

*Is this what you call a fast, a day acceptable to the Lord? Is not this the fast that I choose: releasing wicked restraints, untying the ropes of a yoke, setting free the mistreated, and breaking every yoke? Isn't it sharing your bread with the hungry and bringing the homeless poor into your house, covering the naked when you see them, and not hiding from your own family? Then your light will break out like the dawn, and you will be healed quickly. Your own righteousness will walk before you and the Lord's glory will be your rear guard. Then you will call, and the Lord will answer; you will cry for help, and God will say "Here I am." -Isaiah 58:5-9*

In only a couple of weeks, it will already be Ash Wednesday (February 22). We will be starting the Lenten season with all of its somberness and austerity. Accordingly, we will have soup and extra Wednesday services! (Soup will not start until March.) But we will be bringing back our Shrove Tuesday pancake supper this year for the first time since the pandemic. You should smile to yourself and hear a paradox at work there: Lent is somber!/Join us for pancakes and soup! These are two different and opposite expressions. But both are true. The life-sharing and relaxing meal of soup (and pancakes on Shrove Tuesday) is part of our design in the somberness of Lent. One of the paradoxes central to our faith is that God speaks both out of Law and Gospel, or you might say: boundaries and promises, or commandments and blessings, or somberness and soup. Or as Isaiah puts it above: the fast that God chooses is one of release!

There is this common idea that Lent is a time when we have to diminish, or give up things for Lent, or we chasten ourselves for our betterment in this Holy Time. The rules are harsh and we have messed up and need a boxing around the ears. But this kind of punishment and harshness toward ourselves is not the kind of Lent that God chooses. These rules that only diminish and silence are not the kind of commandments God gives. You could say, this journey to the cross does not end in death and darkness. (Spoilers! Easter is on the way just as much as Good Friday is on the way.)

Instead, the Lent that God wants for God's people is one that cuts the cords that bind us and frees us to dance in the aisles. God chooses justice, mercy, and sharing food (like pancakes and soup!). If you have read and studied the Ten Commandments and all you got from them was a boxing about the ears, then you have not done reading and studying about them! Keep reading friends, for God never once stopped talking with just the Law, but always includes Gospel in every breath. God's commands are a stack of flapjacks full to the brimming with life just as much as they ever were with healthy vegetables that you should be eating. For example, they all start with the profound promise: I am the Lord your God! The Lent that God chooses adds to our lives more than it takes away. So it is better then to add things to our lives during Lent, not take them away!

Not only that, but Isaiah tells us fasting/lent/and commands should not be focused on ourselves! If your reading of the commandments has only made you to turn your head down and look at your own shortcomings, then again, keep reading! The fast God chooses is about our neighbors, our families, those in need, the outcast and the naked. The commandments should not turn our heads inward, but outward toward God and our neighbor. God's fast is about providing release for those around you, as God has provided this release for you. So we will find at the center of this somberness and soup, a vast treasure of relationships. Relationship between you and God. Relationship between you and your neighbor. Instead of diminishing ourselves because of a scolding, we find ourselves stretching out and growing in love toward those around us! That's what Lent should really be about. Because somber as it may be, light will break out like the dawn and you will be healed quickly. Then you will call, and the Lord will answer; you will cry for

help, and God will say: “Here I am!”

-Pastor Tommy.

**Join us for Bible Study**

The Monday night Bible study group will be and 4th Mondays of the month. Pr. Richter will Gospel of Luke. If you have any questions about this opportunity for study, please contact the office.



meeting at 6:30, every 2nd continue our study on the

*Gifts to our congregation have been given in memory of*

**Joan Leadman**

Linda Levin—Endowment Fund

**Claire Carpenter**

Linda Levin—Endowment Fund

**Scott Malloy**

Lila Panek—Quilters

**The 137<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting** of Zion Evangelical Church will be held on Sunday, February 12, 2023 at 11:30 p.m. All eligible members (confirmed, communing, contributing) are invited to review 2022 and help set the agenda for our way forward in 2023. The meeting will be followed by a potluck lunch in Augustana Hall.

