

**Lebanon  
Evangelical  
Lutheran  
Church**

*A Congregation of the North/West  
Lower Michigan Synod, of the ELCA  
Craig Satterlee, Bishop  
Elizabeth Eaton, Presiding Bishop*

1101 S. Mears Avenue  
Whitehall, MI 49461  
(231) 893-5745

**Rev. Douglas M. Ogden**

**Sunday Morning Worship**  
10:15 am in person  
YouTube Worship on the Web

**Office Hours**  
Please contact the church office for  
current hours

**Bulletin Announcements**  
Margaret Everling

**Newsletter Editor**  
Meg Eaton

**Church Council**  
Cheri Crouch      Dave Dusenberry  
Laura Hollister      Wietse Schaafsma

Sarah Schmalz      Amy Swope  
Al Wheeler  
Treasurer: Terry Beekman  
Financial Secretary: Curt Crouch

**“We are baptized members of God’s  
Church, forgiven and set free by  
grace through faith.**

**[www.lebanonlutheranchurch.com](http://www.lebanonlutheranchurch.com)**

**Facebook: Lebanon Lutheran  
Church (ELCA)  
Instagram—Twitter :  
#llcsignsofgrace**

TO BRING GOD’S GRACE AND LOVE TO EACH OTHER  
AND TO THE WORLD

# THE LIGHT

Pastor’s Notes



July 2025



## A critical moment in history

**W**hile we reflect on how far we’ve come, we know how far we have to go. Fifty years after ELCA World Hunger was founded, we find ourselves at another critical moment in history. **Amid rising costs, global conflict, the lingering impact of COVID-19, and intensifying effects of climate change, the world once again faces a startling rise in hunger that is undoing decades of progress.**

A rapidly changing climate is making it harder to grow food. Violent conflict threatens lives, land and livelihoods. And the prices of food and basic commodities continue to climb. The number of

people living in hunger worldwide is approaching heights we haven’t seen in nearly 20 years – as many as 828 million in 2022. The challenges we face today threaten the progress we have made in the past – and loom over our world’s future.

From our long history and deep partnerships, we have learned the most effective steps toward sustainable, long-term change. As a church, we are called to confront challenges that seem insurmountable. And as a church, we are there with our neighbors to witness their hope and their persistence in the face of such challenges.



**July 2025**  
**Fund of the Month**  
**Backpack**

**Websites of Interest**

[www.lebanonlutheranchurch.com](http://www.lebanonlutheranchurch.com)

[www.mittensynod.org](http://www.mittensynod.org)

[www.elca.org](http://www.elca.org)

[www.whitelakescouting.com](http://www.whitelakescouting.com)

[www.whitelakechorale.com](http://www.whitelakechorale.com)

[www.hopescarves.org](http://www.hopescarves.org)

[LivingLutheran.org](http://LivingLutheran.org)


[www.samaritas.org](http://www.samaritas.org)

**Suicide Hotline** [1-800-273TALK.org](http://1-800-273TALK.org)  
[www.co.muskegon.mi.us/cmh/suicide\\_prevention](http://www.co.muskegon.mi.us/cmh/suicide_prevention)

**Every Woman's Place** 231-722-3333 or  
[www.everywomansplace.org](http://www.everywomansplace.org)

**The Trevor Project** 1-866-488-7386

The Trevor Project is the world's largest suicide prevention and crisis intervention organization for LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning) young people.

**Swedish**  
**Smörgåsbord**



Lebanon Lutheran Church  
1101 S. Mears Avenue  
Whitehall

Thursday, July 10, 2025, 5:30 pm

Adults \$18.00 Children 5-10 \$10.00  
Under 5 - Free  
Tickets available at the church office or  
at the door



## As Alcoholics Anonymous turns 90, a look at the Serenity Prayer's eternal relevance

(RNS) — “Serenity” is not a word many would use to describe the world right now. Perhaps that is why this four-line version of a prayer continues to be uttered as often as it has been since it was first penned.

