

THE MESSENGER

July 2024

The newsletter of Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church

Fun and Fellowship

Attention past, current and future softball players!

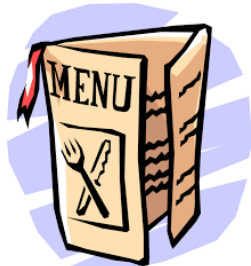


To celebrate the 75th season of the church league that our church plays in, an exhibition game is being organized and is open to anyone aged 10 or older. The game starts at **1:30 pm** on **Sunday, July 7** at Faith Lutheran in the Village of Maine. This event is a wonderful opportunity for past players to hit the field again and for new enthusiasts to experience the game. Concessions will be available, and spectators are welcome!

Church Family Campout July 12-13, at Rusty's.

See the sign-up sheet in the church hallway for the address. You can bring a tent or a camper or just come for the fellowship. Bring your own food & drinks.

Friday will start at 5:30 pm, but come when you can, with a **bonfire planned at about 8:00 pm**.



On **Saturday**, we plan to meet at **B's Nest (1404 W Main St, Merrill)** at **noon for lunch** (pay for your own food), but you can go to Rusty's before that in the morning if you'd like. There will be other activities available.

In this Messenger:

- 1) 75th Softball League Season Celebration/ Church Campout
- 2) Pastor's Devotion
- 3) Calendar
- 4) Ushers needed
- 4) Faith Questions
- 4) Online Worship Services
- 4) Upcoming Events
- 5) *How to Respond* Training
- 5) Birthdays/Anniversaries
- 5) Attendance & Financial Updates
- 5) Church Phone Calls Info.
- 6) VBS Wrap-up
- 6) NLHS Golf Outing



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Freedom

Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men: whether to the king, as the supreme authority, or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men.

Live as free men, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as servants of God. Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the king. (1 Peter 2:13-17).

As Americans we love freedom. On July 4th we celebrate how we became an independent nation and in the *Declaration of Independence* we were given certain freedoms. We have the freedom to say what we want. We have the freedom to pursue any job or lifestyle as long as it isn't illegal. We have the freedom to practice our religion and spread the message about Jesus without being arrested or killed.

As American we are free, but as Christians are we free? Martin Luther once said, "A Christian is a perfectly free lord of all, subject to none. A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all." As Christians we are free. The greatest freedom we have received is that we have been set free from sin, death, and the power of the devil. We have free forgiveness through Jesus' blood shed on the cross. We have the promise of eternal life through faith in Jesus who rose from the dead for us. We have the ability to resist the devil and his temptations for we are no longer under his control and God gives us strength to fight against the devil and his temptations.

As Christians we are free, but what are we to do with our freedom? Peter in the above passage tells us what to do with our freedom. Since we are free, we are now free to serve. In our freedom we submit to our government, not only to our president, but also to our local authorities. In our freedom we show love for our fellow believers and help them in any way we can. In our freedom we show proper respect to everyone so that our light for Christ can shine to them. In our freedom we fear, love, and respect God above all.


As Christians we are free to serve, but do we use our freedom as a cover-up for evil? We all do. We can be selfish. We can be conniving. We can be divisive. We can use our freedom to enslave ourselves to sin which only leads to death. And what is worse is the fact that we know this and yet we still use our freedom won by Christ for these things.

As Christians we can use our freedom for sin, but what has God done for us? He still loves us. He hasn't removed what Christ has done for us. He continues to reach out to us. He strengthens us to serve him and others freely. Let Christ, the one who freed us, be our motivation to be free to serve. It is God's will that we do good. So let us live as free men to be servants of God who honor the government, show proper respect to everyone, love the brotherhood of believers, and fear God.

- Pastor Neal Behm

July 2024

View the most up to date calendar at christmerrill.com/calendar.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 6:30 pm Worship	2	3	4	5	6
7 9:00 am Worship (Holy Communion) 1:30 pm Softball League Celebration @ Faith	8 6:30 pm Worship (Holy Communion)	9 2:00 pm Worship @ Bell Tower 6:00 pm Council Meeting	10	11	12 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">Church Family Campout</div> 7:00 WELS Night at the Brewers	13
14 9:00 am Worship 10:30 am Open Forum <i>Drop off donations at church of clothing & small items for September Free Sale</i> 1:30 pm Softball @ St. John's	15 6:30 pm Worship	16	17	18 6:00 pm Board of Elders Meeting	19	20 WELS Sunday School Conference
21 9:00 am Worship (Holy Communion) 3:30 pm Softball @ Faith	22 6:30 pm Worship (Holy Communion)	23	24	25	26	27
28 9:00 am Worship 10:30 am Voters' Meeting 3:30 pm Softball @ St. John's	29 6:30 pm Worship	30	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; display: inline-block; margin-bottom: 10px;"> WELS Women's Ministry Conference – July 28-30 National Conference on Worship, Music & the Arts July 30-August 2 </div> 			

8:00 am Sundays - worship service on the radio (96.3FM, 730AM)
 9:00 am Sundays - worship service online at youtube.com/@christmerrill

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

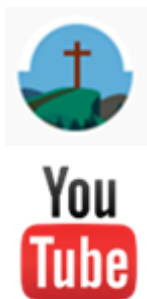
JOIN OUR USHER TEAM!

