

THE MESSENGER

April 2024

The newsletter of Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church

Open Forum

On Sunday, **April 14** there will be an open forum in the fellowship hall of the church starting at **10:30 am**.

An open forum is an avenue for all members to have an informal discussion on various topics. Items to be discussed include:

- Church communications
- Hospitality
- Lord's Prayer - *A survey will be distributed during the forum after discussion.*

No Sunday School or Bible studies will be held so that interested youth and adults may attend.

Voters' Meeting

The quarterly Voters' Meeting will be Sunday, **April 28** starting at **10:30 am** in the sanctuary. Topics to be voted on include:

- Ratify the Board of Christian Education chairman appointment (until Jan. 2025): Mr. Scott Schult
- Election of two Camp Phillip delegates
- Election of a delegate to represent our church at the District Convention June 10-11

In this Messenger:

- 1) Open Forum/Voters' Meeting/All-Ages VBS
- 2) Pastor's Devotion
- 3) Calendar
- 4) Women's Bible Study
- 4) Bake Sales
- 4) Swing Dancing
- 4) Attendance & Financial Updates
- 5) Church Cleaners Needed
- 5) Clothes Closet
- 5) May 18 Event
- 5) *CW: Supplement Copies*
- 5) New Bible Study
- 5) Birthdays/Anniversaries
- 6) WELS Youth Night
- 6) WELS & ELS Singles Group
- 6) *Forward in Christ Bible Studies*
- 6) WELS Night at the Brewers
- 6) Campout
- 7-8) New Library Items

All-Ages Vacation Bible School

Come fly with us! We're taking a balloon ride into God's Word at Christ Lutheran Church. All ages are invited to join in *Soaring High!*—a vacation Bible school with a hot air balloon theme. **The five-day program runs Wednesdays from May 29 through June 26.** Take a break from cooking, and join us for a free 5:00 supper. After supper, we'll sing upbeat songs, study God's Word together, and close out the evening just before 7:00 with fellowship. Youth will also make projects to take home and play games. Attend whichever sessions fit your schedule. For more information, call 715-536-3313.



715-536-3313
www.christmerrill.com
www.facebook.com/christmerrill
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So What Now?

“I know that my Redeemer lives.” (Job 19:25)

Have you ever found yourself feeling a bit of a letdown after you got done with some big event in your life? Maybe after watching the championship game of your favorite sport you feel letdown that the season is over. Maybe you look forward to the freedom of summer during a long academic semester but find yourself going to work just a few days after heading back home. Perhaps you looked forward to your retirement but then found yourself a little bit unsure of what to do with your time. There are plenty of times in our lives when we might feel a bit of a letdown when something significant comes to an end.

We just finished our Lenten journey to the cross and our celebration of Easter Sunday. Over the past month and a half we have gathered together around God's Word as a family of believers fifteen different times. We have had guest preachers come to our church. We have had multiple opportunities to get together for a meal. But now all that extra activity is over. So maybe we find ourselves thinking, “So what now?”

Here are a few thoughts to help you avoid that feeling of a post-Easter letdown: **First of all, realize that the Easter celebration isn't over.** Job once said, “I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth” (Job 19:25). Easter isn't a holiday that Christians celebrate just once a year. It's the most significant moment in all of history through which our entire world is viewed. **We celebrate Easter every Sunday. We cling to Easter when sickness or death attacks our loved ones. Easter is our ultimate hope we look forward to the last day when “the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.”** (1 Corinthians 15:52)

In the meantime, while **we live our lives in the sure hope of the resurrection**, perhaps we can keep some of this momentum about Easter as we move forward. While we won't be gathering as a full family of believers in church each Wednesday, perhaps you could **take the time to gather around God's Word with your own immediate family.** Perhaps the return to a more “normal” routine will give you the opportunity to **carve out some time to study the Bible on your own or to attend one of the Bible studies offered here at church.** At the very least, **in our worship and our lives, we can keep Christ's cross and his empty tomb in clear focus** as we go through the rest of spring and into summer. **May God bless you as you continue to worship and serve your risen and exalted Lord.**

