

Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church



December 2021

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Rev. Tammy K. Barthels - Pastor

Church - 715-362-5910

Emergency-Cell Phone: 715-581-0468

prtammyimmanuelrhinelander@gmail.com

Office Hours Tues.-Thurs. 10-3pm

or by appointment

Brittany Landphier - Youth Leader

brittanylandphier@gmail.com

Cell Phone: 715-202-0637

Kari Britton - Administrative Assistant

immanuelsecretary2015@gmail.com

Office Phone: 715-362-5910

Office Hours Tuesday & Thursday 8—3

Sheree Vanden Heuvel - Financial Secretary

finimmanuel@gmail.com

Cell Phone: 715-360-3176

Member of the ELCA Churchwide elca.org &
the Northern Great Lakes Synod nglsynod.org



Visit us on our Website @
Immanuelrhinelander.org

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

Pastor's Message ~ Advent. A time of longing and waiting

Psalm 27:14 – *Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord!*

The season of Advent is about waiting for the coming of the Lord. We wait for Christ's arrival that happened two thousand years ago and for the arrival that is yet to occur. We journey toward Bethlehem in the comforting but challenging reality of the "already" and the "not yet". We travel with holy anticipation to meet the newborn king in the manger. The mood or tone of Advent is one of longing. As the body of Christ, we carry different longings.

What were the deep longings stirring in the hearts of the original hearers of Luke's gospel? What did they expect from the promised Messiah? A conquered king? A mighty warrior? An avenger? What are the deep longings that stir in your heart?

The season of Advent unfolds against the backdrop of deliverance from oppression. Yet even today, oppression persists and the long-awaited deliverance carries, especially for people who live on the margins of society.

We remember this Advent season those who are struggling with oppression, inequality, depression, addiction, discrimination, abuse, social hostility, violence, poverty, homelessness, and so much more. We remember individuals who are struggling during the holidays, who have lost a loved one, the heartache of miscarriage or infertility, the ache of a serious illness, separation from family, financial concerns, divorce, unemployment, loneliness, those who cannot wait one more minute for Jesus.

We lean on the gifts given to use during this season, the gift of hope, love, joy and peace as we await the coming of Christ. WE lean heavily into the "already". After all, Advent is about hope for today, and Jesus is with us in the liminal time between the already and the not yet! May you experience God's comfort and peace during this waiting season.

(Adapted from Sundays and Seasons, Year C 2022, copyright 2021, Augsburg Fortress)

Yours in Christ +

Pastor Tammy



Righting our Cosmic Story As Eden Withers and Burns: Embracing a Cosmic Theology of Creation

Reverend H. Paul Santmire has worked tirelessly for more than 50 years, preaching, marching, organizing, and writing seven books, numerous articles, and ecumenical social statements about his passion, the need for a cosmic theology of creation. In his 2020 book, *Celebrating Nature by Faith*, he scrutinizes scripture and writings of the leaders of the Christian faith, especially Lutheranism, for historical attitudes about creation in theology. He learned that the bold Martin Luther, near the end of his pastoral service 500 years ago, passionately espoused a cosmic Christ whose holy spirit was within and around everything in the cosmos. All of creation was sacramental. But, this germ of a cosmic theology of creation was ignored as western Christianity focused on God-man relationships (not creation-God-man interrelations) for the next five centuries, treating creation as the incidental background to the great story. Then in 1961, Reverend Joseph Sittler made a remarkable address at the World Council of Churches in New Delhi, calling for the inclusion of a cosmic theology of creation in a revised framework for Christianity. In 1972, the Lutheran Churches in America forged such a social statement along with a guidebook. Subsequently, in 1993, the ELCA published a social statement advocating caring for creation as elemental in worship and practice. Moreover, in the last 50 years, there have been growing numbers of ecumenical leaders fervently calling for a cosmic theology of creation to be integrated into Christian theology. Several provocative and transformative documents have recently sprouted from this fermenting milieu: *Thank God for Evolution* by Rev. Michael Dowd (2008), *On Care For Our Common Home* by Pope Francis (2015), and *The Universal Christ* by Father Richard Rohr (2019). An eco-reformation seems inevitable. St Francis pointed the way 800 years ago.



