

THE MESSENGER

August 2023

The newsletter of Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church

Church Outdoor Worship & Picnic

Sunday, August 13 there will be an outdoor worship service at **10:30 am** at **Riverside Park** in Merrill followed by a **picnic at 11:30 am**, with outdoor games afterward. The meat will be catered for the picnic; attendees are asked to bring a dish to pass.

Regular worship services will be held at the church on Sunday, August 13 at 9:00 am as well as **Monday, August 14 at 6:30 pm**.

Mini Golf & Mexican Food

Sunday, August 27

Mini Golf Time: 2:00 pm

Location: 107 Bait Shack
(near Council Grounds)

Cost: \$5 for 18 holes or
\$7 for 18 holes and an ice cream cone

Meal Time: 4:30 pm

Location: Casa Amigos (N2410 WI-107)



Sign up on the hall bulletin board for both or either event.

Open House/Free Garage Sale/Cook-out

Saturday, September 9 from 8:00 am to 2:00 pm. Start collecting your gently worn clothing items and household items in good condition to donate for the event.

In this Messenger:

- 1) Church Outdoor Worship & Picnic
- 1) Mini Golf & Meal
- 1) Open House/Free Garage Sale/Cook-out
- 2) Pastor's Devotion
- 3) Calendar
- 4) CW '21 Offering
- 4) CW '21 Transition
- 4) Attendance & Finance Numbers
- 4) Online Giving
- 5) Refresh the Church
- 5) Church Directory & Information Gathering
- 5) Lost & Found
- 5) *Meditations* Sign-up
- 5) Birthdays and Anniversaries
- 6) Service Reminders
- 6) NLHS Updates
- 7) Softball Pictures
- 8-10) VBS Recap



715-536-3313
www.christmerrill.com
www.facebook.com/christmerrill
1204 N. Sales Street | Merrill, WI 54452



Let Us Pray

“Pray continually.” (1 Thessalonians 5:17)

Prayer is perhaps the easiest and the most powerful thing we can do as Christians. It's easy because we are having a heart-to-heart conversation with God. It's powerful because we are talking to God who can do all things. Yet, despite all of this, during my years in ministry and simply talking to people, I have had people say the following, “I don't know what to pray for. I don't want to bother God with my prayers because he has more important things to do. I don't know how to say the right words for prayer.” Maybe you have heard others say these things or maybe you have found yourself saying this. So let's examine these statements about prayer.

“I don't know what to pray for.” In our minds we can have this idea that there are certain things that are proper to pray for and other things that are not. It is wrong to pray for things that are sinful, but besides that, God doesn't limit what we can pray for. We can pray for any and every single thing as long as we leave it to God to answer the prayer according to his will. Even Jesus did that. He prayed for God to remove his cup of suffering from him, but he submitted himself to his Father's will. Therefore, don't be afraid of what you can pray for since **you can pray for anything.**

“I don't want to bother God with my prayers because he has more important things to do.” We may have this idea because that's how it works with everyone else in the world. People can be busy with other things and they can't bother to help us with all our problems. But that doesn't apply to our God. God is present everywhere, God never gets tired, and God is never bothered by us, for we are his children. When we were children, got hurt, and cried to our parents for help, our parents dropped everything to take care of us. That's what God will do for us. He even promises to do that even if we don't pray to him. But he wants us to pray to him and communicate what we are going through.

“I don't know how to say the right words for prayer.” It is proper for us to remember that as we approach God he is the King of kings who deserves respect and honor. But God never tells us that there are right or wrong words for prayer. God never tells us that the prayers of those who use better words are better prayers than those who do not. **God just wants us to talk with him. God wants us to cast any burden upon him.** And even if you still feel intimidated to pray without using the right words then look to the Lord's Prayer. The reason Jesus gave that prayer is because his disciples asked him to teach them how to pray. So if we don't know what to say then use the prayer that our Savior taught us to pray.

Prayer is a wonderful gift from our God. He gives us the ability to approach him and talk with him. We can pray for anything from our God. We aren't bothering God with our prayers. We can speak freely with our God. Therefore let us pray and do it continually.

