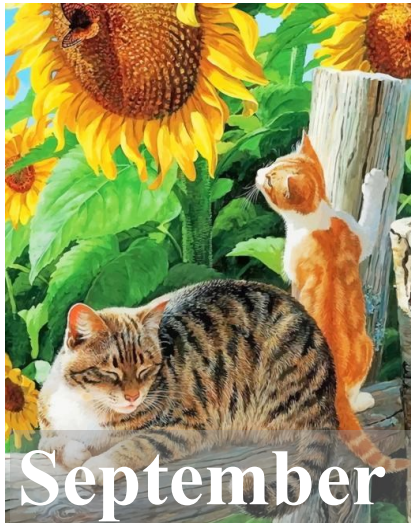


# Congregational Clarion

A M E R Y C O N G R E G A T I O N A L U C C



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## FROM PASTOR DANA

It is that time of year.....for us to think about the budget of the church. We all live on a budget. Some are very intentional and look at their budget month to month, just like we do at church. Some have a very informal system- when the money runs out it runs out, and some may not really live within a budget and incur debt. In some ways we have been living on credit this year- digging into our savings to keep operating costs covered. This disturbs me because the salaries of the staff (all of us-not just mine) come out of operations. You just hired me yet month to month the church is using savings to pay me. I know some people run their investments such that they donate toward the end of the year but because we don't make pledges we don't know if we can even support the budget we are planning on-although it has all worked out in the past.

Someone mentioned that people want to give to a particular line item-let's choose youth as an example-we will always accept what you want to give us, but if we are giving to a line item but neglecting the more boring items like building and grounds, operations, and staff-well without these items there would not be a youth program to give to. It is important to realize we must help support operations and building as well as the more exciting things like the youth program. Of course, if you have or are supporting operations and you have some spare cash for a specific line item-then great, we will use it for the designated ministry.

While we are talking about spending- I thought I would share information that it appears not everyone knows and may be concerned about: Art. The art between the office door and my door was purchased by me, out of my personal funds. The art from the "Picture the Bible" curriculum that hangs at the end of the hallway near the fellowship hall was paid ½ youth and ½ Christian Ed. Because there is a curriculum attached to it for multiple uses and for all ages that was approved by these two committees. I paid for the 1<sup>st</sup> 20 frames and the church paid for the second 20 and the last 12- to hang and protect the pictures for longer use. We have 52 pieces of that art -it is not all hanging at once.

I want to provide deeper, richer, and empowering worship experiences on Sundays, and also including the Seder meal and extra services at special times of the year. I want to prepare the church visually and spiritually for growth. I want to engage the community with us, and our church with the community, through inclusive events. We are working on bringing a new version of the block party back as requested by many of you. Abby is expanding our youth ministry with ecumenical connections with other churches and working within the community to engage young families with community events in hopes for growth. We are maintaining what we already do well like our mission team, the famous dinner theater, our walleye and chicken & biscuit dinners, hosting Polk County Meals on Wheels and sponsoring Ruby's Pantry and many other ministries. All of this is supported by you out of your devotion to God and for that I am very grateful. Let us together continue to build the kingdom or kingdom of God on Earth.

I am really looking forward to watching the Jesus Revolution with you. On Saturday October 7<sup>th</sup> at 6:30, we will watch the movie together in the Sanctuary then move to the fellowship hall for treats and discussion of the movie and the experience of watching it.

I am also announcing an all-day's women retreat on Saturday, October 21<sup>st</sup> from 8am to 2pm at East Emmanuel Lutheran Church. The cost will be \$20 with breakfast and a boxed lunch provided. This is open to the public so please invite female friends and family. There will be a time of getting to know each other, a time of Bible study, a time for quiet reflection or fellowship or crafting. We will have use of their outdoor shelter if the weather is nice along with the labyrinth. Come join us!

