodegradable Products](#)
4. [Toxic-Free Cleaning Products](#)
5. [Safer Deodorant](#)
6. [ByFusion](#)
7. [Washing Machine Bag](#)
8. [Norwex](#)
9. [AirNow!](#)
10. [Grove Collaborative](#)
11. [MEANS Database](#)
12. [How2Recycle](#)

method

**GUPPYFRIEND®**  
Washing Bag

PACKAGE FREE



**Green Paper Products**  
Environmentally Friendly & Compostable

**Norwex®**

# Sabbath-keeping

BY LINDA POST BUSHKOFSKY



**HAVE YOU NOTICED THAT HOW WE THINK OF TIME** has changed since the coronavirus pandemic began? Saad B. Omer, director of the Yale Institute for Global Health, describes it this way: “We all now exist in a single, long day in Pandemic Standard Time that started in January [2020] and is still going on.”

Many of us have trouble discerning which day it is, as all the days seem so similar. For those newly working at home, the distinctions between work hours and non-work hours have broken down. Many are now working longer hours than before because work is always accessible, as are we.

These changes in how we view time got me thinking about the Sabbath. If keeping Sabbath means intentionally interrupting our ordinary days with sacred, holy time, how do we observe the Sabbath in these no-longer-ordinary, pandemic days?

Many of us experience days of end-to-end online meetings for work and school. And then, in non-work hours, we gather with friends and family via these same video-conferencing systems. Screen fatigue is real. What would it be like if we spent a day not reading email, not scrolling through social media apps, not binge-watching something? A day of hours and minutes not controlled by an agenda?

Many of us are respecting the call to stay at home and have been doing so for most of the last year. Yet staying at home is no guarantee of meaningful engagement among those who live with others. What would it be like to spend a day talking, playing games, taking walks together?

Some are experiencing stress-related insomnia. Physical distancing and quarantining can lead to isolation and depression that impact sleep. Being chronically sleep-deprived, medical experts warn

us, can lower our immunity, and that, in turn, can increase susceptibility to viruses. What would it be like to spend a day resting? Getting out into fresh air for some physical exercise?

When the days all blur into one and we lose track of time, Sabbath-keeping can help us to order our days, spend time with God and those we love, and rest our bodies and minds. These much-needed self-care aspects come with Sabbath-keeping.

Because Sabbath-keeping nurtures our faith, Sabbath-keeping can support our spiritual health too. The coronavirus has shaken many of us to our core, uprooting our lives. By keeping the Sabbath, we trust God to see us through to the other side of this global pandemic. By keeping the Sabbath, restoration can happen. As healthier disciples, we are better able to respond to God’s call.

Keeping Sabbath is more than setting aside one day each week. It’s a way of living. “A Sabbath heart is restful even in the midst of unrest and upheaval. It is attentive to the presence of God and others even in the welter of much coming and going, rising and falling. It is still and knows God even when mountains fall into the sea.” So writes author Mark Buchanan in his book *The Rest of God: Restoring Your Soul by Restoring Sabbath*.

We’ve got bucketloads of unrest and upheaval in our lives right now: The pandemic. Systemic racism. Climate change. Lost jobs. Shuttered businesses. Domestic terrorism. The list goes on and on. I can’t help but think: We could better face all the unrest and upheaval with Sabbath hearts. We could better love ourselves and love our neighbors with Sabbath hearts.

May we all observe the Sabbath and keep it holy. 🕊️

Ten ways to embrace our divine creative power

# Holy creativity

by Kirk Byron Jones

**“IN THE BEGINNING** God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen. 1:1). The very first picture of God we see catches God in the act of creating. What if the continual expansion of the universe and our willing and resistant evolving in it are proof that God did not stop creating after Genesis 1 and 2? What if God was just getting started? What if God is always just getting started?

With all due respect for prayer and study, the best way to get a real feel for God’s essence is to watch a child at deep play. Such freedom! Such joy! Creativity is what happens when freedom and joy come together. It is the overflow of freedom and joy. When Jesus says, “Whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it” (Mark 10:15), he is signaling and suggesting that somehow God, childlikeness, and the domain of free, joyous expression go together—that such realities share a certain commonality that makes life happen in its freshest, finest, and fullest way, over and over again.

Being born as children is a holy calling to join God in free, joyful, and playful creative expression. It is easy to forget this calling in the throes of a vast assortment of dehumanizing and diminishing realities that seek to snuff the Spirit right out of us from the day we are born. That is why we must, in the words of Jesus, be “born again” (John 3:3). To be born again is not, first and foremost, to have our souls saved for residence in heaven in the next life but to have our souls reclaimed for dynamic creative experience and expression with God and one another in this life.