- Pastor Neal Behm

August 2023

View the most up to date calendar at christmerrill.com

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4 1:45 pm Worship @ Bell Tower	5
6 9:00 am Worship (Holy Communion) 3:30 pm Softball @ St. John's	7 6:30 pm Worship (Holy Communion)	8 6:30 pm Council Meeting	9	10 6:30 pm Fellowship Committee Meeting	11	12 9:00 am Northland Lutheran High School Wildcat Open
13 9:00 am Worship 10:30 am Outdoor Worship @ Riverside Park 11:30 am Church Picnic @ Riverside Park	14 6:30 pm Worship	15 9:00 am Church Refresh	16 9:00 am Church Refresh	17 6:00 pm Board of Elders Meeting	18	19 8:00 am Church Refresh
20 9:00 am Worship (Holy Communion)	21 6:30 pm Worship (Holy Communion)	22	23	24 6:00 pm Church Directory Discussion	25	26 8:00 am Church Refresh
27 9:00 am Worship 2:00 pm Mini Golf 4:00 pm Meal @ Casa Amigo	28 6:30 pm Worship	29	30	31		

8:00 am Sundays - worship service on the radio (96.3FM, 730AM)

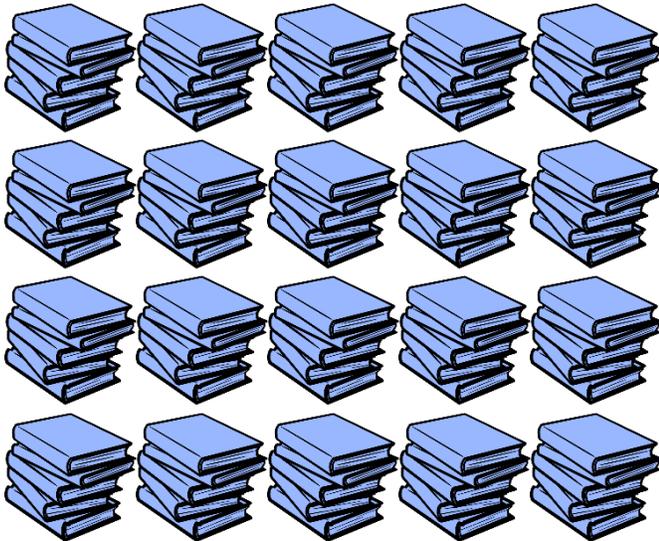
9:00 am Sundays - worship service online at [youtube.com/@christmerrill](https://www.youtube.com/@christmerrill)

TRAVELING THIS SUMMER? Find a WELS church in which to worship at <https://yearbook.wels.net/>

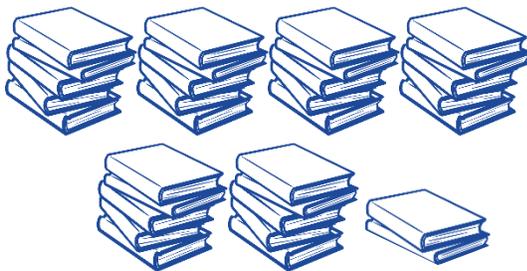
CHRISTIAN WORSHIP '21 SPECIAL OFFERING

CONTINUES: Let's do this! The goal is to have at least four new hymnals in each row for services starting in September. With shipping, the cost is about \$30 per hymnal. **Consider giving an offering to the Memorial Fund designated for "Hymnals."** Your offering can be recorded by including your name or envelope number. Envelopes are located on the right side of the mailboxes.

One hundred hymnals have already been purchased.



Thirty-two more hymnals are needed to reach the goal.



CHRISTIAN WORSHIP '21 TRANSITION

As the transition continues to the new hymnal, in October *Christian Worship (CW) '93* and *CW: Supplement* will begin to be placed on the pews at the services using them. Beginning September 17, *CW: Hymnal* will be located in the hymn racks and will be utilized for the Psalm of the Day and hymns; the liturgy settings will still be printed in the bulletin. This will help to reduce paper usage, copier expenses, and bulletin printing time. Please reach out to Pastor or your elder for additional information.