Why have we not emphasized and integrated all of cosmic creation, the foundational material and spiritual life force into the entire Christian story? We're the poorer for it. Due to this oversight, some have accused the ecumenical Christian Church of being complicit in the destruction and desecration of the blue planet. If all of creation is sacred, why has the Church stood by quietly as it was being pillaged? The blue planet is enveloped in a crisis. How humans respond in the next ten years will set the planet on a path to either worsening destruction for tens of thousands of years or a slow repair for tens of decades. What shall it be?

As stewards of our common home, we must act. Rev. Santmire prefers that we call our relationship with creation, a partnership, not a stewardship. We must respect creation as our equals, he argues. So, what next? Because there are powerful forces that refuse to accept that we are in crisis, and they control much of business and government, nothing will change if we do not demand it. Martin Luther taught that scripture calls us to be both personally responsible for our brethren, and civically responsible for our communities by ensuring good civil governance that cares for the larger common good (such as clean air and water, safe public spaces, schools, judicial fairness, healthy landscapes). We must embrace a new consciousness, a modern cosmic theology of creation to right our course and to fortify our ecumenical resolve to demand governance that respects, protects and repairs all of creation. This means that we have to vote with prayerful discernment, and we may have to march with other faith communities to insist that government leaders craft the needed policies and then make them into laws. It's about caring for creation at both a personal and a civic level. We cannot have one without the other. To paraphrase Reverend Martin Luther King, "An edifice that is creating harm must be changed." God help us to help all of our earthly brethren, seen and unseen, small and large. We see and hear their travails.

Bill Mattson

Christ the King Sunday

Dear Northern Great Lakes Synod,

As we approach Christ the King Sunday this coming November 21, I share with you a portion of what I will be preaching at First, Iron River. Whether or not your congregation will be participating in the special liturgy provided for Native American Sunday, the readings for the day, whatever their liturgical context, proclaim that we welcome Jesus the Christ to rule over us.

The year was 1925. The Great War is seven years over. This is the year that dogsleds reached Nome with emergency diphtheria serum after a 1000-kilometer run and the World's Fair opened in Chicago. It's the year that the Presidential monument on Mount Rushmore was first proposed, and when John T. Scopes was indicted, tried, and convicted for teaching Darwin's theory of evolution. The American Association for Advancement of Atheism formed in this year. Adolph Hitler wrote Mein Kampf, Benito Mussolini dissolved the Italian parliament and announced himself dictator over Italy, and the League of Nations held a conference on arms control and poison gas usage. This is the year that the KKK marched 40,000 strong on Washington, the year that the Italian liberal-national party joined the fascist movement and the German SS was formed. In the year 1925, dictators were on the rise as were the political ideologies of fascism, communism, socialism, and hate.

People were looking for something, someone to believe in. They were questioning not only the authority of God, but the very existence of God. They were being swept up into movements that seduced them with power, and a false sense of superiority over other human beings. And into the midst of this, Pope Pius the 11th declared a day to celebrate and proclaim to the world anew that of all of the world's authorities and leaders and movements and politics, only Christ is King. Only Christ is the one to trust, the one to follow, the one with ultimate authority so complete that he reigns both in and beyond this world.

As we celebrate Christ the King Sunday, we affirm that whatever is going on in our world, Christ is King. Christ still carries ultimate authority in our lives. And in the midst of the world's authorities and leaders and movements and politics, we proclaim to the world anew, even as we ourselves are reminded, that only Christ is the one to trust, the one to follow, the one in which we place our hopes and commend our fears. He is the one that we invite to reign over us, over our will, our thoughts, our minds, our bodies, and our hearts to bring in the Kingdom of God.



May you find meaning and joy as you worship Christ the King this weekend.