God grant me the serenity<sup>[SEP]</sup> to accept the things I cannot change; <sup>[SEP]</sup>courage to change the things I can; <sup>[SEP]</sup> and wisdom to know the difference.

As popular as it is, few people seem to know or even care about the origin and authorship of the Serenity Prayer. It was conceived in a little stone cottage in Heath, Massachusetts, by theologian and professor Reinhold Niebuhr around 1932. It was soon printed on cards and distributed to American military personnel in conflict and circulated by the National Council of Churches. It became even better known after being adopted by Alcoholics Anonymous in 1941, after an early AA member saw it in a New York newspaper obituary.

Niebuhr never capitalized on the success of his prayer. His daughter, Elisabeth Sifton, who died in 2019, wrote in her 2003 book, “The Serenity Prayer: Faith and Politics in Times of Peace and War,” that her father didn’t believe prayers should be copyrighted. He never profited from the Serenity Prayer’s popularity, other than Serenity Prayer kitsch his friends gave him — coffee cups, wood carvings and needlework.

As 12-step fellowships like AA fellowships and other organizations and churches published his prayer, and even edited and rewrote it without permission or credit, Niebuhr’s attitude was that if his prayer helped any of these groups, they could have it.

Far beyond having authored the Serenity Prayer, Niebuhr was tremendously influential as a public thinker. He had a powerful effect on the German minister Dietrich Bonhoeffer, of the anti-Nazi Confessing Church, and the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., who wrote about Niebuhr in his “Letter from a Birmingham Jail.”

But he never lost his humility. In response to a question from journalist Mike Wallace about whether Niebuhr considered himself “superior to atheists,” Niebuhr said that it would be “pretentious” to deem himself superior in the eyes of God to anyone because of their religion or lack of one, stating: “How do I know about God’s judgment? And if you equate God’s judgment with your judgment, you have a wrong religion.”

New York City renamed West 120th Street between Broadway and Riverside Drive — the site of Union Theological Seminary, where Niebuhr taught for more than 30 years — in his honor. Niebuhr received the Presidential Medal of Freedom Award in 1964 from President Lyndon B. Johnson, and many other awards. Search his name, read a paragraph or two, and you will see many more plaudits.

*Continued on page 4*

Serenity Prayer continued from page 3

Niebuhr wrote many drafts of the Serenity Prayer. It continues to be rewritten to this day by many people, with or without their knowledge or care as to its origin. Niebuhr also penned speeches, sermons, articles and books, including one about his experiences as a pastor in Detroit in the early 20th century, titled "Leaves From the Notebook of a Tamed Cynic."

From one tamed cynic honoring another tamed cynic for the sake of the tamed cynic in you, I offer the full Serenity Prayer. I call your attention to one line that is not included in the most popular, four-line version: "that I may be reasonably happy in this life ..."

That line calls me to be reasonable, in all matters, even in my pursuit of happiness. Feel free to adapt this to your needs and preferences. I can almost hear Niebuhr say, "Take it. It's yours."

God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; courage to change the things I can; and wisdom to know the difference.

Living one day at a time; enjoying one moment at a time; accepting hardships as the pathway to peace; taking, as He did, this sinful world as it is, not as I would have it; trusting that He will make all things right if I surrender to His Will; that I may be reasonably happy in this life and supremely happy with Him forever in the next.

(Dwight Lee Wolter, pastor of the Congregational Church of Patchogue, New York, is the author, most recently, of "The Gospel of Loneliness." He writes at [DwightLeeWolter.substack.com](http://DwightLeeWolter.substack.com))

## Swim Lessons



We are offering Swim Lessons for 2025!

