

Eden Evangelical LUTHERAN CHURCH

Life in Eden

Visit our Website



From the Pastor

O LORD, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens. Out of the mouths of babes and infants you have founded a bulwark because of your foes, to silence the enemy and the avenger. When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have established; what are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them? Yet you have made them a little lower than God, and crowned them with glory and honor. You have given them dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under their feet, all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea and whatever passes along the paths of the seas. O LORD, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth! -Psalm 8

New Year's resolutions are awful. And not just because we inevitably fail to keep them. But there is something more deeply flawed about the whole idea: it relies on an unhealthy myth of progress. Nadia Bolz-Weber tweets the same thing about this every New Year. She says: "No one has ever become their ideal self. After all those resolutions and elimination diets and strivings. It's always a moving target. Your ideal self doesn't exist. YOU do. Your actual, lumpy, shimmering, inconsistent self is the one that is loved and needed here." The central flaw in making New Year's resolutions is, by setting our sights on a moving target of self improvement, we miss out on the actual us as we are.

And at this point you might ask with the psalmist, but who am I that anyone should care about me? Who are lumpy inconsistent mortals that God should favor them? Yet God does favor us. And that is what makes all the difference this New Year. The psalmist says: it is out of the mouths of babes, that God establishes a bulwark. Babes aren't powerful, paragons of ideal self-hood, or good at keeping resolutions, and they certainly have the most in life that they can improve upon. I mean, what can they do but eat, sleep and poop? And in my experience they cannot even do those three simple things without help most of the time. But it is precisely weak babes, like the baby Christ, that are the tools that God uses to establish the strongest defense against the darkness. So if God can make bulwarks out of the babbling from an infants mouth, who are you mortal, to say that you are not important? That you have to be better than you are?

We aren't just setting ourselves up for failure when we make New Year's resolutions, we are creating a cycle of violence against ourselves! Even if you manage to keep your New Year's resolution, all it means is you have successfully waged war against yourself for a whole year. You have, through violence against your own sins, hurt yourself until you become a shell of who you were before, all in the name of progress. Is clawing tooth and nail against our very self-hood actually a good thing to practice? What do we actually gain from learning to hurt ourselves until we achieve some measly step forward? How much of you will remain after you find you have to take another step after this one? And another after that? So much violence at your own hand you will have to endure for so little gain. And worse, if you fail at keeping your resolution, as I always do, you are likely to do even more violence to yourself in your shame at not meeting your unrealistic standards for yourself. There is no way to win with resolutions! By making them, you are setting bulwarks against yourself. Because in doing so we devalue what God our Sovereign has made holy. YOU! Stinking YOU! That's who God favors. Not someone better than you, or more successful. But baby you. Believe it or not, even in comparison to the stars and the moon, that's who God loves.

So this New Year, be it resolved that we do not make any resolutions. Instead, let us practice something better than violence against ourselves. Let us practice that forgiveness that God has shown us. Let us practice love for ourselves and one another, despite (and to spite!) any room for improvement. And even when we fail at practicing those things (because we will), let us take comfort in the knowledge that we are not the Sovereign, we do not have to be perfect. But God, whose name is majestic in all the Earth, loved us even when we were lumpy and gross. And that same God is at work making us new again every day. Amen.

-Pastor Tommy Richter



January Birthdays

1/02	Beverly Oas	1/11	Helen Scheuneman
1/03	Patricia Savola	1/13	Kathy Baij
1/04	Dawn Mattson	1/16	Kristen Sontag-Long
1/08	Bruce Dausey	1/21	Gabriel Cole
1/08	Keira Albright	1/22	Christi Salo
1/10	Stephanie Dausey	1/27	Doug Scheuneman
1/10	Kenneth Davis	1/28	Lesla McAllister
1/10	Connor Salo	1/31	Jean Hayes
1/10	Kaye Methot	1/31	Sara Sutherland
1/11	Rachel Harmon		

Thank Yous

Thank you to the 9 ladies helped put the cookie containers together and delivered them to our people at Medilodge, Harbor View and those who are Home-Bound. Also Thank You to all the ladies who donated cookies for the containers, we delivered 14 containers with a large variety of cookies.

We had pizza and decided where our monies were to be spent from the Bazaar, had some laughs and a good time..

Thank You WELCA/Eden Ladies.

Dear Eden,

What a beautiful surprise!! Thank You so much for the wonderful tin of cookies and candy (love). Such a lovely thing to do for others for the Holidays. I shared mine with some of the "Aids" and Nurses. All loved them.

Thank You Sincerely, Mary Gill

Eden Lutheran,

To Terry, thank you for all your help in my bulletin and my music. Also a special thanks to the cookie makers. I was thrilled when Lynn delivered them today (Sunday) my vision is so bad I can't bake or use the stove anymore, so greatly appreciated. Thank you everyone for all your support and care.

Love and Prayers

Marlene Robbins

Thank You WELCA for the yummy, delicious plate of goodies. That was very thoughtful!

Terry

THANK YOU to Anne Balko who continues to send out birthday greetings to all our Eden family. We appreciate your dedication!

Thank You WELCA so much for all the great cookies you made for me. Such a nice thing to do! I sure enjoyed them.