Yours in Christ,
Bishop Katherine Finegan

Ecumenical Worship Service

Blue Christmas
December 21st @ 7pm
at First Congregational
United Church
of Christ

This is an opportunity for those among us who are grieving, depressed, sad, lonely or suffering in some way to bring our pain and sadness to God during the holidays.

(masks are required)



NATH WISH LIST

1. WHITE OUT TAPE
2. AIR FRESHENER
3. TUMS/ROLAIDS
4. 13 GALLON GARBAGE BAGS
5. 30 GALLON GARBAGE BAGS
6. TOILET BOWL CLEANER
7. BATHROOM GARBAGE CANS
8. DISHWASHER DETERGENT
9. GLASS CLEANER
10. LYSOL SPRAY

**We appreciate your kindness and generosity
with the shared parking lot.**

**Thank you,
Everyone at Frasier's Plumbing and Heating**

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.

MONDAY TO FRIDAY 11 AM TO 3 PM.

MASKS ARE REQUIRED

Please call Linda at [715-420-1700](tel:715-420-1700) or e-mail at northernlakescenter@gmail.com if you are in need of anything.



**PLEASE SEE THE
BACK PAGE
OF THE
NEWSLETTER
FOR OUR
CHRISTMAS EVE
WORSHIP
SCHEDULE!**



PRESIDING BISHOP

GOD HAS GIVEN US A MISSION

By Elizabeth A. Eaton



Remember the Beatles? John, Paul, George, Ringo! I was into it. I had Beatle boots, love beads and granny glasses. My big brother gave me a model of Paul (the cute Beatle) for Christmas one year. It was one of those paint-it-yourself kits. I knew the lyrics to the Beatles' hits better than I knew Martin Luther's Small Catechism. The early hits were pop and upbeat: "I Want to Hold Your Hand," "A Hard Day's Night." Even later "Yellow Submarine" was still whimsical.

But then the Beatles got older, and the world changed. Vietnam, the Kennedy and King assassinations, the urban riots, the 1968 Chicago Democratic convention. Innocence—for those of us who had that luxury—was gone. Skepticism, even cynicism, was the lens through which the world was seen. A lot was broken, including trust in institutions and the church.

In 1971, John Lennon's hit "Imagine" came out. It was evocative and, I'm sure, was meant to point us to the possibility of a better future. I found it disturbing. A world without religion. No heaven. No hell. No countries. No possessions. As if excising these things would cure humanity and the world would be as one.

There was and is enough brokenness in the world to go 'round. But the brokenness is not outside of us—in institutions, politics, religion—it is within us. The only way to construct utopia is to get rid of people. Imagine.

Except God has a different way. It is the way of Jesus. It is the way of love. It is the way of life. You see, God so loves the world and all of creation and all of us. God is right down with us in all of our messiness. In Jesus, God has reconciled the world to God's self, redeeming it and us in spite of our rebellion. We can stake our lives on the relentless, faithful, powerful, tender love of God.

During the pandemic we dreamed great things and imagined an ELCA that could envision a world experiencing the difference God's grace and love in Christ makes for all people and creation. We prayed and still pray that the Spirit will activate each of us so

that more people know the way of Jesus and discover community, justice and love. And we set a goal—engage a million new, young and diverse people by the end of this decade. Why? Because the world deserves to hear the gospel. The world needs to look beyond itself. There is a heaven.

Clearly this is not the work of the churchwide organization alone, nor of any one congregation. It is a mission for all of us. There are so many people who do not know that they need to know Jesus. There are so many people who think that God's grace is too good to be true. There are so many people searching for meaning. All are beloved by God. God longs to draw all people to Godself, to clean us up and wash our faces so that God's image shines clearly from all of us, so that we can see God's image shining from each other.

New, young and diverse? What about those of us who are already here, have always been here, who have been doing the work and paying the bills? We are the 99 sheep that didn't go astray. We are the older brother who stayed home and worked hard. Of course we are!

We have lived in the love of Jesus and walked in Jesus' way. *We* know the freedom of the Christian. We don't live in an unforgiving world, but in a redeemed world with a future. Why wouldn't we want to share that with as many people as we can?