**The Evangelism and Membership Committee** is looking for people who are willing to host coffee hours following worship on Sunday morning. Fancy coffee hours are not expected – just plug in the pot of coffee and you’re all set! Please sign up on the list on the bulletin board in Augustana Hall.

Sunday School is currently being paused for the time being due to a lack of children attending. Stay tuned for news of new events being planned by the Christian Education and Youth committee.

You are invited to join us for Sunday morning worship over ZOOM if you are not able to attend in person. Go to the Zion Lutheran Church website. Under Worship Times, click on "Join our Zoom Worship". If you are asked for an ID, the number is 9063415427 (the church phone number). You may also be asked for a passcode – 49854. You may also join by phone: call 1-929-205-6099 and enter the meeting ID above.

The number of families in our county who face food insecurity is growing. Please remember our Backpack Buddy ministry with your generous gifts.

We will be celebrating Shrove Tuesday (or Fat Tuesday) at Zion! Join us for a Pancake Supper on Tuesday, February 21, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. We'll do all the cooking; you can do all the eating. Thanks to Ruth Jones for heading up the kitchen crew.

Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent, is on February 22<sup>nd</sup>. Ash Wednesday services will be held at 12:00 pm. and 7:00 p.m.

Mid-week Lenten services will be held each Wednesday during Lent (March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29) in the sanctuary beginning at 7:00 p.m. The service will also be available over Zoom.

Lenten Soup Suppers have returned! Suppers will begin at 6:00 p.m. on each Wednesday during Lent (March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29). There will be a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in Augustana Hall for soup, bread and dessert. Thanks for sharing with us!

**Looking Ahead....**The Congregation Council will be hosting an Easter Breakfast on Sunday, April 9<sup>th</sup> from 9:00-10:00 a.m. Your whole family is invited to come and share breakfast!

Pastor Tommy will be visiting homebound members of our congregation on Thursday afternoons. If you would like a visit, please call the church office – 906-341-5427 or Pastor Tommy – 906-286-4383. Pastor Tommy is also available to visit with your family at other times, as well. Please let him know.

If someone in your family or a friend needs a pastoral visit, please let Pastor Tommy know! As much as we would like Pastor to have magic powers, **he doesn't know someone is sick or in need of a visit unless you tell him.** The hospital cannot contact Pastor to let him know when a member is a patient. Thanks for helping

Your family will receive a Lenten folder in the mail by Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

There are several ways you can honor or memorialize a family member or friend.

\*You can help pay for *Bulletin, Bread and Wine* each week for \$10.

\*Sponsorship of the *newsletter*, The Beacon, is \$50 per month (paper, printing, postage). Acknowledgement of your gift will be made in the newsletter.

\*The cost of a candle for the *Eternal Light* is \$5 per week. Your gift will be noted in the bulletin.

\*Flowers may be placed on the Altar. The cost of the flower arrangement depends on what kind of bouquet(s) you order. Flowers may be ordered from any of the three florists in Manistique.

We are still looking for someone to snow blow and shovel. If you have any leads on someone who may be interested, have them call the church office (906-341-5427) or Kay MacGregor (928-530-1120). The church pays \$200/month, November through April.

The February Noisy Offering will be given to the hot lunch program at the Manistique Middle/High School hot lunch program. Some students are unable to pay for a lunch each day so they are not allowed to eat. Good nutrition is important for learning. Thanks for your donations. The February Noisy Offering will be collected on February 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup>.