We are all expressions of a Spirit of creativity in whom freedom and joy have their playful way. Creativity is not just

what God does. Creativity is who God is. Therefore, the power to create is in us all. Creative inspiration is a divine, ever-flowing, overflowing stream. Each of us is not just a precious creation of God; we are powerful creators *with* God. We have holy authorization to use our sacred power to create in every area of our lives: sculpting new ideas, framing new attitudes, and building new relationships.

Seeing God in a more creative light invites us to hear and move freely to the creative rhythms of the gospel. The closer people got to Jesus, the more imaginative and daring they seemed to become. Peter did not try walking on water until he saw Jesus doing it. Martha had not wondered about her brother coming back from the dead until she heard what Jesus had in mind. The whole lot of them could not have imagined that Calvary wasn’t the end of it all until it wasn’t. There was no following Jesus without taking in and taking on the wild and wonderful possibilities he inspired day in and day out.

There is no way to fully follow Jesus today without having our curiosity and imagination baptized in the waters of his lavishly creative spirit. We die not only with the absence of breath but also with the absence of curiosity and imagination. The good news is that being in Christ makes us not only new creations but also new creators. Spiritual transformation involves embracing our divine creative power and wielding it in the spirit of limitless love, freedom, and joy from which we receive it. Here are ten ways to begin.

**1. Expect to be creative.** Creativity is much broader than making art. It is the means by which we live our lives. Every decision, action, or reflection is an expression of our creative spirit. The question is

this: *How and what will you choose to deliberately create?* An essential practice of believing in God as creative Spirit is to expect without hesitancy or shame God’s continual refreshing of our own creativity. Befriend your creative spirit and learn to be at home with the astonishing.

**2. Connect with your inner child.** We tend to be far more imaginative and creative as children than we are as adults. Fortunately, the child in us is never vanquished altogether. Allow your abiding child to call forth your creative powers. Daydream, doodle, wonder, and wander. Keep a picture of yourself as a child nearby to help you tap into the springs of limitless imagining inside.

**3. Be energized by your inspirations.** What energizes you and fills you with an insurmountable feeling of being thoroughly alive? Anything that does so should be brought to bear on your creativity. Freely draw from what inspires you to energize your mind, body, and soul for all-out making. Hold nothing back.

**4. Practice patient attention.** We miss so much when we stop noticing. Living at a sacred pace—one that allows for noticing more than usual and for relishing details—give us more to enjoy and use in our creative play. Creative inspirations are everywhere, including the smallest of things and the slightest of moments. Paying attention just a half second longer may yield an insight or inspiration more than worth the extended look. Slow down and see what shows up, being especially alert to the surprising and interesting. Watch for zones of intense creative flow. Notice when you are in such a zone, and dance with the Spirit.

**5. Find freedom in lavish openness and radical receptivity.** Freedom is at the heart of God, and thereby at the heart of the divine reality of creative expression. But how does one live freely? I feel most free when I give up fixations on my own preferences and open myself to ideas that do more than just confirm what I already know. I feel a certain sanctified detachment that grants me permission to seek and be fulfilled by purely new experiences. Energies that might be given to holding on are allocated to letting go, and I find myself engaged and inspired in genuinely different ways. In such a state, fresh creativity is inevitable.

**6. Feed anticipation and cultivate excitement.** Zora Neale Hurston gives a momentous testimony to the power of triumphant joy: “I have been in Sorrow’s kitchen and licked out all the pots. Then I have stood on the peaky mountain wrapped in rainbows, with a harp and a sword in my hands.” Anticipation is an unsung elixir for living with deliberate joy. One way I intentionally feed anticipation and cultivate excitement, or “FACE,” is to keep a FACE joy journal.

When I wake up, I simply think about what I am most looking forward to that day. Merely writing these ideas down builds anticipation and intention for them, stirring up enthusiasm that may not otherwise exist. The more energy you have and feel, the greater your desire and capacity to create.

**7. Keep a creativity journal.** Another way of taking your creative power into your own hands is to saturate your mind and spirit with energizing thoughts. Several years ago, I began coaching myself daily with written affirmations and reflections that kept my creative juices flowing. Before I knew it, I had dozens of inspirations I could turn to at any time. Consider maintaining your own creativity journal. It may consist of both your own words and quotes from others. Doodles, pictures, and other images are also wonderful ways to intentionally and regularly evoke your creative spirit.