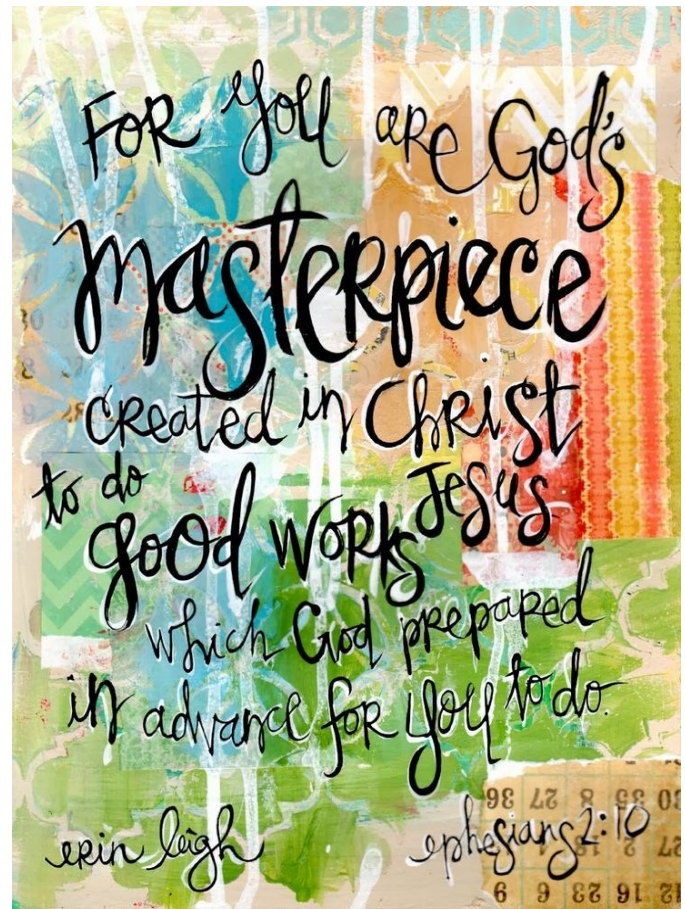
There will be no Prayer Walk for September as it coincides with the Amery Fall Festival.

Adult Study will begin 6pm on Wednesday

September 13<sup>th</sup>. This study will comprise of a video segment and discussion. It will end at the same time youth is picked up from the Wednesday night youth program. You are invited to join us for dinner at 5:30pm to have a family dinner. Also Firestarter age kiddos are welcome—there will be a play area in the fellowship for supervision. The first Study will be Bob Goff "Everybody Always" followed by the Lord's Prayer with Adam Hamilton followed by Because of Bethlehem with Max Luccado. These studies will take us through Christmas.

I am excited about all the upcoming events. I also love that so many of you are enthusiastically joining in the planning and participation in them as we continue to follow Christ and do God's work in the world.

Blessings,  
Dana







09/01 Karri Bowen  
 09/02 Gavin Harris  
 09/02 Pat Canham  
 09/02 Paula Richey  
 09/04 Cooper Harris

09/06 Thomas Bowen  
 09/08 Tyler Jackson  
 09/18 Chris Anderson  
 09/21 Adam Tulkki  
 09/21 Gary Piasecki  
 9/22 Barry Schaefer  
 09/23 Andrew Benner  
 09/23 Evie Porter  
 09/24 Leanne Whitley  
 09/25 Joy Silvis  
 09/26 Randy Olson  
 09/28 Teri Kohlrusch



## The main days and months you should know about for September are:

### National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month

Blood Cancer Awareness Month  
 National Food Bank Day  
 International Literacy Day  
 R U OK Day  
 World Suicide Prevention Day  
 Hispanic Heritage Month  
 International Day of Peace  
 International Day of Sign Language  
 National Public Lands Day



September 1  
 September 1  
 1st Friday  
 September 8  
 September 9  
 September 10  
 September 15  
 September 21  
 September 23  
 4th Saturday



**From  
Abby Betzold  
YOUTH MINISTER**



**Youth Director Contact Information:**

**Abby Betzold**  
**715.268.7390; ext. 12**  
**715.715.641.2237 (cell)**  
**Youth.ameryucc@gmail.com**

## September Youth News

As this school year starts back up, we are trying some new versions of old ideas. "Back when I was young" (okay I'll admit I'm still young) we had Critters, this program was for younger students to come on Wednesdays and learn about God. This summer, we had a very successful Community Vacation Bible School, and I truly found myself feeling a need to offer Wednesday night programming for younger students not just our middle & high schoolers. That being said you'll notice in our "upcoming youth events" below that we will be having the Fire Starters program on the 2nd & 4th Wednesdays. This will be offered for Pre-K through 5th Grade. Another, new version of an old idea is that we will be introducing STAFF (Serving Together As Friends in Faith) this will be the same concept as the old FUEL, we will be gathering our older kids with the youth groups from other churches once a month to do a fun activity or service project.

Now, knowing that we are implementing some new activities, this is the part I've been spending a lot of time praying about. I need help!! I could really use one more male adult to help with our older youth (6th-12th) on a regular basis. This would be to lead small group discussion time, questions are provided for you. I could also use a few 2 to 3 adult volunteers who would like to help on the 2nd & 4th Wednesdays with Fire Starters, this would be in a variety of activities from making crafts to going through the Bible study with students, again I will provide all the materials and show you how to do the craft for the week, I just can't be in too many places at once. And finally, I am looking for some Wednesday night cooks, it can be simple dishes like pizza, mac n cheese, or hot dogs, we are looking to feed hungry kids is all!

