

THE MESSENGER

July 2021

The newsletter of Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church

July Weekly Schedule

Sunday @ 8:00 am **Worship Service with Guidelines**
such as distancing, face masks, reduced touch, etc.

Sunday @ 9:00 am **Worship Service** (traditional format)

Monday @ 6:30 pm **Worship Service** (traditional format)

Worship Livestream

Christ Ev. Lutheran Church provides an internet livestream broadcast during many of the **Sunday services** (9:00 am). Subscribe to the YouTube channel (Christ Ev. Lutheran Church :: Merrill, WI :: WELS) to get updates about the live streaming schedule. The videos are available on the channel to watch at one's convenience.

Services on the Air

A Christ Ev. Lutheran Church worship service is on the air **Sunday mornings at 8:00 am** on 96.3FM, 730AM, and streaming at bluejay963.com, Alexa, and TuneIn (for mobile streaming).

Worship Needs Survey:

Each household has received a survey in their mailbox regarding member **worship needs**. The Elders will review the answers received and present the results at the July Quarterly meeting. **Please return the survey by July 19 to the Elders narthex mailbox.**

In this Messenger:

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- 4) Christ Facebook Group
- 4) Birthdays
- 4) Stewardship Committee Updates

- 4) SCRIP sales

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- 6) VBS Recap



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Be Like Manasseh

If I were to ask you to name the most wicked person mentioned in the Bible whom would you pick? I imagine most of us would think of King Ahab, his wife Jezebel, or Judas as being some of the most wicked people mentioned in the Bible. But there is another person described in the Bible as being truly wicked. His name was Manasseh and he was king over Judah for 55 years. 2 Chronicles 33 describes all the wicked things Manasseh did. He made altars dedicated to Baal and Asherah. He worshiped every starry host. He placed a carved image inside God's temple. He practiced sorcery and witchcraft. He even sacrificed his sons. God tried to reach out to his people, but they didn't listen to him because Manasseh had led them astray. Manasseh was so wicked that the Bible describes him as being more evil than the wicked nations that used to be in Canaan. Because of this eventually God sent the king of Assyria who took Manasseh as a prisoner and brought him to Babylon.

At first glance we are shocked to hear about how wicked Manasseh was, but all that you have to do is glance at yourself and you will realize just how wicked we can be. We might not think we would ever do the wicked things that Manasseh did, but in a lot of ways we are no different. We may not have altars dedicated to false gods, but anytime our hearts are dedicated to love things more than God is idolatry. Anytime we believe in superstitions, reading horoscopes, or playing around with Ouija boards is a form of witchcraft. We haven't sacrificed our sons to false gods, but are we sacrificing the souls of our children by neglecting to instruct them with God's Word? The times when we refuse to listen to God's Word and let it work in our hearts is wickedness, and we might even lead people astray when they see our actions.

Because of this you might be wondering why the title of this devotion is: **Be Like Manasseh**. It's because of what Manasseh eventually did. **While he was in exile he remembered who God is and prayed to him, and God listened to his prayer.** God brought him back from exile. **Thankful for what God did, Manasseh showed his love for God by his actions.** He destroyed the altars he had made. He destroyed the carved image he placed inside God's temple. **He worshiped God** by offering up sacrifices to him. All the while he was leading the people away from their idolatry to worship the true God.

This is the type of Manasseh we want to be. **God wants us to pray to him asking for his forgiveness for the sins we have done. When we offer up that prayer God listens to us. Thankful of this, we will be like Manasseh and show love for God by our actions.** Ask God to help you to remove any idolatry in your heart so that you can fear, love, and trust in him above all things. Instead of dabbling around with any form of witchcraft **engulf yourself in God's Word to guide you. Continue to instruct your children with God's Word so that they will grow in their faith. Continue to encourage one another to come to church** all the more as we await the Day that Jesus returns. In this way you will be like Manasseh and may God help us to do this.