We are seeking confirmed men to support our worship services and warmly welcome our members and guests. To volunteer, please sign up on the fellowship and service bulletin board in the entryway. Choose a date that works for you.

FAITH QUESTIONS? Do you have a question about what the Bible says about a topic? An envelope will be available on the education bulletin board for people to turn in anonymous questions about faith or life. In addition to the question, some brief comments for background can be included. Pastor will review these and address them in some forum. If a name is included, he will address the question individually.

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 youtube.com/@christmerrill to get updates about the live streaming schedule. The videos are available on the channel to watch at one's convenience.



JULY OPEN FORUM: Please join us for a discussion on **Sunday, July 14**, in the church fellowship hall after the worship service. An open forum is an avenue for all members to have an informal discussion on various topics. Items to be discussed include: upcoming church maintenance projects and tentative costs; the Lord's Prayer; Kronenwetter mission support; and education ministry ideas.

FEEDBACK OPPORTUNITY AFTER MONDAY WORSHIP: For those unable to attend the open forum, you will have an opportunity to share your comments about the Lord's Prayer with the available elders on **July 15**. Your input is important to us!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THESE UPCOMING EVENTS:

Sunday, July 28: Quarterly Voters' Meeting in the sanctuary after the 9:00 am service.

Sunday, August 18: Mini golf at 107 Bait Shack at 2:00 pm. For \$7 you get 18 holes of golf and an ice cream cone. Wood-fired pizza will also be available for purchase.

Saturday, September 7: Free Sale/Open House
You can bring your clean, sorted items to be donated on the second Sunday in July, or any Sunday in August.

Sunday, September 8: 10:30 am Outdoor Worship at Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church. Experience the opportunity of having a worship service in a different setting. Invite your family and friends. Please bring comfortable seating (blankets or lawn chairs). We will be using the hill space between the church and shed along with the lower level for those that prefer a flatter surface. In case of inclement weather, we will move the service indoors. A church picnic with outdoor games will follow. Note that there will not be a worship service at 9:00 am on this date.



HOW TO RESPOND TRAINING:

After our past free garage sales, we have heard comments such as "I didn't know how to answer their question," "What happens if someone asks this?" or "What should I do if 'this type of person' shows up?" Because of these comments, in May Pastor led a *How To Respond* Training. Although the aim of this class was how to respond in a brief conversation for the garage sale, what is mentioned in the class can be used whenever these types of scenarios happen. You can view the training video at <https://youtu.be/5sdoavpUk-8>

JULY BIRTHDAYS



- 1 Patrick K. 15 Vicki L.
- 9 Larry W. 16 Ken C.
- 10 Lynda K. 20 Deana J.
- 13 Nikki S. 25 Jennifer H.
- 13 Cynthia V. 30 Nick C.
- 14 Carl C.

JULY ANNIVERSARIES

- 1 Neil & Cynthia V.
- 3 Ken & Ellen C.



SHUT-IN VISITATION: The Elders welcome help from members visiting our shut-ins. Members are encouraged to visit and/or keep them in our prayers. Please reach out to Pastor or an elder for contact information.
Brad B. Laurene H. Tom L. Phil M.
Lorna P. Kathleen P.

<i>Spiritual Growth Weekly Averages</i>	May
Sunday worship/Online	65/4
Bell Tower worship	3
How to Respond Training	8
Sunday Adult Bible Study	11
Sunday School & Teen Bible Study	7
Wednesday Bible Study	12
Women's Bible Study	3
All-Ages Vacation Bible School	26

CHURCH FINANCIAL UPDATE

Our Offerings to the Lord (as of 5/31/24)
 Anticipated offerings: \$67,821
 Actual offerings: \$56,080
 Actual expenses: \$61,988
 General Fund balance as of 6/10/24: \$15,668

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.

AUTOMATED PHONE CALLS FROM CHURCH:

Members are asked to **add the phone number of 855-248-7295 to their caller ID or their phone address book** and entitle that contact as Christ Lutheran Church so that it will be identified properly on their caller ID. Automated calls from the church will come from this phone number. **Reach out to Ken or Colleen to opt-in your cell phone number for receiving text messages** from the church.

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

All-Ages Vacation Bible School Wrap-up

We're back on the ground; vacation Bible school is over. Thanks to all who came and helped us with *Soaring High!* It was lots of fun! Thank you for using your talents to help all soar into God's Word! We couldn't have done it without you! Thank you for serving with love!



Northland Lutheran High School Golf Outing



WILDCAT OPEN!

August 10

Pine Valley

Sponsorships Available

Adults (19 & ↑) \$90

Students (18 & ↓) \$60

Scan to Register, or go
to nlhs.org