- Pastor Neal Behm

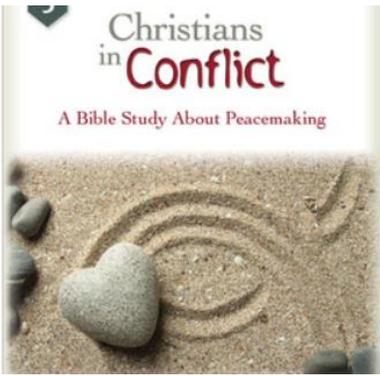
April 2024

View the most up to date calendar at christmerrill.com

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 4:30 pm Board of Christian Education Meeting	2	3	4 6:30 pm Women's Bible Study	5 Women's Retreat @ Camp Phillip (Fri – Sun)	6 10:00 am Children's Fest @ Smith Center, Merrill
7 9:00 am Worship (Holy Communion) 10:20 am Children's Group Time 10:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Teen Bible Study 10:30 am Adult Bible Study	8	9 2:00 pm Worship @ Bell Tower 6:00 pm Council Meeting	10 9:00 am Adult Bible Study 4:30 pm Catechism Class	11	12 7:30 pm Swing Dancing Teen Retreat @ Camp Phillip (Fri – Sun)	13
14 9:00 am Worship 10:30 am Open Forum	15 6:00 pm Board of Elders Meeting	16 6:00 pm Northland Lutheran High School Open Forum 7:00 pm NLHS Delegate Meeting	17 9:00 am Adult Bible Study 4:30 pm Catechism Class	18 6:30 pm Fellowship Committee Meeting	19	20
21 9:00 am Worship (Holy Communion) 10:20 am Children's Group Time 10:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Teen Bible Study 10:30 am Adult Bible Study	22	23	24 9:00 am Adult Bible Study 4:30 pm Catechism Class 6:30 pm Choir	25	26 Time of Grace Women's Event (Fri – Sat)	27
28 9:00 am Worship 10:20 am Children's Group Time 10:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Teen Bible Study 10:30 am Voters' Meeting 5:45 pm WELS Youth Night	29	30				

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

9:00 am Sundays - worship service online at youtube.com/@christmerrill



WOMEN’S BIBLE STUDY We all experience conflict. This practical course leads us to apply biblical conflict-resolving principles to our own lives and to consider how every Christian can become a vital part of a culture of peace. **The April 4 study will be the last one in this series.** Paper copies of the previous studies from the series are available in the display to the right of the bulletin board at the top of the stairs.

The **May 2 Women’s Bible Study** will consist of viewing and discussing the webinar *(mis)Understanding Mental Health: A Christian Look at Today’s Epidemic* presented by **WELS Women’s Ministry**. There’s been a lot of focus on mental health in recent years. Current generations are growing up using vocabulary that expresses this reality while older generations aren’t used to discussing something they grew up thinking was taboo. This webinar will be unique in that we will be hearing from licensed professional counselors from Christian Family Solutions. Guided by their insight, we’ll get an overview of what is going on, what we can do, and when and where to get help.



PAVE-THE-WAY BAKE SALES: Every other Sunday beginning April 7 a sale will be held with all proceeds going to the parking lot fund. Anyone is welcome to donate food items the morning of the sales. Contact Lynda for more information.

SWING DANCING: On **Friday, April 12 at 7:30 pm** everyone is welcome to attend swing dancing in the church fellowship hall. No experience or partner is needed; lessons will be provided.