Even a million new, young and diverse people—why stop there? The flock was not whole until the one lost was found. The older brother did not realize that all his father had was already his as a gift. This is true for us. God has given this mission to invite more people into the way of Jesus. Imagine. †

A monthly message from the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Her email address is bishop@elca.org.

Thank You for Serving

Everyone who filled a Shoebox for Samaritan's Purse.

Deb Rinka for decorating the sanctuary for Fall.

Mary Peterson for baking Cardamom Coffee Cakes and donating proceeds to the quilters.

Cory Dellenbach who runs our Live-Stream
(and all who have helped Cory! - Jackie, Isaiah, Charlie).

Gabby Kohnhorst for donating books for the children's area in the sanctuary.

Dianne Syms for her dedication to ACES and being their treasurer.

Thank you to Brian Willoughby for being an outstanding Treasurer.

Thank you to our staff; Sheree, Kari, Brittany and Randy for keeping things running at Immanuel

Thank you to JoAnne Barrix, Matthew Johnson, Becky Eades, Jackie Waldorf, Brian Willoughby and Darlene Machtan for sharing their stories of ministry on Stewardship Sunday.

Thank you to all the members of Immanuel who continue to use their gifts and talents to further the kingdom of God. (Especially those who work behind the scenes!)



Congratulations to Joanne O'Brien who won the Stewardship Earth Bounty basket on Stewardship Sunday.



We extend our deepest sympathies to the Lois Deets family on the death of Lois.

Expressions of sympathy may be mailed to Lois' daughter: Joanne D'Alton, 978 Chandler Lane, Sun Prairie, WI 53590-4445

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.

Operation Shoebox

We filled 93 shoeboxes this year!!!
 We beat last year's record!!
 Thank you to everyone who participated and donated towards this wonderful project and to our generous donor who is covering the cost of shipping.



POINSETTIA ORDER FORM

We will be decorating the church with poinsettias for the Christmas Season. If you would like to donate one or more poinsettias to beautify the sanctuary for this festive season, please fill out the form below and return it to the church by December 12th. You can return the form by mail or simply place it in the offering plate in an envelope with your check enclosed. The cost of poinsettias this year for 4-1/2" pot Pixie is \$6.75 and \$15.50 for 6-1/2" plant. You may select the color you wish, if no color is chosen we will order red.



Please circle one:

Red White Pink

Pixie \$6.75

Medium \$15.50

Name: _____

In Memory of: _____

In Honor of: _____



**YOUTH GROUP
WHITE ELEPHANT
GIFT EXCHANGE**

DECEMBER 8, 2021 • 5:30 PM
Immanuel Lutheran Church
Bring a wrapped gift of \$5-10 value to participant!
All Ages Welcome!!
Contact Brittany with any questions 715-202-0637



SNOW SHOVELING

We are looking for volunteers to shovel/snowblow the sidewalks January through April. If you are interested, please call the church office @ 715-362-5910.

Thank you for volunteering!

COUNCIL MINUTES

IMMANUEL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Council Meeting Minutes: October 13, 2021

Council Members Present: President: Matt Johnson, Secretary JoAnne Barrix, Glen Johnson, Mary Wolf, Keith Snyder, Gene Frane, Bill Mattson, Darlene Machtan, Jackie Waldorf, Deb Rinka, Charlie Strong, Pastor Tammy Barthels.

Opening

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

Devotion by Bill: God is speaking, Franciscan Blessing

Action – Motion/Second/ Carried...Approved the minutes from the September 8, 2021 council meeting with 3 abstentions.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Tammy is in discussion with the Sheriff's department about providing spiritual support for inmates. What can the ministerial association do for them? Also, visits to nursing homes are difficult with facilities closing due to Covid. Pastor recommended sending cards to residents. She will include addresses in her Monday email.