- Pastor Neal Behm



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 6:30 pm Council Meeting	2 1:45 pm Worship @ Bell Tower	3
4 8:00 am Worship w/ Guidelines (Holy Communion) 9:00 am Worship (Holy Communion)	5 6:30 pm Worship (Holy Communion) Family Week @ Camp Phillip (through Friday)	6	7	8	9	10 9:00 am Men's Bible Study
11 8:00 am Worship w/ Guidelines 9:00 am Worship 2:00 pm Softball @ St. John's, Hamburg	12 6:30 pm Worship	13	14	15	16	17 Softball Tournament @ Immanuel, Corning
18 8:00 am Worship w/ Guidelines (Holy Communion) 9:00 am Worship (Holy Communion) Softball Tournament @ Immanuel, Corning	19 6:30 pm Worship (Holy Communion)	20 6:00 pm Board of Elders Meeting	21	22	23	24 Softball Tournament @ Faith, Maine
25 8:00 am Worship w/ Guidelines 9:00 am Worship 10:15 am Voters' Meeting Softball Tournament @ Faith, Maine	26 6:30 pm Worship WELS Synod Convention (through Wednesday)	27	28	29	30	31

EDUCATION MINISTRY OPPORTUNITY:

Are you a voting member that has an interest in having a direct voice on the educational happenings of our church? One way to provide that input is by serving on the Board of Christian Education. The basic objectives of this board are to plan and administer the total education program of the congregation, to determine policies, to select personnel for the various agencies, to propose the necessary means and facilities for the agencies, and to direct and supervise the entire educational program of the congregation. Please contact Scott Schult or email ChristMerrillEducation@gmail.com to ask questions or express an interest.

COMMUNION UPDATE: White grape juice will be offered as an alternative for those that have a need for it. When the individual cups come around, the grape juice will be set apart on a section of the outside rim of the tray. Please contact Pastor Behm if you have any questions.

STAY ROOTED IN GOD'S WORD,

STAY CONNECTED: Due to the unique time we have been living in, the Elders will be giving members a clean slate in terms of attendance. Starting on September 1, the Elders will begin to use a system that lovingly addresses absenteeism through a series of contacts.

The first goal is to make sure that people are fed with God's Word regularly, even if the circumstances of their life prevent them from being able to attend worship.

The second goal is to follow up on members who have been absent from worship for longer periods of time. The Elders want to gently encourage them to return to faithful use of Word and sacrament. God powerfully comes down when His people gather together; through this gathering we can carry out encouragement, confession, forgiveness, accountability and prayer for our family of believers. (Matt 18:20; James 5:16; 1 Thes 5:11; Gal 6:1-2; Luke 17:3; Eph 2:19-22).

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY is held at 9:00 am on the **second Saturday** of the month in the church basement. Neil Varnum will lead the study *Patience Gives Way to Complaint (Job 2:11-3:26)*.

To join the class virtually, use this link:

<https://kennethcerney.my.webex.com/kennethcerney.my/j.php?MTID=m009f131e1cbdced169578ba2886bb5f4>

JOIN THE CHRIST LUTHERAN FACEBOOK GROUP:

This group is a place for members of the congregation to interact, ask questions, and build each other up as the body of Christ. To join, go to:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/christmerrill>

JULY BIRTHDAYS

1 Patrick Kleinschmidt	15 Vicki Lindstrom
3 Ariana Raddatz	16 Ken Cerney
3 Kayoda Raddatz	19 Brian Stockowitz
9 Larry Woller	20 Deana Jankowsky
10 Lynda Kropp	22 Del Jaeger
13 Seth Line	23 Peggy Boehm
13 Nikki Stockowitz	25 Jennifer Heisinger
13 Cynthia Varnum	29 Bonnie Huth
14 Carl Christian	30 Nick Cordova