<i>Spiritual Growth Weekly Averages</i>	February
Sunday worship/Online	64/4
Midweek Lenten worship/Online	29/4
Bell Tower worship	11
Sunday Adult Bible Study	13
Sunday School & Teen Bible Study	7
Wednesday Bible Study	10
Women’s Bible Study	6

CHURCH FINANCIAL UPDATE

Our Offerings to the Lord (as of 2/29/24)

Anticipated offerings: \$27,128

Actual offerings: \$21,217

Actual expenses: \$29,210

General Fund balance as of 3/10/24: \$15,844

Your offerings help to support the ministry of the congregation. Giving continues to trend below budget. Please consider how your offerings benefit our church, our fellowship events and our ability to reach our community. For more information, see the Treasurer Report on the bulletin board by the elevator.

CHURCH CLEANING HELP NEEDED:

Talk to Church Properties Chairman Mike K. if you are willing to help vacuum, dust, sweep, and/or mop a portion of the church.



Currently there are volunteers to clean the church restrooms.

CLOTHES CLOSET: There are clothes from our “Free Sale” set aside in one of the classrooms in the church basement. They are available for those in our congregation or others who might have a need for some clothes. We have clothes in sizes from small kids to larger adults (male & female). There are a few household items, also.

Contact Christy at 715-218-8515 to make arrangements to meet with her to check things out.

From now until May 18, **donations for the Clothes Closet may be brought any Sunday** and placed in the coat room. Items should be clean and organized by size and gender.



MAY 18TH FREE SALE & OPEN HOUSE:

Christ Lutheran Church will be hosting another garage sale where the items are offered for free. Donations of clothing and housewares may be brought to church any Sunday and placed in the coat room. For larger item donations, talk to Al. Sign up sheets are on the bulletin board to volunteer; consider how you can be a part of this special community outreach event.

RESERVED PEWS: Kindly save the marked pews near the back of the sanctuary for those with young children and those with disabilities.

CHRISTIAN WORSHIP: SUPPLEMENT copies available soon. Would you like a copy to take home? The congregation will have an opportunity to take a personal copy of *CW: Supplement* with them **starting April 7** until April 28. Copies will be available in the fellowship hall on a cart between the stairs and elevator.

BIBLE STUDY ON YOUR SCHEDULE:

Growing Together is an ongoing congregational Bible study intended to provide an avenue to hold individual, family or small group study at a time that works for you. The next study will be on 2 Kings. **To receive a paper copy of each week’s lesson in your church mailbox, please sign up by April 14 on the hallway bulletin board.** To receive each week’s lesson in your email, please sign up at ChristMerrill.com/email and subscribe to the Growing Together in Christ Bible study.

CALLED WORKER TUITION ASSISTANCE:

Applications for those preparing for full time ministry are due **May 1** and may be turned into the Board of Christian Education mailbox.

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

9 Preston C.	20 Neal B.	24 Laura P.
9 Don P.	21 Dick S.	30 Willi H.
12 Derek S.	22 Jacob M.	30 Lois W.
17 Marion S.	24 Lisa K.	



APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

1 Wayne & Lorna P.
10 Paul & Renee W.
24 Alan & Diane Z.
30 Leon & Jennifer M.





WELS YOUTH NIGHT

SUNDAY, APRIL 28 5:45-8:30PM

We are excited to have our next Youth Night at Northland High School (2107 Tower Rd, Kronenwetter). Teens **grade 8-12** are welcome to come Sunday, April 28 from 5:45-8:30 pm for **free food** and **ALL OUT NERF WAR** (think paintball without paintballs)! Bring your buddies and compete for bragging rights. Eyewear is encouraged. Guns and ammo will be provided. WELS membership not required; invite your friends! Text Pastor Schnake at St. Peter if you have any questions (715-348-2075).