**Upcoming Scripture Readings**

**February 5**—Fifth Sunday After Epiphany  
 Isaiah 58:1-9a [9b-13], Psalm 112:1-9 [10],  
 1 Corinthians 2:1-12 [13-16], Matthew 5:13-20

**February 12**—Sixth Sunday After Epiphany  
 Deuteronomy 30:15-20, Psalm 119:1-8, 1 Corinthians 3:1-9, Matthew 5:21-37

**February 19**—Transfiguration of Our Lord  
 Exodus 24:12-18, Psalm 2, 2 Peter 1:16-21, Matthew 17:1-9

**February 26**—First Sunday of Lent  
 Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7, Psalm 32, Romans 5:12-19,  
 Matthew 4:1-11

**Church Attendance Report**

	Saturday	Sunday	Zoom
12/31-1/1	14	33	4
1/7-1/8	12	50	2
1/14-1/15	5		
1/21-1/22	14	43	5
1/28-1/29			

**Congregation Council Highlights**

### January 2023

- +The treasurer's report showed a December income of \$11,198.69 with expenses of \$16,666.76.
- +The council received three thank you notes.
- +The council approved a letter of transfer for Betty Denessen.
- +The Finance and Stewardship Committee is looking for volunteers to help with counting the offering each Sunday following worship. Please contact Cyndee Miske or Linda Levin if you can help with this task.
- +Ash Wednesday services will be held at 12:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. on February 22, 2023.
- +Mid-week Lenten services will be held each Wednesday during Lent at 7:00 p.m. The services will be preceded by a Soup Supper (March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29) at 6:00 p.m. in Augustana Hall.
- +There will be a Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper on Tuesday, February 21 at 5:30 p.m.
- +An Easter breakfast, hosted by the Congregation Council will be held on Sunday, April 9 from 9:00-10:00 a.m.
- +Pastor Tommy will be visiting homebound members, as well as anyone else who would like a visit, on Thursday afternoons. He will visit your family anytime in an emergency. Please call the office 906-341-5427 or Pastor's phone 906-286-4383.
- +The Evangelism and Membership Committee is seeking volunteers to host coffee hours following worship on Sunday morning.
- +A 2023 budget was adopted for presentation to the congregation at its Annual Meeting on February 12, 2023.
- +The February Noisy Offering will be going to the Manistique High School to help provide lunch to students who have unpaid accounts.
- +Lenten folders will be sent to homes in time for Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent.
- +Sunday School will be on pause for the time being as we lack students.
- +The council approved resolutions to be presented to the congregation at its Annual Meeting.
- +The council approved changes to the Ahlstrom Trust Fund By-Laws. The changes will be presented to the congregation for their approval at its Annual Meeting.

**Journey Youth Gathering**  
**July 24-27, 2023**

The Northern Great Lakes Synod is excited to be partnering again with the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin and the LaCrosse Area Synod for another regional youth gathering where high schoolers (those who have completed 8th-12th grades) will encounter God and one another in new ways through creative ministry, challenging conversation, inspiring guest speakers, service learning, and uplifting worship. Additional details and a link to register are available at <https://nwswi.org/journey>.

**Youth in Advocacy Retreat April 14-16, 2023**

High School Youth from across the U.P. and Wisconsin are invited to gather in Madison for a weekend in April to learn what it means to be an advocate and how advocacy relates to our Lutheran Page 5 Northern Light faith. If you would like to be part of the NGLS delegation, please contact Stefanie Ehle at [youthcoordinator@nglsynod.org](mailto:youthcoordinator@nglsynod.org). Registration for this event is available at: [loppw.org/resources/youth-advocacy](http://loppw.org/resources/youth-advocacy)

**2023 Synod Assembly**

We will gather May 18-20 at Northern Michigan University in Marquette, MI for a Bishop's election. Bishop Finegan is available to serve another term. This in-person event will include a Friday night banquet with entertainment by Whitewater, ministry

display tables, worship, time for long-overdue fellowship and so much more! Our ELCA Churchwide Representative will be Lori Fedyk, Treasurer of the ELCA. In addition to in-person activities, we will also enjoy pre-Assembly workshops via Zoom. Details will be announced as they become available. Registration Information Online registration will be available on our website ([nglsynod.org/assembly](https://nglsynod.org/assembly)) in February, so keep an eye on E-Notes for the announcement and link. Please be aware of the fee structure this year: · Voter registration is \$125 until April 12 at 5 pm ET · Late voter registration is \$150 after 5 pm on April 12 · Visitor registration is \$25 · All registration closes permanently on April 26 at 5 pm ET. We are looking forward to being together again in Marquette!