**July 7-10 and July 14-17, 1/2 hour lessons from 9-11:30 AM**  
**Cost: \$65 per child**

**Pool Location: 1230 Schuler**  
**North Muskegon 49445**

**Ages 3-5, Ages 6-8 , Ages 9-12**

**Muskegon YMCA Certified swim instructors will be conducting the lessons.**

Register online at: [www.lebanonlutheranchurch.com](http://www.lebanonlutheranchurch.com) or pick up a form near the church office.

Call Lebanon Lutheran Church - 893-5745

## Prayer Concerns

**It is an important part of our ministry to be praying constantly for one another. We add names to the prayer list with consent in order to maintain privacy and confidentiality. This month in your prayers, please remember:**



### Prayers for those who are homebound:

**Helen Bartlett**, at daughter Carol Roods' home now.

5337 W. McMillan, N. Muskegon 49445

**Mary Bernhardt**, at Robinswood Assisted Living #115, 2650 Ruddiman, N. Muskegon 49445

**Jane Blyth**, 28801 Jefferson Ave., Apt. 332; Saint Clair Shores, MI 48081

**Chris Claus**, American House - 17383 174th Avenue, Spring Lake, MI 49456

**Karl Glass**, @ Edison Christian Health Care Center, 1000 Edison St., Grand Rapids, MI 49504. Room #382.

**Shirley Glass**, with health concerns, 3232 Richmond NW, Walker, MI 49534

**Marlene Holmstrom**, at home. 2643 Benston Road, Whitehall, 49461

**Ken & Sandy Kolb**, with health issues - 6755 W. Old Channel Trail; Montague 49437

**Elaine Liska**, Sunrise Senior Living—Sunrise of Troy; 6870 Crooks Road, Troy, MI 48098-1704.  
Elaine Liska—Room 130.

**Phyllis Monte**, at Legacy of Caring - Whitehall—1302 Warner Street, Whitehall 49461

**Ruth Nurmi**, with health concerns—308 E. Dayton Street, Fremont, 49412

**Barb Smith**, at Legacy of Caring - Whitehall—1302 Warner Street, Whitehall 49461

**Lois Szczerbinski**, at Robinswood Assisted Living, 2650 Ruddiman, N. Muskegon 49445

### Special Prayer Concerns:

**Brianne Beekman**, (Terry & Mary Beekman's granddaughter) diagnosed with multiple brain tumors.

**Esther & Roy Baldrige**, Esther is receiving chemotherapy treatment.

**Lucas Carlson**, (Terry and Mary Beekmans grandson) for new treatment.

**Sheila Fretty**, re-occurring cancer and hospitalized for health concerns

**Margaret Fountain**, (Mary Koenen's sister) diagnosed with multiple myeloma suffered a relapse.  
New treatment has begun.

**Dwight Mead** (Paula Moreau's brother-in-law), non-hodgkin lymphoma mantel type (stage four).

**Sarah Schmalz**, recuperating from surgery

**Wendy Shalifoe**, starting chemotherapy for re-occurring cancer

**For our partners in faith**, our companion synods in Salud para la Vida in San Pedro Sula, Honduras for their mission and ministry in their place as we fulfill our mission in our place; for all the churches of the Lutheran World Federation, for people of the gospel throughout the world.



## Worship Notes

**Sunday, July 6—Pentecost 4**  
**Worship - 10:15am**

**Color: Green**

### Readings

**Today we pray for: Brian  
and Kara Jaekel**

**Isaiah 66:10-14**  
**Psalm 66:1-9**  
**Galatians 6:[1-6] 7-16**  
**Luke 10:1-11, 16-20**

### Prayer of the Day

O God, the Father of our Lord Jesus, you are the city that shelters us, the mother who comforts us. With your Spirit accompany us on our life's journey, that we may spread your peace in all the world, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

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**Sunday, July 13—Pentecost 5**  
**Worship - 10:15am**

**Color: Green**

**Today we pray for:**  
**Shaun Jeffrey and Amber Creed**

### Readings

**Deuteronomy 30:9-14**  
**Psalm 25:1-10**  
**Colossians 1:1-14**  
**Luke 10:25-37**

### Prayer of the Day

O Lord God, your mercy delights us, and the world longs for your loving care. Hear the cries of everyone in need, and turn our hearts to love our neighbors with the love of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

