

THE MESSENGER

May 2021

The newsletter of Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church

2021 Summer Worship

Thank you to everyone who offered feedback on our summer worship schedule. Our family of believers has met the changing spiritual and physical needs of our members in the past and we will continue to strive to do so now and in the future. We do this not by looking to our own interests, but by each of us looking to the interests (needs) of others (Phillipians 2:1-4).

To meet those needs, there will be three service offerings, **starting on May 30:**

- **Sunday, 8:00 am worship**
 - With guidelines (distancing, masks, reduced touch, etc.)
 - Approximately 30 minutes
- **Sunday, 9:00 am worship**
- **Monday, 6:30 pm worship**

Holy Communion will be available on the first and third Sundays of the month and on Mondays following a Sunday with Holy Communion.

The Board of Elders will be reviewing this format at its monthly meetings and will make adjustments as needed. Please continue to provide feedback through your elder or via email to elders@christmerrill.com.

Worship Livestream

Christ Ev. Lutheran Church will be providing an internet livestream broadcast during many of the **Sunday services** (10:30 am through May 23; 9:00 am starting May 30). Please subscribe to the YouTube channel (Christ Ev. Lutheran Church :: Merrill, WI :: WELS) to get updates about the live streaming schedule.

In this Messenger:

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A Bond of Love

“Do not hide your face from me, do not turn your servant away in anger; you have been my helper. Do not reject me or forsake me, O God my Savior. Though my father and mother forsake me, the LORD will receive me.” (Psalm 27:9-10)

On May 9th we will be celebrating Mother’s Day, and **what a blessing motherhood is both for mothers and for children.** Even before we were born we heard our mother’s voice and the songs and melodies that she would sing and hum to us. When our mothers heard our cries for the first time this brought tears of joy to her eyes. Our mothers were the first ones to teach us about our ABC’s, 123’s, and about Jesus as our Savior. As mothers you have the joy of watching your children grow. And for us who are now adults who no longer live with our mothers, we still love and thank them for everything they did for us and still do for us.

So it is appropriate for us to think of our mothers and thank them, not only on Mother’s Day but everyday. Yet, I, and possibly you as well, have experienced people who do not like Mother’s Day, not because of the commercialism but for different reasons. Some people didn’t grow up with a mother. Some people grew up with mothers who weren’t kind and loving as they should have been. Some people, now as adults, have a poor relationship with their mothers. Therefore the concept of celebrating Mother’s Day can bring grief and hard feelings.

And how is it possible that people can have grief and hard feelings with their mothers? It’s because of our sinful nature. As children we don’t perfectly honor our mothers as we should, and even growing up as adults we still don’t perfectly honor them and therefore poor relationships can happen. As mothers we may not perfectly love our children and care for them as we should. So it is possible that a mother may forsake her own child.

It is for this very reason I quoted the passage above from the book of Psalms. I would encourage you to read Psalm 27 which begins by saying that the Lord is our light and salvation and therefore we have nothing to fear. We don’t even have to fear if our own fathers and mothers forsake us because the Lord receives us. He never hides his face from us but always turns his face toward us to listen and to help us. Although the Lord should reject and forsake us because of our sins, Jesus Christ was rejected and forsaken by his Father on the cross so that he can be our Savior. Therefore, **as strong as a bond of love is between a mother and her child, the bond of love between the Lord and us is even stronger.**

So as we celebrate Mother’s Day thanking our mothers for everything they do, let us also thank our Lord who has given us our mothers. And if you don’t plan on celebrating Mother’s Day for whatever reason because of your past, we can still **thank our Lord for he never rejects or forsakes us because he is our Savior who will receive us both now and forevermore.**

- Pastor Neal Behm



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 8:00 am Worship w/ Guidelines (Holy Communion) 9:00 am Children's Group Time 9:15 am Youth Education 9:15 am Adult Bible Study 10:30 am Worship (Holy Communion)	3 5:00 pm Board of Christian Education Meeting	4	5 9:00 am Adult Bible Study 4:45 pm Bylaw Review Committee Meeting	6	7	8 9:00 am Men's Bible Study
9 8:00 am Worship w/ Guidelines 9:00 am Children's Group Time 9:15 am Youth Education 9:15 am Adult Bible Study 10:30 am Worship	10 6:00 pm Women's Bible Study	11 6:30 pm Council Meeting	12 9:00 am Adult Bible Study	13	14	15
16 8:00 am Worship w/ Guidelines (Holy Communion) 9:00 am Children's Group Time 9:15 am Youth Education 9:15 am Adult Bible Study 10:30 am Worship (Holy Communion) 4:00 pm Softball @Faith, Maine	17 6:00 pm Board of Elders Meeting	18	19 9:00 am Adult Bible Study 4:45 pm Bylaw Review Committee Meeting	20	21	22
23 8:00 am Worship w/ Guidelines 9:00 am Youth Group Car Wash 9:00 am Children's Group Time 9:15 am Sunday School 9:15 am Adult Bible Study 10:30 am Worship 2:00 pm Softball @ Faith, Maine	24	25	26	27	28	29
30 8:00 am Worship w/ Guidelines 9:00 am Worship	31 6:30 pm Worship					