### **2023 Synod Assembly Opening Worship Service Synod Choir**

Please join us! Please sign up by May 1 and attend rehearsals if possible:  
Wednesday, May 10, 7:15pm at Bethany Lutheran, Ishpeming  
Wednesday, May 17, 5:30pm at Messiah Lutheran Church, Marquette

#### Synod Assembly opening Worship

Northern Center Ballroom on the NMU Campus  
Thursday, May 18, 6:00pm

Sign up by contacting Heather Oysti at the Synod Office by May 1 906.228.2300 or [hoysti@nglsynod.org](mailto:hoysti@nglsynod.org)

#### **Good snowy morning from Fortune Lake!**

With many regional schools having a snow day, [today is a great day to invite folks to register for summer camp!](#) Over the next few months, I'll be sharing updates about camper registrations. Who doesn't enjoy a little healthy competition? As of this



morning, here are the numbers of registered campers from our association congregations:

- **Holy Trinity Chassell: 10!!!**
- Bethel Menominee: 7
- Calvary Quinessec: 6
- Ascension Minocqua: 4
- United Crystal Falls: 3
- Trinity Ishpeming: 3
- United, L'Anse 3
- Trinity Rhinelander: 2
- St. Paul's Ironwood: 1
- Bethlehem Florence: 1
- Emmanuel Menominee: 1
- All Saint's Wakefield: 1
- Faith Calumet: 1
- Gloria Dei Hancock: 1
- Bethany Amasa: 1

**Congratulations to Holy Trinity Chassell, Bethel Menominee, and Calvary Quinessec for taking the Top 3 spots!** Where will your congregation be by next month's update? How can you boost your numbers? [Here are some tried and true ways to encourage folks to register for camp:](#)

1. **Talk about camp all the time.** The Top 3 on our leader board are great at this!
2. **Use the Summer 2023 Camp brochures as personal invitations** for people who would benefit from a week at Fortune Lake. Tell them why you love camp and why they might love it to. Let us know if you need more brochures. Post the Summer 2023 poster in a prominent location, and refer to it often.
3. **Send your pastor to camp!** Rostered leaders are always welcome at camp. By committing to spending a week at camp (which is not vacation time), pastors show the congregation that it is a priority and part of what we do. Invite campers that are within the age range of that week's programs to attend with the pastor.

4. Camp is not just for kids! Some of our most popular programs are intergenerational, where families of all types and sizes come to camp together. **Encourage grandparents, Godparents, aunts and uncles, and parents to come to camp with their kids.**
5. **Host a Camp Sunday.** Invite previous campers of all ages to help lead the service, share songs, do a skit for the children's message, etc. Reach out to our staff, as we may be able to join you!
6. **Offer campership funds.** Involve campers in fundraising efforts and use the money to offset the cost of camp. Remember that we don't turn anyone away for financial reasons, so please reach out if you need assistance in bridging the gap.
7. Think outside of the church box. **Are there neighbor kids who would benefit from camp?** Talk to your school administrations and ask for suggestions of who you might invite. They know.
8. **Encourage early registration.** Families' summer schedules fill quickly. Some camp programs fill quickly. Free t-shirts go to all who register by March 1. Early Bird discounts go through April 1.
9. **Follow our social media accounts:**  
<https://www.facebook.com/FortuneLakeLutheranCamp> and  
<https://www.instagram.com/fortunelake/> Like, share, and comment on our posts.
10. Struggling to find people to commit to overnight camp? Looking to rebuild your intergenerational connects after years of pandemic? **Sign up for a Congregational Day Visit!** Go to <http://fortunelake.org/summer-camp/congregational-day-visits/> to learn more.
11. Last but not least: **pray.** Who might the Holy Spirit be nudging you to invite? Please let me know how our staff might support your camp recruitment efforts. We firmly believe that we are partners in ministry, and are always looking for creative ways to share the load.