If you are available to help in any of these ways or even if you can only do one Wednesday a month I'll take you're help! Just reach out to me and let me know what area you are interested in helping with!

### Upcoming Youth Events:

August 30th : Youth Group Starts 3:30-7pm

September 6th : Youth Group 3:30-7pm

September 10th: Sunday School Starts (during 10am Worship)

September 13th : Fire Starters 3:30-6pm / Youth Group 3:30-7pm

September 20th : Youth Group 3:30-8pm S.T.A.F.F Night 6-8pm at Our Savior's

September 27th: Fire Starters 3:30-6pm / Youth Group 3:30-7pm

Blessings to all!

Abby

## Peace and Pain co-exist

By Julie Etta Smith

Today was the last session of my **GriefShare** group, I almost didn't want the session to end. I feel a certain sense of sadness, but in the same token, feeling very blessed that I learned so much as a participant in this group. I truly believed that we all managed to help each other in our journeys; both in small ways and big ways...but always miraculous.

Just like the photo here...it is best to think of Grief like an ocean, ebbing and flowing in your life. I feel as if I have done a pretty decent job of "learning to swim."



One of the **GriefShare** statements is their mission to provide you with help on: "*Your Journey from Mourning to Joy*." It really helped me on my journey, and I plan on keeping my workbook to reference from time to time. Just like any journaling a person does...it is so good to go back and see how things have progressed and also how prayers have been answered.

In my workbook, I noted several quotes, lessons and sometimes just observations that have helped with my healing. The grief process is different for everyone, but some of these lessons that were highlighted I feel compelled to share and record perhaps a "Readers Digest"



condensed version of the ones that meant the most to me:

**--Peace & Pain coexist:** just like the title of this blog, I found it is so valuable to be reminded that pain and sorrow are both part of the human condition. Everyone knows that, but sometimes we need an affirmation that we are not alone in suffering. Everyone experiences grief. Just because you have pain, does not mean you will never experience joy again... even joy that can occur at the same time as sorrow. There are many biblical contexts that assure us that we can find peace after, or even amongst, the pain. These are a few of my favorites:

*But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. Do not fear their threats; do not be frightened. 1 Peter 3:14*

Another verse affirms pain and human suffering, but also declares the reassurance of a coming peace. Jesus states:

*I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world. John 16:33*

Many times, when we grieve, we feel guilty for having joy again. I know my Mom wouldn't want me to dwell on missing her, but rather move forward. Which leads me to my next point:

**--Move Forward instead of Moving On:** This bit of advice may seem just like a matter of semantics, but it provides a valuable insight into the way we heal. Sometimes people mean well by saying something to the effect of "She really needs to Move on..." which seems to imply forgetting the past. Whereas **Moving Forward** allows us to remember the person we have lost, respecting and treasuring the

(Continued on page 6)



(Continued from page 5)

memories while at the same time proceeding with carrying on with your life. I know, easier said than done. Yet, it is something to strive for.

**--Grief is not Linear:** Just like the ebb and flow of the ocean it is good to remember that Grief comes and goes. There will be good days and bad days. I found comfort in remembering that you just don't go from point A to point B and then you're done. It doesn't work that way. Thoughts and sadness will sneak up on you when you least suspect it. That's OK, it's just part of the process. The worst thing you can do is to be hard on yourself and think, "I thought I was done with this"...well apparently you weren't. Let it wash over you like a wave and then proceed.

A perfect example that happened to me occurred during a recent drive to Dallas to help my son move. On the way home we drove through Des Moines...not stopping. The fact that Mom was no longer there, and we just drove by the skyline and familiar roadways...it suddenly hit me.... I miss her so much. All those years of trips to Des Moines and now it will never be the same.

Even if we did go back, as they say...you can never go home again. So, since I was driving, I felt compelled to stop at a rest stop and let the tears flow. I didn't deny my emotions and I felt better by allowing myself to experience those feelings. It's part of the process and I have learned that the journey is not over yet. However, every tear heals.

**--Gratitude changes our hearts:** I have this phrase: "Gratitude changes our Hearts", written on a post-it note by my desk as a gentle reminder to remember all the things in my life that **ARE** going right. Blessings can bring a smile to your face, even if it is through your tears.