**Sunday, July 20, Pentecost 6**  
**Worship - 10:15am**

**Color: Green**

**Today we pray for: Rob  
and Julie Johnson**

**Readings**

Genesis 18:1-10a  
Psalm 15  
Colossians 1:15-28  
Luke 10:38-42

**Prayer of the Day**

Eternal God, you draw near to us in Christ, and you make yourself our guest. Amid the cares of our lives, make us attentive to your presence, that we may treasure your word above all else, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

**Sunday, July 27 —Pentecost 7**  
**Worship - 10:15 am**

**Color: Green**

**Today we pray for: Dakota  
and Ginny King**

**Readings**

Genesis 18:20-32  
Psalm 138  
Colossians 2:6-15 [16-19]  
Luke 11:1-13

**Prayer of the Day**

Almighty and ever-living God, you are always more ready to hear than we are to pray, and you gladly give more than we either desire or deserve. Pour upon us your abundant mercy. Forgive us those things that weigh on our conscience, and give us those good things that come only through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.



# July



7/1 Molly Crouch	7/12 Rick Hughes
7/1 Kareece Johnson	7/13 Mitchell Foster
7/2 Zoe Fretty	7/13 Emily Snell Glass
7/2 Frank Lundell Jr.	7/16 Cindy Frale
7/3 Raegan Murphy	7/16 Morgan Hughes
7/3 Reilly Murphy	7/16 Judy Kurtz
7/3 Rhonda Sweet	7/17 Joel Fretty
7/4 David Civis	7/18 Brooke Otto
7/5 Stephen Troy	7/19 Barb Reece
7/5 Michelle Wheeler	7/22 Terry Beekman
7/6 Diane Eastman	7/23 Jennifer Fretty
7/8 Donna Frietsch	7/26 Matthew Everitt
7/9 Michael Palmer	7/27 Mackenzie Fretty
7/10 Robert Ackerman	7/28 Bob Ferrentino
7/10 Mark Brooks	7/29 Sophia Walters
7/10 Caryn Koster	7/31 Patricia DeNicolo
7/11 Lindsey Schenten	



7/1/16	Daniel & Arin Bowen
7/6/74	Al & Michelle Wheeler
7/11/78	Jim & Stephanie Emms
7/19/69	Brian & Juanita Holmblade
7/28/18	Ken & Kathy Mahoney
7/30/11	Charles & Sally Jackson



## Baptism Anniversaries



7/2 Eric Nelson  
7/2 Drake Otto  
7/2 Jay R. Otto  
7/5 Jeff Griswold

7/7 Nora Gaiser  
7/7 Ellis Gaiser  
7/8 Monica Ogden  
7/12 Arin Snell Bowen

7/14 Carla Nessa  
7/18 Blake Swenson  
7/19 Kelsey Fretty  
7/23 Brianna Clark



& **thrivent** &  
present our annual



**Montague  
Foods**

# Back to School **BACKPACK GIVEAWAY**

**FREE**

*Hot Dog  
Dinners*

**FREE**

*Backpacks  
&  
Water  
Bottles*

**Wednesday, August 13<sup>th</sup>**  
5:00 pm - 7:00 pm

at

**Lebanon Lutheran Church**

1101 S. Mears Ave. Whitehall, MI 49461

Additional Parking at Shoreline Elementary



**STUDENTS MUST BE PRESENT & WITH THEIR PARENT/GUARDIAN,  
FIRST COME FIRST SERVED, WHILE SUPPLIES LAST**

QUESTIONS? CALL (231) 893-5745

**A message from Thrivent:**

Losing your spouse is an incredibly difficult journey, and navigating grief can feel isolating -- no matter how many days, months, or years it's been since your loss. We want you to know that you don't have to go through it alone. Our partner non-profit, Roots & Wings, is launching a virtual widow's support group designed to provide a safe, compassionate space for women to connect, share experiences, and find comfort with others who understand.