**8. Practice emptying.** I have a beautiful, handcrafted piece of pottery on my desk.



PHOTO BY NISHANT KULKARNI ON UNSPLASH

This small bowl, a gift from a pastor with creative hands, is one of my most precious possessions. It remains empty, and I use its emptiness to help me reach my own feeling of emptiness several times each day. In these moments, I practice putting my own preferences and prejudices aside, trying to be open and receptive to God on God’s terms rather than mine. This emptiness refreshes me in ways I cannot fully explain. Surrendering all has a way of yielding all beyond our wildest imagination. The worst grip of all is holding on too tightly to what you already know.

**9. Rest your mind.** One of the best things you can do for any creative undertaking is to temporarily take your mind off it. I call my mental respites “peace pockets.” These 20-minute periods are tender times of what Mary Oliver calls “not-thinking, not-remembering, and not-wanting.” Sometimes I just look out the window. I may play music or light a candle. I may be walking or seated. The essential element is that my mind is resting. The result is renewed energy and focus. Sometimes I’m also given an idea or connection that was patiently waiting for me to have the space to hold it.

**10. Sleep, nap, rest your body.** Physical rest is a must for sustaining creative strength. A rested body leads to peace. Peace leads to clarity. Clarity leads to creativity. When Jesus wields his creative power against the waves that are swamping the boat (Mark 4:35–39), calming the storm with mere words, he has just awak-

en from a nap. This detail isn’t incidental to the story; it’s crucial.

Unleashing our creative potential isn’t always easy. When Dizzy Gillespie came onto the musical scene in the early 1940s with a new rhythmic style of jazz called bebop, he was denounced by many critics and fellow musicians. One of the criticisms was that bebop was not as easy to dance to as the big band swing that was then popular. Similarly, some of our most important creative callings will be seen as more challenging than charming, more threat than treat. Sometimes our offerings to the world will yield long stretches of waiting as we search in vain for eyes, ears, and hearts ready to listen and applaud.

Gillespie and others persisted. Eventually appreciative ears formed and called forth the flourishing of a new musical expression. (By the way, it’s not that hard to dance to bebop. You just have to be open to dancing in a different way.)

That we are called by God to create in life and ministry is no small thing. It is magnificent and mighty beyond all words and wounds. Creativity—divine and human—is truly something to be celebrated. Although the process of creating may not always feel like a party, God’s creative Spirit is never far from us.



*Kirk Byron Jones, senior pastor of Zion Baptist Church in Lynn, Massachusetts, is the author of Rest in the Storm: The Creativity Journal. This article is adapted from a new chapter in the 20th anniversary edition of Jones’s Rest in the Storm: Self-Care Strategies for Clergy and Other Caregivers, © 2021 by Judson Press. Used by permission of Judson Press.*

# U.P. WILD CHURCH

Wild Church creates opportunities to foster a deeper spiritual connection with God outdoors. Deep within the Christian tradition there hides a wealth of wisdom on how to cultivate a culture of compassion through the way of love. It is time to bring this authenticity forward especially in the wild setting of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Churches are experiencing a mass exodus and wondering why. We understand why. Most of us are in need of healing just as our Earth is; we aim to do this together.

## **U.P. Wild Church is:**

Where has the reverence, the wonder, and the awe for the natural world gone? Have we built too many walls over, through and around ourselves so that we can no longer see or feel the Mystery that creates all things?

## **In Gathering Together:**

We create opportunities to foster a deeper spiritual connection with God outdoors and through virtual nature walks online.

## **Wild Church is Collaborative Voice:**

One that is rising up from a diverse choir of seekers who desire a faith life that is responsive to what's happening in the world right now. Indeed, it is as if Spirit is stripping us of our man-made divisions by reconnecting us to the soil, the watersheds, the oak tree, the caterpillars, as if there, we will fall back in love & in doing so, find ourselves again.

## **Wild Church Values:**

We are a community who openly prays for the healing of the land and our hearts, allowing for open conversation on our culture of consumption, embracing holy wisdom, and celebrating our varied personal experiences. Using expansive language, our intention is to provide space in which each person experiences God's love by simply by being Christ-like to them (kind, compassionate, understanding). We walk Jesus' way of love, justice and transformation and especially strive to listen and respond to the spiritual needs of those outside of traditional church contexts.

The leaves have not suddenly changed their colors at this moment, nor has the sky been transformed. All that beauty was already there. What changed? I did. This splendor was there, but I did not notice it. I became a beholder and I see what is there to be seen (M. Himes). When we step out of ourselves (ego) and into creation, we begin to notice the love which supports all that exists. God is the Mystery which has created all things; for God is love and love is a relationship of which, we are called into daily.