I am so very thankful for this group in helping me in "processing" my grief and helping me to move forward with JOY. If you are interested in learning more about this group, their web site is: [www.griefshare.org](http://www.griefshare.org) or feel free to contact me with any questions, I would be happy to help.

Julie E. Smith

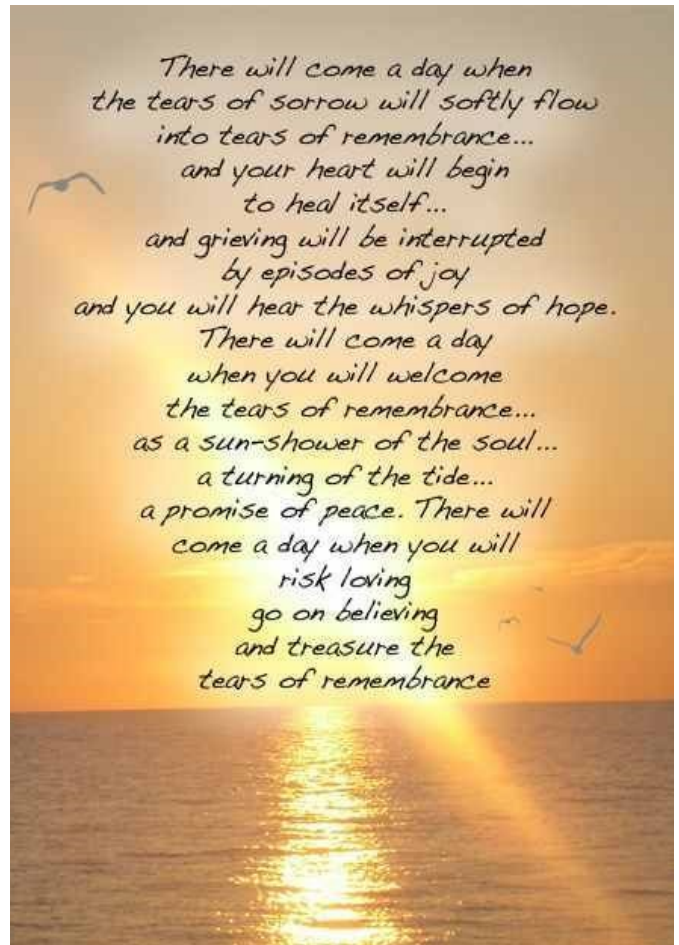


*Note from Rae:*

You may find more of Julie's writings or contact her at the following websites:

<https://www.americandestinations.net>

<https://www.awriterspassion.blog>



## Council Meeting August 8, 2023

**Attendance:** Sheldon Betzold, Sandy Morris, Chad Leonard, Kate Bevington, Pastor Dana Caldwell, Abby Betzold, Sherry Monson

Pastor Dana opened meeting in prayer @ 6:02

Approval of June Council Meeting Minutes. Motion made to approve by Chad L and Abby B. Motion passed.

**Treasure/Financial Secretary Reports:** Chad L presented the report that showed we are still \$13,000.00 below our yearly budget but the actual income to actual expense is better than in June. It was brought to Chad's attention that the noisy kettle fun was to go to the Banner Memorial Fund. A motion was made by Kate B and Sandy M to approve the report. Motion passed. The Financial Committee Report presented by Chad B reported that the church is slowly moving money to WESTconsin Credit Union. They have sold some stock and moved it to a dividend fund. The financial report will be published in the Clarion for the 1<sup>st</sup> half of the year. Giving statements will be emailed out to those with email addresses and mailed out to those who do not have email addresses on file.

**Clerk Report:** Sandy M reported no change in membership. As of July 31, we still have 145 members. Pastor Dana reported we received letters of membership transfers for Ross Smith and Julie/Scott Smith.

**Youth Director's Report:** Abby B reported they are planning some changes to the Wednesday evening activities beginning this fall. There are plans involving younger youth on the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays which Redeemer Church will be partnering with us. August 30 will be the 1<sup>st</sup> scheduled youth group. There are plans for an Adult Bible Study on Wednesday's from 6-7 pm. Families with younger children are encouraged. It will be held at the south end of the fellowship hall with children of families in the same room. Because there may be more families and youth involved there will be a need for more volunteers to assist with meals. Local area churches are planning one Wednesday night a month for a special activity for older youth. This program will be called **STAFF (Service Together As Friends of Faith)**. So far, the area churches who are planning to be a part of this are: 1<sup>st</sup> Lutheran, Our Savior's, Redeemer, East Immanuel, Neighbors United in Christ, Catholic. Balsam Lutheran is still questionable at this time.