This widow-led group will be a place where you can:  
Share your feelings openly and without judgment.  
Listen to and learn from the experiences of other widows.  
Find encouragement and understanding in a supportive community.  
Discover coping strategies for navigating grief and rebuilding your life.

Our next virtual meeting will be held on: **Thursday, July 24th from 10 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. ET.**  
We'll be meeting via Zoom. You can register here: <http://bit.ly/julywidowsgroup>

We understand that taking this step might feel daunting, but we truly believe that connecting with others who share similar experiences can be a powerful part of the healing process. We hope to see you there.

***Band Hosting Opportunity***

Montague Bands are "co-hosting" a group of musicians from Switzerland on July 13th - 17th. Many of the musicians are 18+ years of age. We are looking for host families in the White Lake Area. In order to be considered a host

1. The guests would need a "space to call their own." (Own bed/air mattress)
2. You would need to transport them a few times throughout the week.

If you would like more specific information, please contact Emma Greenwood at [greenwoode@mapsk12.org](mailto:greenwoode@mapsk12.org). She will give you more specifics and details.

**Introducing: Disabling the Church**

Disabling the Church is a podcast by the Center for Disability and Ministry at Western Theological Seminary. This series amplifies the voices, giftedness, and perspectives of disabled people, challenging ableist biases and reimagining the church as a space of true belonging. Through conversations with scholars, ministers, and community members, the podcast explores how the church can dismantle barriers—physical, theological, and cultural—to create a more inclusive and enriched faith community.


<http://disablingthechurch.buzzsprout.com>


*Continued from page 1*


## Our approach


**F**or 50 years, generous people of faith have enabled ELCA World Hunger to connect with local partners in 67 countries around the world, including the United States, as these partners address hunger in their communities. The global reach of these connections through our shared Lutheran faith positions us to take on such far-reaching, long-lasting partnerships. Working with local churches, we encourage efficiency and empower communities to tailor solutions to their specific challenges.


### This work includes

 **Agriculture and nutrition:** Soup kitchens, food pantries and meal programs provide immediate support to those in need. Community gardens and agricultural programs help families grow food to nourish their families and communities for the long term.

 **Water and sanitation:** Water for drinking, growing crops, sanitation and hygiene is paired with ongoing health education, training and maintenance to create healthier families and stronger economies.

 **Health care and disease prevention:** Clinics and community health programs provide health education and medical assistance to people in poverty and work to halt the spread of HIV/AIDS, malaria and water-borne illnesses.

 **Income and savings:** Microloans and income-generating activities help families start or upgrade their small businesses and pay for such essentials as food, medical treatment and school fees.

 **Education and training:** Removing barriers to education – such as school fees and uniforms – can give children the chance to attend school and increase their future earning potential. Literacy training, vocational education and other such programs help teens and adults secure jobs and better opportunities for the future.

However, our commitment to fighting hunger goes beyond funding. We are a publicly engaged church, working for lasting, systemic change. Our teaching, organizing and mobilizing play critical roles in supporting and amplifying our hunger work at the grassroots level.

Through these projects and more, and with the support of many across this church, ELCA World Hunger gets at the many root causes of hunger and poverty.





Living in God's Amazing Grace

## Lebanon Lutheran Church

1101 South Mears Avenue

Whitehall, MI 49461

*The Light* is published monthly by Lebanon Lutheran Church, 1101 S. Mears Avenue, Whitehall, MI 49461. Submissions are accepted through the 15th of each month. Submissions MUST include your name and a way to contact you in case of questions.

2 ways to submit your information:

- yellow folder in Margaret's office  
(better)
- [office@lebanonlutheranchurch.com](mailto:office@lebanonlutheranchurch.com)  
(best)