REGISTER ONLINE (via Sign-Up Genius)

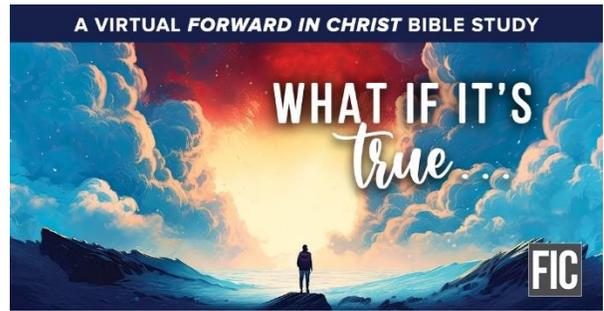
https://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040A48AEA_F22AAF94-48092938-nerf

WELS & ELS Singles Group

There are over 1000 members in their Facebook group. It's a great place to discuss things related to single life, to ask questions about dating, encourage other people in their singleness, or share things that make you laugh. On Facebook, check them out at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/wels.els.singles>

They've recently set up an **Instagram** account to help to inform churches and individuals on upcoming events for singles. Follow @wels.els.singles and spread the word!

You can also sign up to receive monthly emails from the group at wels-els-singles.com/subscribe.



Join *Forward in Christ* for its first live Bible study series! Bible study author Greg Lyon will lead a study at 7:00 pm on selected Tuesdays of each month until June. The study will examine six scriptural truths in which we, as Christians, put our trust.

What if it's true that . . .

- Jan: God made mankind in his image
- Feb: You are a sinner
- March: God wants your broken heart
- **April 30: You are forgiven**
- May 28: You are a child of God
- June 25: You are free

Go to <https://forwardinchrist.net/online-study/> to register for upcoming studies, read the written studies that correspond with the live studies, or watch recordings of the previous studies.



FRI, 7/12  **VS**  **7:10PM**

Back and better than ever, plan to join thousands of WELS members for another exciting WELS Night at American Family Field!

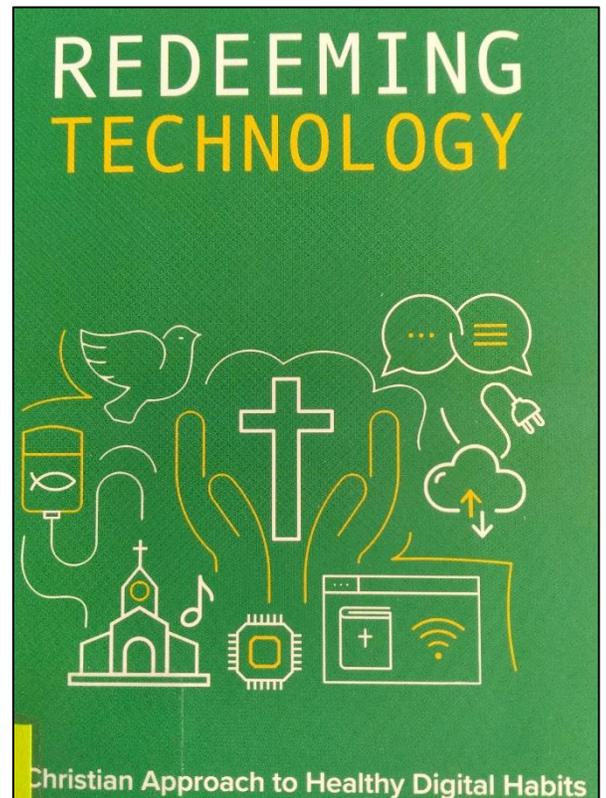
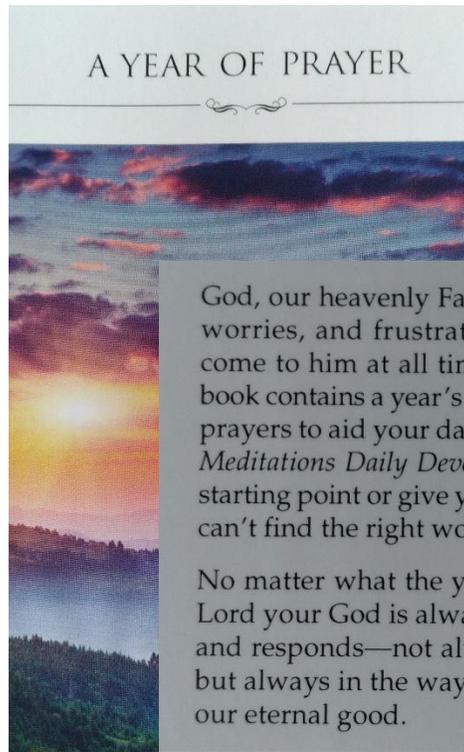
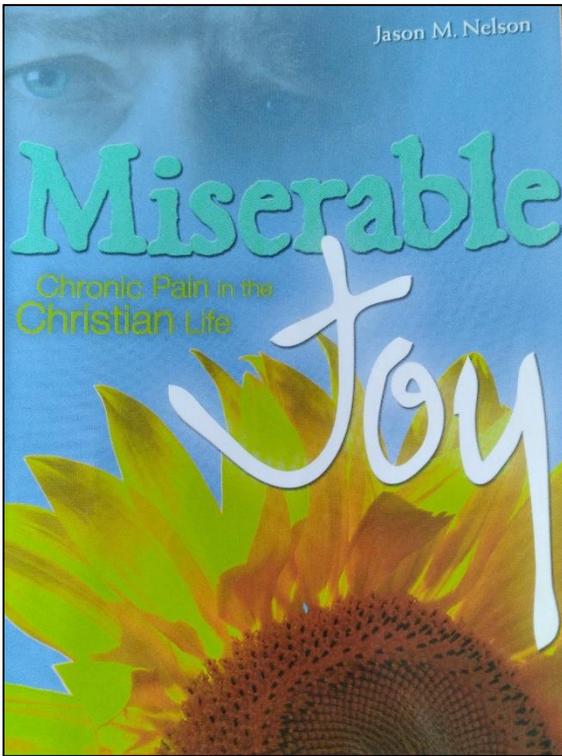
TICKET PRICES - Up to 50% Off		
FIELD OUTFIELD BOX \$23	LOGE OUTFIELD BOX \$17	TERRACE RESERVED INFIELD \$10