**Board of Trustee Report:** No report

**Board of Deacon Report:** Pastor Dana reported they had a good Deacon Retreat at her home. They discussed communion, worship, prayers of the people and how to talk about communion to others.

**Board on Congregational Giving:** Kate B no report.

**Pastor's Report:** Dana reported she would like feedback on the newly proposed Church Flyer. The Narthex Table has been moved. October 8th worship is Indigenous People Sunday will introduce the Land Acknowledgement. The emphasis on that Sunday will be Hope. Plans for Adult Bible Study on Wednesday. The Staff Retreat went well. The focus was Growing the Church. Chris and Nancy Anderson will be hosting an all-church hayride and picnic at their house from 2-7 pm. Sign up sheets for the Health and Happiness Walk will be coming out soon.

**Review Monthly Calendar:**

**Old Business:** no report

**New Business:**

Coffee Hour Sign-up for donuts in September

Ginny Ormsby recommending the purchase of Max Lucato Pocket Prayers for Teachers. After discussion by council members, it was decided to not support this project.

Chicken & Biscuit Dinner Sunday, September 24<sup>th</sup>. Because of other annual church dinners in the fall, this seems to be the best date to try. Sherry M will talk to Ginny O to see if she can help with the biscuits.

**Next Council Meeting:** Tuesday, September 12 @ 6pm

Motion to adjourn made by Chad L and Abby B. Motion passed. 7:11 pm

Submitted by: Sherry Monson

# September 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>27</b> Blessing of the Backpacks <b>10:00am Sunday Worship</b>	<b>28</b> 10:00am - 2:00pm Office Open 6:30pm Boy Scouts	<b>29</b> 10:00am - 2:00pm Office Open 7:00pm - 8:00pm Financial Class	<b>30</b> 10:00am Bible Study 10:00am - 2:00pm Office Open 3:30pm - 7:00pm Youth Group	<b>31</b> 10:00am - 2:00pm Office Open	<b>1</b> Office Closed	<b>2</b>
<b>3</b> 9:00am Diaconate Meeting <b>10:00am Communion</b> <b>10:00am Sunday Worship</b>	<b>4</b> Labor Day - Office Closed	<b>5</b> 10:00am - 2:00pm Office Open	<b>6</b> 10:00am Bible Study 10:00am - 2:00pm Office Open 3:30pm - 7:00pm Youth Group 7:00pm Christian Education Mtg.	<b>7</b> 10:00am - 2:00pm Office Open 5:00pm Trustee Meeting	<b>8</b> Office Closed	<b>9</b> 6:45am Ruby's Pantry Volunteers 7:30am - 9:00am Ruby's Pantry Distribution at SMC 4:00pm Hayride/Cookout
<b>10</b> 9:00am Mission Team Meeting <b>10:00am Sunday Worship</b> <b>10:20am First Day of Sunday School</b>	<b>11</b> 10:00am - 2:00pm Office Open 6:30pm Boy Scouts	<b>12</b> 10:00am - 2:00pm Office Open 11:00am Health and Happiness Meeting 6:00pm Council Meeting	<b>13</b> 10:00am Bible Study 10:00am - 2:00pm Office Open 3:30pm - 7:00pm Youth Group	<b>14</b> Fall Festival 10:00am - 2:00pm Office Open	<b>15</b> Fall Festival Office Closed	<b>16</b> Fall Festival
<b>17</b> 10:00am Sunday Worship <b>10:20am Sunday School</b>	<b>18</b> 10:00am - 2:00pm Office Open 6:30pm Boy Scouts	<b>19</b> 10:00am - 2:00pm Office Open 5:00pm Gaither Video	<b>20</b> 10:00am Bible Study 10:00am - 2:00pm Office Open 3:30pm - 7:00pm Youth Group	<b>21</b> 8:15am Ministerium 10:00am - 2:00pm Office Open	<b>22</b> Office Closed 3:00pm Wedding	<b>23</b> Preparation for Chicken Dinner
<b>24</b> 10:00am Sunday Worship <b>10:20am Sunday School</b> 11:00am - 1:30pm Chicken Dinner	<b>25</b> 10:00am - 2:00pm Office Open 6:30pm Boy Scouts	<b>26</b> 10:00am - 2:00pm Office Open	<b>27</b> 10:00am Bible Study 10:00am - 2:00pm Office Open 3:30pm - 7:00pm Youth Group	<b>28</b> 10:00am - 2:00pm Office Open	<b>29</b> Office Closed	<b>30</b> 10:00am - 2:00pm Health and Happiness Walk and Block Party