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

1. Witness: Sharing the Gospel (3xyear): Darlene shared a story about Gig for God outreach. The jail ministry and cards to shut-ins are examples.
2. Administer and oversee financial affairs and budget (quarterly): Benevolence contributions and the Building fund were discussed.
3. Staff: Evaluate, Support, and Maintain relationships (2xyear): It was stated that Kari is doing a good job as administrative assistant.

A. Boundaries Training: The synod recommends that youth leaders, pulpit supply people, Sunday School teachers, and council members attend this training. It is a 2 hour class that can be signed up for on the Synod Web site. **Action – Motion/Second/Carried...**Mandate that all people that work with youth in our church take this training with the church covering any costs.

Short-Term Items:

Old Business: None

New Business:

1. Covid update/guidelines: Bill shared background data about the cases climbing. We are in a Covid era as scientists are continually working against new variants. It is recommended that we continue with our current precautions.
2. Stewardship Sunday (11/14): JoAnne shared that stewardship is continuing with the caring for creation theme with an emphasis on Immanuel's thriving ministries. Readings and hymns for the service have been chosen. The worship service will be in-person and live streamed. Immediately after the service there will be a Zoom gathering with stewardship questions to ponder. We also plan to have a drawing for a gift basket for all that attend.
3. Council nominations for 2022: There will be a vote the 2nd week in December. Matt, Jackie and Gene will be going off council. Charlie has volunteered to serve another term.
4. Social Media Guidelines: Cory formulated a working document based on research from other facilities. **Action – Motion/Second/Carried...**Approve and accept the document as written to church policy.
5. Use of church space (Northwoods Face Mask Warriors): This group has asked to use our facility to bag and box masks with no more than 3 people at a time. They will sanitize chairs and tables that they use. **Action – Motion/Second/Carried...**Allow Northwoods Face Mask Warriors to use our facility one day a week thru the end of the year.

Committee Actions and other noteworthy items:

Action – Motion/Second/Carried... Purchase needed items for AED at an approximate cost of \$150.00.

Action – Motion/Second/Carried...Enroll Pastor Tammy in Portico insurance at the same level as in the past. Pastor Tammy abstained.

Worship and Music committee is planning regarding Christmas services. Christmas Eve is on a Friday. Should there be three services? Possibly 3:00, 4:30 and 6:00 PM? Should there be a sign-up so social distancing can be maintained? We will consider these questions further next month.

Reminder: Open and Close for November: Charlie and JoAnne

Next scheduled meeting is November 10, 2021 Devotion: Jackie

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 7:05 PM after closing prayer.

Closing Prayer: JoAnne closed with A Disciple's Prayer

Respectfully Submitted,
JoAnne Barrix, Council Secretary

**Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp
YOUTH RETREAT:
BUILDING ON FAITH FOR GRADES 3—6**

If you have a child in grades 3-6
that would like to
go to this fun retreat,
please let Brittany know ASAP
so we can register the youth.



**YOUTH RETREAT:
BUILDING ON FAITH
FOR GRADES 3-6**

February 25-26, 2022
Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp
Crystal Falls, MI
Learn more and register at fortunelake.org

FEATURING:

- Snow tubing
- Campfires & singing
- S'MORES!
- New and old friends
- Delicious meals
- All kinds of building activities to grow our faith



**RHINELANDER AREA FOOD
PANTRY VOLUNTEERS**

A big thank you to our November crew!

Immanuel Lutheran volunteers the 2nd Saturday of the month from 10:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

There are many tasks at the Food Pantry from weighing items and stocking shelves to carrying out groceries.

Please consider volunteering for this ministry!



CONFIRMED IN CHRIST

Congratulations to Emma Bierman, Johanna Dellenbach, and Payton McCue who confirmed their faith in Christ in October. They are pictured with Pastor Tammy Barthels and Youth Leader Brittany Landphier.

Emma and her parents, Char and Jason Bierman, and brother, Gage, are pictured above left.

Payton and his parents, Melissa and Fred McCue and sister, Mariah, are pictured above right.

Johanna and her parents, Christy and Cory Dellenbach, and sister, Natalie, are pictured below left.