Individual tickets and parking can be purchased at brewers.com/wels.

SAVE THE DATE: A Family **Campout** is being planned for July 12-13 at Rusty's - he has an area for tents and RVs to park and a fire pit. Everyone will bring their own food.

New Library Items

The **church library**, located in the lower level near the windows, has many 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!



New Library Items

WITH TEARS IN OUR EYES

God's comfort as I grieve the death of my loved one

With Tears in Our Eyes is a book of 25 devotions written especially for those who mourn because a loved one has died. Each devotion includes a comforting Scripture text, an easy-to-read message, and a helpful prayer. With a keen sensitivity for all the emotions that wash over us as we mourn, this book shows us that God's love enfolds us, even as we leave the cemetery with tears in our eyes.

Purposeful Grieving

Embracing God's Plan in the Midst of Loss

These 56 devotions recognize the challenges of grief while focusing the spotlight on the cross of Christ. Psalm 13 serves as the outline for the daily messages. Each devotion concludes with a prayer and two journaling questions—one for further thought on the devotional topic and one for personal help as you face the future. Pointing to Scripture, Dr. Stacy Hoehl lets the divine Comforter speak for himself and pull back the corner of the blanket of grief that threatens to smother you, allowing you to step out and wake up in the dawning light of the Lord.

Simply Lutheran

A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO LUTHERAN TEACHINGS

Would you like to learn more about your faith? *Simply Lutheran* provides a clear and approachable overview of Lutheranism. Throughout this book, you will focus on the authority of the Bible, the characteristics of God, the plan of salvation, and life in the church today. Each of these topics is explored with down-to-earth language and relatable illustrations. Ultimately, you will deepen your understanding of what it means to be a Lutheran.

Simply Lutheran offers a concrete starting point for those who want to dive deeper into the critical topics of Lutheranism. For lifelong Lutherans, this book also makes an excellent choice for personal reading, for strengthening and expanding their knowledge of their beliefs.

6 WAYS TO GROW GREAT FAITH

WHAT'S BIG STARTS SMALL

There are many more new books in the library!
Check one out today.