Grace & Peace,

Amanda Rasner, Camp Director

*“You do well if you really fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’” ~James 2:8*



Dear Northern Great Lakes Synod,

Have you heard the phrase, “Birds of a feather flock together?” This little saying acknowledges what we all know; we gravitate towards the familiar and the comfortable. We like to be with people who think like us, behave like us, believe the same things as us, maybe even look like us. It's natural. I suppose some anthropologist could give a long treatise on herd mentality or the role such affinity

plays in survival. Other observers of societal norms would offer that social media has intensified this phenomenon. Online algorithms supply us with posts that affirm our foregone conclusions. Worse, there are more than a few memes out there that characterize anyone with an opposing view as being fair game for mockery or dismissed as unworthy. Beware of viewpoints being portrayed in the extreme, with no room for nuance or grey area. It is becoming more and more rare that people gather with birds of another feather, where their world view or assumptions or convictions are challenged. People talk about echo chambers, where we proclaim what we believe to be true only to hear it echo back to us as proof. The thing is, if we only surround ourselves with people who agree with us, if we never encounter a contrary opinion and explore it for its valid points, if we avoid conversations that invite deeper thinking, broader understanding, or a push back against what we consciously or unconsciously believe to be true then we have stopped learning and our lack of engagement contributes to the polarization of our society and the underlying anger that results from feeling misunderstood. A remedy for this is intentional engagement and deep listening, not to argue a point or change someone’s mind, but to understand the reasons that support another perspective. To that end, our Synod will be offering a Lenten Kaleidoscope Challenge. Our NGLS Kaleidoscope in Christ task force seeks to provide more opportunities for our synod to see others through the eyes of Jesus so that we can better, as James and elsewhere in scripture urges, “love your neighbor as yourself.” Because it is more than a little difficult to love what we do not understand or stay present with topics or people that make us uncomfortable.

So during Lent, you are invited to engage the resources on our website under The Kaleidoscope Challenge. Short videos, articles, movies, and books are linked there for you to watch, read, and study. I encourage you to consciously lower your defenses, raise your awareness, and learn something new about racial equity, our indigenous neighbors, and the LGBTQIA+ community. And you are invited to join a small group of people every week via zoom to process and discuss the resources for that week. What do you have questions about? What surprised you? What challenged you? What pricked your compassion? Your curiosity? Your emotions?

On our synod website, [nglsynod.org/christ-kaleidoscope-challenge](http://nglsynod.org/christ-kaleidoscope-challenge), you can register for the cohort of your choosing. A variety of leaders, dates, and times are available. At a time when people are quick to anger and disagree, I hope that our Church and your church can lead the way toward mutual respect and understanding. As Martin Luther once said, “God doesn’t need your good works, but your neighbor does.” For the sake of community, for the sake of the command of Jesus to love, for the sake of our neighbor, let us do the homework that will lead to authentic witness and put the love we have for Jesus into action.

Yours in Christ,

Bishop Katherine Finegan

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**Rev. Tommy Richter, Pastor**

Office: 906- 341-5427 Home 286-4383

**Secretary:** Shirley Leitgeb

[shirley.leitgeb@zionmanistique.org](mailto:shirley.leitgeb@zionmanistique.org)

**Musician:** Linda Levin

**Custodian:** Pat Toennesen

**Treasurer:** Naomi Fletcher

**Financial Secretary:** Cyndee Miske

**Choir Director:** Rebecca Peterson

**Congregation Council:**

Linda Levin, President

Donna Mott, Vice President

Kay MacGregor, Secretary

Jo-Nell Berger

Ruth Jones

Cathy Knudson

Janet Krueger

Peter Mathson

Bonnie Moody

Teddy Nelson



A congregation of the Northern Great Lakes Synod  
of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.