<i>Spiritual Growth Weekly Averages</i>	June
Combined Sunday & Monday worship	72
Men's Adult Bible Study	5
Vacation Bible School	33

Our Offerings to the Lord (as of 6/30/23)

Anticipated offerings: \$79,207

Actual offerings: \$68,815

Actual expenses: \$74,054

General Fund balance as of 7/9/23: \$18,541

Your offerings help to support the ministry of the congregation. We are currently trending below budget. For more information see the Treasurer Report on the bulletin board by the elevator.

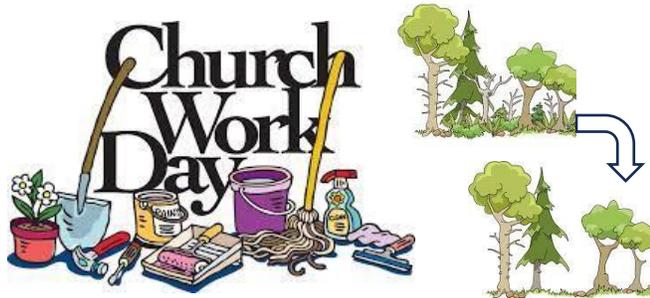
ONLINE GIVING OPTION: Christ Lutheran has an online giving option for members to give their offerings directly from their checking/savings account or with a credit card. To participate, go to www.christmerrill.com/giving. You can also give through the GivePlus app available from the App Store or Google Play. You will be given the options to give to your preferred church fund and choose to pay directly from your checking or savings account or use a credit or debit card. You will also be able to do one time giving or set up recurring giving. There is a small cost to the church to use the service; there is an option available for you to offset the processing fee when using a credit/debit card.

Your gifts will be automatically deposited in the church bank account and your giving details imported directly into Church 360 and will be tracked the same way as our current regular giving. And if you are using the app please confirm that you are giving to the correct Merrill church, **Christ Ev. Lutheran Church**.

MESSENGER SIGN-UP: To get an electronic copy of each month's *Messenger* in your email, go to ChristMerrill.com/email and subscribe to *Messenger*. Paper copies will continue to be available at church.

REFRESH THE CHURCH INDOORS AND OUTDOORS

Join us to tackle some outstanding "spring cleaning" type projects that go above and beyond what our volunteer cleaners do each week. There are several opportunities to help out: **Tuesday, August 15 and Wednesday, August 16 starting at 9 am and again at 2 pm; Saturday, August 19 and 26 starting at 8 am.** We can work with whatever amount of time you can give us and around your schedule. A list of items is located on the sign-up board in the entry.



CONNECTING OUR COMMUNITY Come on **August 24 at 6:00 pm** for a planning session about putting together a member directory and updating member information for the directory as well as church records. Everyone is welcome to attend or provide ideas to Scott S. if not able to make it.



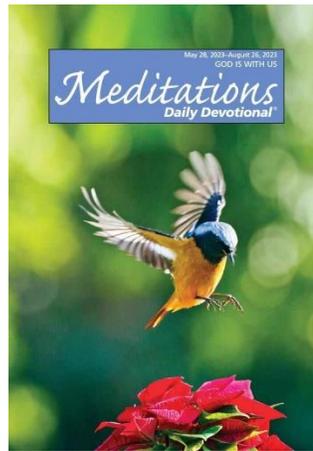
LOST AND FOUND: Located in the coat room on top of the shelf at the far end is a clear bin containing items that have been found at the church. **Please take a few moments to look through the bin and take anything that belongs to you.** Any unclaimed items will be disposed of at the end of August.



MEN'S BIBLE STUDY: The group will not meet in August, but will resume its study of *Destruction and Deliverance*, a series about the flood, on **September 16** (third Saturday) at 9:00 am. Please mark your calendars. All men are invited.