## **Wild Church is For:**

Everyone. You are welcome whether you are a part of a Christian faith community already, questioning your faith, in recovery from wounds inflicted by religious trauma, simultaneously receiving nourishment from other faith traditions, or simply seeking to go deeper.

## **Your Are The Bee\*:**

Like bees pollinating the flowers... growing our community is all word of mouth. You tell your story, and you invite your friends by sharing what you found helpful and why you attend gathering- we invite those we know who need to be nourished, fed, excited or inspired! You are the bee who takes the nutrients back to the hive. You are invited to actively participate in creating content, reading a poem or reflection, guiding us on a nature walk, taking photos or videos in nature, sharing our gifts with us.

\* If you noticed the typo, so did someone else who sent a message reminding us, "always include something imperfect, because it reminds us that we're all here on this earth to learn, and to leave the perfection to God."

## **Who We Are:**

A non-profit collaboration with funding support from the Episcopal Diocese of Northern Michigan and the ELCA Northern Great Lakes Synod. Marquette's, Lanni Lantto (she/her/hers: grew up in Catholic tradition) leads Wild Church offerings with help of volunteers.

Visit us at <https://www.upwild.org> for more information



# June 2021

Immanuel Lutheran Church 715-362-5910  
21 W Timber Drive, Rhinelander

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3	4	5
				6-7pm Making Sense of Scripture		
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
9:00 Worship	7pm AA & Alanon	5pm Stewardship	6pm Council	6-7pm Making Sense of Scripture	Pastor's Sabbath	10:30-1:00 Food Pantry
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
9:00 Worship	10-1 pm Text Study  7pm AA & Alanon	Newsletter Articles Due!!!  6-7:30 Women's Circle		6-7pm Making Sense of Scripture	Pastor's Sabbath	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Happy Father's Day 9:00 Worship	7pm AA & Alanon	2-6pm Blood Drive	4:30 Meal @ Frederick Place	6-7pm Making Sense of Scripture		
27	28	29	30			
9:00 Worship	10-1 pm Text Study 7pm AA & Alanon					

All Nursing home worship services are cancelled this month!

## FINANCIAL SUMMARY

April 2021

### GENERAL FUND:

Beginning Balance	\$32,374.17
Offerings	\$12,896.28
Expenses	(12,796.72)
<b>Ending Balance</b>	<b>\$32,473.73</b>

### BENEVOLENCE:

April Offering	\$ 1,172.00
2021 Pledge	\$19,000.00
YTD Remittance	\$ 8,070.02

### BUILDING FUND:

Beginning Balance	\$23,784.82
Offerings	\$ 1,103.32
Expenses	(\$ 76.32)
<b>Ending Balance</b>	<b>\$24,811.82</b>

Income exceeded the  
Expenses by \$99.56.

### April Attendance:

	9:00 a.m.	Other	Total
4/4	53	36	89
4/11	38	12	50
4/18	42	13	55
4/25	44	0	44

Our average online Sunday attendance  
for the month of April was 60.



6/1	Katie Stolzman	6/15	Charlet Bierman
6/3	Shelley Fortier	6/15	Keith Mayo
6/7	Keith Snyder	6/17	Rollene Schroeder
6/8	JR Bartelt	6/18	Holly Gregory
6/11	Rebecca Eades	6/18	Tianna Schulz
6/11	Bryan Meyer	6/19	Douglas Zwickey
6/11	Deb Rinka	6/21	Nick Scholtes
6/11	Max Scholtes	6/27	Danny Snyder
6/12	Susan Anderson	6/30	Matt Johnson
6/12	Mark Jacobson		

6/5	Jake & Heather Morrison
6/8	Dale & Jolene Schlieve
6/10	Thomas & Cindy Kuehn
6/11	Nathan & Gabrielle Kohnhorst
6/12	Lawrence & Anna Levijoki
6/14	Bill & Ella Mae D'Aprix
6/14	Norm & Mary Peterson
6/28	Matt & Allie Johnson
6/28	Scott & Jessica Scholtes
6/30	Paul & Deb Rinka

*May Your Day Be Special!*

If you were omitted or listed in error, please contact the church office at 715-362-5910. Thank you!

## IMMANUEL'S MESSENGER

21 West Timber Drive  
Rhineland, WI 54501

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**Join us for  
in-person worship  
Sundays at 9 a.m.**

Or find our Live Stream on our webpage at  
[immanuelrhineland.org](http://immanuelrhineland.org)