Weekly Sunday Schedule through May 23

8:00 – 9:00 am	Worship Service with Guidelines such as distancing, face masks, reduced touch, etc.
9:00 – 9:15 am	Sunday School Group Time – basement
9:15 – 10:15 am	Education Hour – Adult, Teen, and Youth
10:30 – 11:30 am	Worship Service conducted in a traditional format

YOUTH GROUP CAR WASH: Sunday, May 23 at church from 9:00 - 10:30 am. For a free-will donation, the Youth Group will wash your car. Sign up to reserve your car wash time by calling 715-536-4180 or sign up at church.

Congratulations!

2021 high school graduates:

Delainy Stockowitz and ***Abigail Rasmussen***.

Megan Cordova was confirmed on May 2.

Ben Stahoski Award: This annual award is given out to a catechism class youth that can recite all the books of the Bible in order in the fastest time. This year ***Derek Schult*** had the fastest time of 59.16 seconds.

NLHS DELEGATES: Curt Whitson and Tom Marheine have been reappointed as our delegates to the association meetings at Northland Lutheran High School. Please provide them with any input or questions that you may have.

CAMP PHILLIP DELEGATES NEEDED: Christ Lutheran is a congregational member of Camp Phillip. As members of a corporation congregation, our church members receive a 10% discount on all camp programs. Each congregation may also select two adult male members to serve as representatives at the annual meeting in June. Men interested in representing our church should contact Scott Schult.

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

CALLED WORKER TUITION ASSISTANCE: The fund designed to financially assist students is currently below its maintenance goal; please consider making an offering.

P-16 TUITION ASSISTANCE FUND: The P16 Tuition Assistance Fund is designed to financially assist those who attend WELS preschools, grade, middle and high schools. Please consider contributing to the fund.

THRIVENT CHOICE: Thrivent Choice provides a platform for members to have a financial impact on the causes and nonprofits they care about. Eligible members can recommend where Thrivent distributes a portion of its charitable funding by directing Choice Dollars. Members become eligible for Thrivent Choice based on insurance premiums, contract values and Thrivent volunteer leadership. Monies designated for Christ Lutheran are placed into the P-16 Tuition Assistance Fund. Visit Thrivent.com/thriventchoice or call 800- 847-4836 and, when prompted, say "Thrivent Choice" for more information.

CONTACT INFORMATION CHANGE? Please write your current address, phone number(s), and/or email address on the Friendship Register page next to your name. Thanks.

NORTHLAND BUS DRIVER NEEDED! The Merrill/Wausau route will need a driver for the 2021-22 school year. This is an ideal opportunity for a retired person, or anyone with a serving heart and time in the morning and late afternoon. The position is paid. If interested, please contact Ryan Wiechmann at 715-297-4427.

MAY BIRTHDAYS

2 Donna Polak	17 Dave Polak
6 Frank Abbrederis	20 Avery Kleinschmidt
7 Robert Dehnel	23 Lily Kotila
8 Ken Neff	25 Mitchell Stockowitz
10 Daniel Whitson	26 Brenda Rasmussen
10 Renee Waliczek	26 Wally Pontel
14 Kathleen Plummer	29 Russ Rasmussen
15 Joe Plummer	30 Grace Berg

Bible Studies at Christ

Women's Bible Study will be held from 6-7 pm on **Monday, May 10**. The topic is *Martha and Mary*. **To join the class virtually**, use this link: <https://meet.google.com/egv-bntw-ewt>

Wednesday Adult Bible Study meets at 9:00 am; the current study is about the book of *John*. The final class date for this spring is May 19.

Sunday Adult Bible Study meets at 9:15 am in the sanctuary; the current study is on the book of *Peter*. The final class date for this spring is May 23.

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 on the book of *Job*.

To join the class virtually, use this link: <https://kennethcerney.my.webex.com/kennethcerney.my/j.php?MTID=m009f131e1cbdced169578ba2886bb5f4>

WELS Resources

WELS FAMILY DEVOTIONS

Get your family into God's Word during the week! WELS has developed short devotions for the entire family to use. Each devotion comes complete with a set of questions for different age groups, a prayer, and hymn verses that can be sung or spoken. Downloadable printable versions are also available. Find the family devotions at wels.net/family-devotions.