Sincerely, Pat Hyry

Dear Ladies of WELCA,

Just a note to thank you for thinking of my dad, Jim LeVeque at Medi Lodge. Baked goodies made with kindness and love. He has a sweet tooth and is enjoying them.

Lynn (LeVeque) Perry



Financial Snapshot For Dec.

		YTD
Income	\$ 10,193.22	\$ 120,240.56
Expenses	\$ 4,991.56	\$ 119,008.40

MEMORIAL FUND

In Memory Of:

Jean Moore

John & Kristin Madigan

Rochelle Cotey

Rick & Lorraine Runsat

Harry & Ruth Lindquist

Helen Mattson

Jean Hayes

Daniel & Joanie Hinsa

Balance \$15,908.76

THE YOUTH MINISTRY FUND

Current Balance - \$4,014.49

Amazon Smile

Do you shop on-line? If so, you can make money for Eden on the Bay by shopping at Amazon Smile. Amazon Smile is a program where Amazon donates, at no additional cost, to charitable causes that you select. If you have been using Amazon Smile already, consider naming Eden on the Bay as your organization selected for these donations. If you haven't already been using Amazon Smile, it's easy to do. Simply go to smile.amazon.com to do all your Amazon shopping. (If you search "Amazon Smile" from your normal Amazon site, it will redirect you to the smile.amazon.com location.) From there you can choose the organization you wish to support. The site looks and acts like the regular Amazon site, but generates money for good causes, like Eden.



Assisting Ministers For Jan.

Saturday, Jan. 1 - Joanie Hinsa

Sunday, Jan. 2 - Skylar Wood

Saturday, Jan. 8 - Norma Dick

Sunday, Jan. 9 - Brenda St.Martin

Saturday, Jan. 15 - Volunteer Needed

Sunday, Jan. 16 - Lyon Wood

Saturday, Jan. 22 - Volunteer Needed

Sunday, Jan. 23 - Christi Salo

Saturday, Jan. 29 - Bruce Dausey

Sunday, Jan. 30 - Joanie Hinsa

Pulpit Supply for Jan.

January 1&2 - Grant Soltwisch

January 8&9 - Elaine Robbins

January 15&16- Pastor Ellie Russey

January 22&23- Pastor Breanne Johnson

January 29- Pastor Dave Van Clay

January 30- (Annual Meeting) Pastor Tommy Richter

Prayer Chain

Call to all Prayer Warriors!

It is a new year, and time to refresh our PRAYER CHAIN. If you would like to be part of our new prayer chain, please text or email

Elaine Robbins at 906-450-3344/robbins5614@gmail.com. You can choose if you would like to be contacted for prayer by phone call or text. **Even if you are on the prayer chain now, please sign up again now.** If you need to start the prayer chain, please call or text Elaine at 906-450-3344. As a reminder-all prayer requests are kept confidential.





From The Bishop

“For in hope we were saved.

*Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for,
the conviction of things not seen.*

~Hebrews 11:1

Dear Northern Great Lakes Synod,

As this Year of Hope 2021 comes to a close, we shift our focus to Faith for the year 2022. Faith is, of course, connected to Hope as our Faith in the Spirit of the Living Christ is the source of our faith and our hope.

While each generation has been marked by its own challenges, it's hard not to feel like our time in history is somehow exceptional, perhaps because we are the ones who are living it. The past couple of years have certainly been distinctive. We are living in a time of contrasts and simultaneous opposites:

- Weariness and opportunity
- Grief and creativity
- Loss of traditions and forging something new
- Polarization and common mission
- Apart but together

Living in the tension of seemingly opposing forces is exhausting. And yet, perhaps it is only in that in-between space that we are able to move forward, like walking a ridge line, carefully balancing between two valleys that drop steeply to either side. Every step must be calculated and considered to avoid careening down a slippery slope.

I do believe we entered this pandemic thinking that somehow it would end

and we would all go back to the way things were. Now, I am thinking that it is not about looking for an end, but rather shifting into a new way of being.

Included in the charges given to a pastor at an ordination is this exhortation:

“So discipline yourselves in life and teaching that you preserve the truth, giving no occasion for false security or illusory hope.”

I do not wish to give illusory hope, encouraging you to hold on for some near or distant day when the pandemic will be over and things will get back to “normal”. The shifting and adapting we are doing now may well be permanent and not just a temporary adjustment for extraordinary circumstances.

As we travel the ridgeline of 2022, I encourage you to join me and the whole synod in a focus on Faith. The whole point of being church, the whole reason God created the church in the first place, was to share the good news of Jesus. When so much of the future remains uncertain, we have this core mission to guide our steps.

For 2022, I believe we will find blessing as we dig into what we believe, why we believe it, and what difference that belief makes to who we are as people trying to follow Jesus, and what it means for how we live in the world. Whether you join a Synod-wide Lifelong Faith Formation class or participate in a small group Bible Study in your congregation or with a group of friends, I ask you engage in a new effort, a new discipline, to deepen your faith, and I promise to do the same. Together, we will walk this narrow path through the tension that 2022 brings and find our way into becoming the future church that God is bringing into being.

Yours in Christ,

Bishop Katherine Finegan