MEDITATIONS

SIGN UP



Meditations is an inspiring, personal devotional booklet offering daily Scripture-based, soul-searching studies of God's Word. Each meditation is clearly written and easy to

understand, with a special Scripture reading, devotion, and prayer for each day. *Meditations* provides scriptural guidance and encouragement for daily living. **If you would like to get a copy of this periodical for the next church year, please sign-up on the narthex bulletin board by September 17.**

MEMBER SUPPORT

Sveta H. is currently being treated in Madison. Cards, notes and other items of support may be placed in, or near, her mailbox. Someone will deliver them to her.

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

8 Jon D.		26 Sonia T.
11 Ellen C.		28 Brad B.
13 Colleen S.		29 Dan K.
15 Miley G.		31 Danielle F.
16 Donna D.		31 Ethan R.
26 Jane D.		

AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES

2 – Willi & Jennifer H.
 12 – Mike & Lynda K.

KEYBOARDIST INTEREST

Marion S. continues to be our organist and we appreciate her ongoing service. Anyone interested in playing, or learning to play, the keyboard for our worship services as a substitute, seasonally or some other time frame may reach out to Pastor or an elder to express an interest by the end of September.

ASSISTED LISTENING DEVICES are available for use during church services or meetings (headsets and earbuds are available or bring your own with 1/8" plug). The system has been improved so now the pastor, organ, congregation, and choir can all be heard through the devices. Those with family members with hearing challenges or anyone wanting to know more about the technology are welcome to try them out at any time. Pick up a bag from one of the lower left mailboxes or ask an usher for assistance. Each bag includes a receiver, batteries, earbuds, headset, and sanitizing wipes. Bags may be returned to the labeled bin for cleaning and/or battery replacement.



COMMUNION REMINDERS: White grape juice is offered as an alternative for those that have a need for it. When the individual cups come around, the grape juice is available on the outside rim of the tray. Gluten-free wafers are also available. Please speak with Pastor, an elder, or an usher before the service to express your desire for gluten-free wafers or with any questions.

WORSHIP LIVESTREAM: Christ Ev. Lutheran Church provides an internet livestream broadcast during many of the **Sunday services** (9:00 am). **The service is simultaneously streamed to a TV in the lower level of the church for anyone not able to be in the sanctuary.**

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.



NORTHLAND LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL



DELEGATES: Jacob M. (delegation chairman) and Chris R. were reelected as our delegates at the July Quarterly meeting. Feel free to reach out to them if you have any questions or concerns about NLHS.

NLHS OPENING SERVICE

will take place on the first day of school, **August 28, at 7:45 am.** Pastor Jeff Grundmeier and Mrs. Christine Krueger will be installed during that service. Parents and friends of Northland are very welcome to attend.

P-16 TAP APPLICATIONS DUE: The P-16 Tuition Assistance Program applications for assisting students attending WELS preschool, elementary, secondary, and college level schools are due **September 1** for the fall semester. Applications are available in the narthex to the right of the education bulletin board. Place the completed application in the Board of Christian Education mailbox.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS - September restarts



Catechism Class:
week of September 10

Sunday School, Teen Bible Study, Sunday Adult Bible Study:
September 17 at 10:30 am

Wednesday Bible Study:
September 20 at 9 am

Please submit items for next month's *Messenger* by the 20th of this month to ChristMerrillEducation@gmail.com.

Church Softball 2023

Derek



Ethan



Jerome



Katelyn



Leon



Scott



Tom



Brenda



Team Supporters



Vacation Bible School 2023



Diane, Sonia, & Danielle assisted kids with creating nametags and welcomed everyone.

Thank you to the many volunteers who brought food each week and to Neil & Cynthia for coordinating the meals.



Meal time



Pastor led group devotions



Vacation Bible School 2023



Thank you to this year's teachers:
Jennifer H., Renee,
Derek, & Pastor.



Thank you to Colleen for coordinating VBS, leading music time, and providing recess activities and supervision.



Vacation Bible School 2023

Thank you to craft
helpers Diane & Sonia.



Thank you to Jennifer M. for
leading the outdoor games.



We're done traveling back in time; Vacation Bible School is over for another year.
Thanks to all who helped us go *Back to Jerusalem*. It was lots of fun!