WELS TOGETHER E-NEWSLETTER

Stay in the loop! Subscribe to the WELS Together e-newsletter to stay connected with the people of your synod and the ministry they serve. Also, don't miss the twice-monthly videos that cover important and exciting synod news. Go to wels.net/together to read more and subscribe today.

WELS MEMBERS CONNECT

Join the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod online community at facebook.com/welslutherans, twitter.com/welstweets, instagram.com/welslutherans, and vimeo.com/wels.

In Appreciation

Thank you to everyone for accommodating the needs of others so that all can attend a service format they prefer and in which they feel comfortable.

Thank you to those that have stepped up to fill open roles to meet the needs of others.

Thank you to the members of the Technology Committee for all your work behind the scenes to make worship services, Bible studies and meetings available virtually.

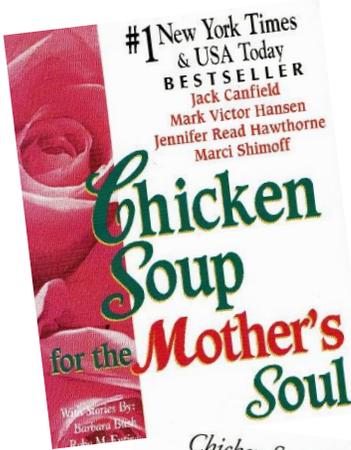
Summer Vacation Bible School



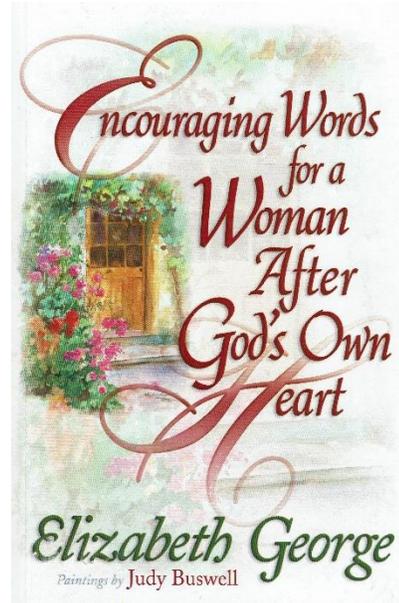
Learn about hard work, cooperation, and victory in Christ with *Ready, Set, Gold!* This engaging program **for the whole family (children and adults)** shows everyone that they have been granted the greatest win through Jesus Christ. All will see how Olympic sports illustrate scriptural truths about the Christian journey. The gospel-centered lessons and Olympic-themed activities emphasize **training** in the Word, **trusting** in God as a part of his team, **servicing** our fellow Christian teammates, and **celebrating the victory** through our Savior.

More information about dates and times will be coming soon.

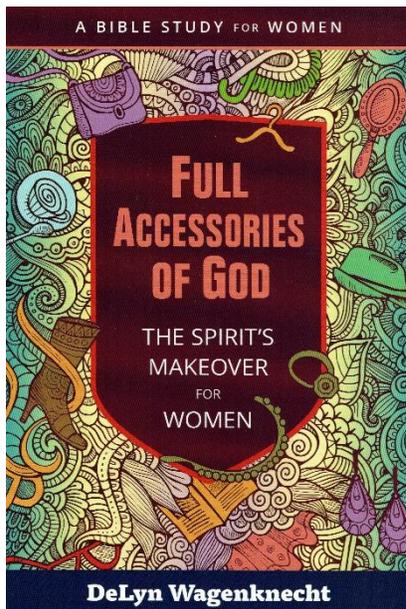
Check out what's NEW in our church library!



Chicken Soup for the Mother's Soul pays tribute to motherhood—the universal calling that requires the skills of a master mediator, mentor, cook and counselor. These heartwarming stories celebrate the defining moments of motherhood from the triumphant to the trivial: from giving birth to developing a mother's intuition, from making special memories and surviving family life to letting go. Whether you are an expectant mother, a grandmother or you appreciate the maternal influence in your life, you will laugh, cry and reflect upon the joys and difficulties of being a mom.



Through engaging stories and timeless prayers, beloved author Elizabeth George offers inspiration for your heart, soul, and home. She invites you to experience the blessings of knowing God's heart as you exchange life's cares for God's comfort, embrace His wisdom, and discover His path of grace, peace, and joy.



Do you ever find yourself browsing the shelves at a shoe store, scanning the glass cases at a jeweler's, or gravitating toward the scarves at a boutique because you felt that adding an accessory to your wardrobe would boost your confidence and charisma? Accessories have a certain place of importance in our lives.

Much more important are the spiritual accessories that come to us from the Holy Spirit. They equip us to live our faith in appreciation for God's love and to share that love with others who—just like us—need the encouragement of the Word at all times and in all places.