December 2021

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

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3	4
			1pm Quilting 6pm - 7:30pm Confirmation		Pastor's Sabbath	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
9:00 Worship Communion 2nd Sunday of Advent	7pm AA & Alanon	6pm Stewardship Zoom	1pm Quilting 5:30pm Youth Group White Elephant Gift Exchange 6pm Council		Pastor's Sabbath <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: auto;">Newsletter Articles Due!!!</div>	10:30-1:00 Food Pantry
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
9:00 Worship 3rd Sunday of Advent	7pm AA & Alanon		1pm Quilting 6pm - 7:30pm Confirmation	11:00 Rhinelander Ministerial Association	Pastor's Sabbath	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
9:00 Worship Communion 4th Sunday of Advent CHRISTMAS PROGRAM	7pm AA & Alanon	7pm Blue Christmas Ecumenical Service at First Congregational Church	1pm Quilting 4:30 Meal @ Frederick Place		Christmas Eve 3:00 pm 4:30 pm and online 6:00 pm <i>Limit to 50 people per service.</i> Please call the office to reserve your space. More services will be added if these times fill.	Christmas Day
26	27	28	29	30		
9:00 Worship	7pm AA & Alanon	All Nursing home worship services are cancelled this month!				
<p>Pastor Tammy is on vacation December 26, 2021 through January 1, 2022. If you are in need of pastoral assistance, please contact Pastor Devon Barrix at 715-277-4983 or 715-490-6153.</p>						

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

October 2021

GENERAL FUND:

Beginning Balance	\$17,252.68
Offerings	\$13,119.54
Expenses	(\$13,442.06)
Ending Balance	\$16,930.16

BENEVOLENCE:

October Offering	\$ 1,429.50
2021 Pledge	\$19,000.00
YTD Remittance	\$15,276.02

BUILDING FUND:

Beginning Balance	\$26,339.70
Offerings	\$ 1,244.57
Expenses	(\$ 42.86)
Ending Balance	\$27,541.41

Expenses exceeded the
income by \$322.52.



12/1	Brooklyn Meyer	12/17	Harper Kral
12/8	Scott Schulz	12/19	Angeline Hoppe
12/9	Anita Foss-Nelson	12/20	Jaxon Meyer
12/11	Cindy Kuehn	12/20	Shirley Scholtes
12/12	Travis Drossart	12/25	Bryan Kral
12/12	Joseph Patrone	12/25	James Wood
12/14	Adam Schmitz	12/27	Dianne Syms
12/14	Nathan Schmitz	12/28	Mary Gregory
12/15	Jason Bierman		

October Attendance:

	In-person	Online	Total
10/03	38	54	92
10/10	33	57	90
10/17	42	58	100
10/24	40	56	96
10/31	51	67	118

Our average worship attendance for the month of October was 99.



12/2	Tom & Dee Montgomery
12/9	Kellie & Joshua Kral
12/15	Ronald & Ruth Palm
12/18	Barbara & Gene Frane
12/20	Terri & Ronald Johnson
12/22	Edna & Duane Snyder
12/30	Otto & Mary Schoeneck
12/30	Karen & Daniel Stroede
12/30	Darlene Machtan & Homer Van Meter
12/31	Joanne & Bernie Dart

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

Electronic Service Requested

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Rhineland, WI
PERMIT NO. 194

Christmas Eve Worship Schedule

Friday, December 24

3:00 pm in-person

4:30 pm in-person and online

6:00 pm in-person

****Limited to 50 people
per service.**

***Pease call the office to reserve
your space. More services will be
scheduled if these times fill.***



**Join us for
in-person worship
Sundays at 9 a.m.
All are Welcome!**

Or join online

1) Through YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYfWH9caWNuzOxf9T9JgecQ> or search Immanuel Rhineland) on YouTube.

2) Through our website:
www.immanuelrhineland.org/worship
(you'll also find the bulletin and lessons here).

3) Through our phone app. Just click on the "worship" button at the bottom of the screen.
The live stream will begin at about 8:55.