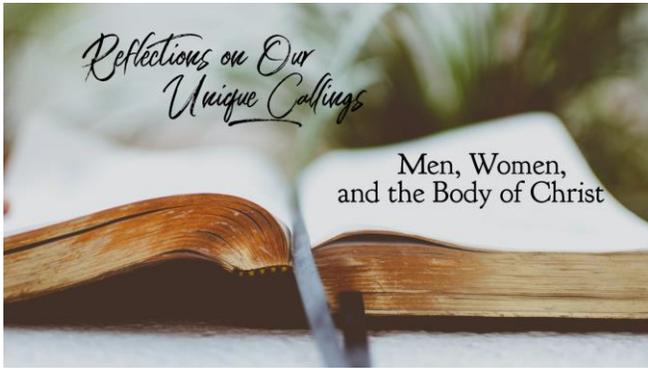
STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE UPDATES:

Members are welcome to bring canned goods or non-perishable items to church and put them in the donation box in the narthex. The committee will be rolling out **Interest Surveys** in July.

NLHS SCRIP SALES: You can purchase gifts cards for your everyday expenses such as gas, groceries, clothing, household items or dining out. A percentage of each gift card you purchase is given to Northland Lutheran High School as a rebate. Cindy Whitson is available to assist you.

Please submit items for next month's Messenger by the 20th of this month to the Messenger slot in the top row of narthex mailboxes or email Messenger@ChristMerrill.com.

Around the WELS



Sign up for a twice-weekly devotion series, *Reflections on Our Unique Callings: Men, Women, and the Body of Christ*, that explores biblical principles and applications, poses thoughts and questions for further reflection, and encourages conversations on how our unique callings find their fulfillment in the home, the church, and the world. Sign up today at <https://wels.net/unique-callings>

2021 WELS Convention

The 2021 *Book of Reports and Memorials* is now available online. This book summarizes the activities of each area of ministry over the last year and contains the proposed ministry financial plan for the next biennium. The information in the *Book of Reports and Memorials* will help guide the delegates of **WELS' 66th biennial convention**, which is being conducted in an altered format this year.

The in-person convention is being held at Luther Preparatory School, Watertown, Wis., **July 26–28**. Only the chairman, secretary, and two laymen from each floor committee will be present. Floor committees will conduct their business and adopt their reports and resolutions via virtual meetings in advance of the convention. Elections will also be held electronically in advance. Delegates who are not attending in person will be able to vote on convention resolutions remotely.

The entire convention will focus on the theme “**Here we stand.**” This theme reminds us of Martin Luther’s willingness to risk his life with his bold stand on the Word of God 500 years ago at the Diet of Worms. Our convention will focus on this theme to remind us that for the Christian church today to carry out its mission faithfully, the same bold stand on the Word of God is necessary.

Major items for consideration at this convention include:

- the proposed ministry financial plan (budget) for 2021–23,
- increasing opportunities that God is giving our synod to proclaim the gospel to a growing number of people around the world, and
- a recommended change in the WELS Pension Plan.

To view the online version of the *Book of Reports and Memorials*, visit wels.net/2021synodconvention.

Serving together with you in Christ,
WELS President Mark Schroeder

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Taste of MISSIONS
Virtual
July 11-17, 2021

Join us online!

- Exciting video updates
- Q&As with missionaries
- Inspirational worship
- Family-friendly activities
- Ethnic recipes from mission fields

Learn more and register for updates at tasteofmissions.com

Mark Your Calendars!

September 25, 2021 Iron Men of God Conference
[Ironmenofgodwi.org](https://ironmenofgodwi.org)

March 4-6, 2022 Pathways to Christ Retreat
<https://pathwaystochrist.org/>

July 21-23, 2022 Women’s Ministry Conference
<https://wels.net/serving-you/christian-life/womens-ministry/>

Family Vacation Bible School

Ready, Set, Gold: God . . . gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 15:57). **Thanks** to those that attended Vacation Bible school (VBS) to strengthen your faith in the victory that is yours through Jesus. We hope you enjoyed your time. **Thank you** to those that supported VBS by welcoming people; teaching; leading games, music and crafts; serving and providing food; and cleaning up.