Full Accessories of God: The Spirit's Makeover for Women is a six-week Bible study for group or personal study. Each of the six chapters includes five daily readings and a sixth day for discussion or reflection. The daily readings include questions for consideration and suggestions for prayer. The study can easily be adapted to the preferred schedule of any group, whether they meet in person or online. Ultimately, *Full Accessories of God* will help you see the ways the Holy Spirit prepares you to live in the truth of the gospel and connect with others through it.

The church library, located in the lower level near the windows, has many more items available to help you and your family grow in faith. Take a look at the resources and take home a book, CD, or DVD today!

Meet our Members



Diane Thoune

Married to **Matt**, 20 years

Children: Sonia, Danielle

Job Title: Civil Engineer

Describe the type of things you would do during a general workday: I design water and wastewater systems. My tasks include reviewing plans and specifications and writing technical reports. I also interact with clients and manage construction projects.

About how many years have you been a member of Christ Lutheran Church? 3

Share a memory of the church from when you first started attending. I remember feeling welcome and like this was a place where we could belong.

Share a Bible verse that is a favorite of yours and tell why it is meaningful to you. My confirmation verse: "Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life." (Revelation 2:10) It reminds me of my eternal life in heaven and why it's important to keep growing my faith.

What's your favorite way to spend a day off? Being outdoors doing an activity with my family or friends.

What are your hobbies? Hiking, reading, stitching, gardening

What pets do you have? a mixed breed dog named Hank. He's not the brightest, but he is pretty much fearless and he's good at getting rid of unwanted critters around our house.

What is your favorite holiday tradition? My favorite tradition is all our big family get-togethers.



Megan Cordova

Parents: Nick & Christy

Brother: James

Favorite school classes and what you enjoy about them? Math because I have always been good at it; English because I like writing; and Spanish for when I go to Mexico.

Favorite way to spend a day off? Sleeping

Favorite types of books? Romance

Hobbies? sports, music, writing

Favorite sport to watch? Play? Football Play? Softball

Which states/countries have you lived in or visited? Wisconsin, Michigan, Minnesota, California/ USA, Mexico, Dominican Republic

What church-related activities do you most enjoy? I like everything because I love socializing and having people around.

What pets do you have? Dog (Bella) and 2 cats (Spots & Buster)

What is your favorite holiday tradition? Christmas Eve, being with my family

Share a favorite Bible verse: My confirmation verse: Jeremiah 29:11 "'For I know the plans I have for you,' says the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.'"

In an effort to promote the feeling of community and friendship amongst church members, each month's Messenger will feature one or more individuals of our congregation. Questionnaires are available for all members below the narthex mailboxes. Completed forms can be placed in the Messenger slot in the top row of narthex mailboxes. Information can also be submitted using this Google Form link: <https://forms.gle/oGZcXKTbpa5mPW8K8>

Meet our Members



Marion Schmoltdt, *pictured with Roger*

Married to **Roger** 58 years; he was called home to be with Jesus in February 2021

Children: Gregg, Todd, Scott

Retired

About how many years have you been a member of Christ Lutheran Church? 28

Share a memory of the church from when you first started attending. So many of the established members were so kind to us; Art and Gert Duerr come to mind.

What positions of service do you have within the church? What do you enjoy about serving in those capacities? I started playing organ for services shortly after coming to Christ Lutheran and have been privileged to do so ever since. Playing music has been my joy almost all my life and I feel happy to be a part of the services by playing. I also was choir director for many years. I make the arrangements of flowers for the chancel area; I enjoy working with materials to make something beautiful.

Share a Bible passage that is a favorite of yours and tell why it is meaningful to you. Psalm 23. Knowing the Lord is always there for me, taking me through this life and into the next.

Which states or countries have you lived in or visited? Lived in Wisconsin and Arizona; visited many places in between. Visited the Virgin Islands, Canada, and Puerto Rico.

What are your hobbies? Playing piano, reading, floral arranging, baking

What authors or types of books do you enjoy most? Agatha Christie mysteries

What type of pet do you have? A dog named Daisy, my constant companion

What is an activity you enjoy doing with your children or grandchildren? My grandchildren are all grown, and my great grandkids live a distance away, but I like seeing them on Facebook.

What is your favorite sport to watch? Football, golf, and Badger basketball

What is your favorite holiday tradition? Celebrating the Lord's birth, death and resurrection – all essential for our salvation.

What is a topic you would like to learn more about? I really enjoy attending the church's Bible classes and learning so much more information about our God.

In an effort to promote the feeling of community and friendship amongst church members, each month's Messenger will feature one or more people/families of our congregation. Questionnaires are available for all members below the narthex mailboxes. Completed forms can be placed in the Messenger slot in the top row of narthex mailboxes. Information can also be submitted using this Google Form link: <https://forms.gle/oGZcXKTBpa5mPW8K8>