



When You Are Weary

Greetings in the name of the risen Christ!

It's May and the sun is shining (well, it is at the time I am writing this) and it seems as if Spring has finally arrived in West Michigan. May is full of celebrations, Mother's Day, Graduation, the end of school and Memorial Day. These celebrations bring joy for many, but might also be a source of sadness or stress for others, which leads me to highlight what else happens at this time of year. May is also Mental Health Awareness Month; the idea is that if we highlight mental health, mental illness, and the available resources, we, as a society, can reduce stigma and create incentives to improve the mental health system. It is an unfortunate reality that we don't talk much about mental health, or mental illness, in the Church; and the Church is exactly where we need to be creating a safe, sacred space for those conversations.

Mental health struggles can affect anyone, at any time, including people within our faith community. According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), approximately 1 in 5 adults in the U.S. experience mental illness each year, and the occurrences of mental illness among youth is on the rise. Since Covid, our society as a whole has become more divided, anxious, lonely, and depressed. Yet, the number of people seeking treatment is far less than the number of people experiencing mental illness. All too often seeking treatment is seen as being weak, or mental illness is seen in the church as being a result of limited faith; something you can pray away.

Let me be clear: mental illness is not a weakness. Struggling with your mental health is not a flaw, a choice, or something that you can "power through."

That last bit is important. Throughout my ministry, I have often encountered the idea that we need to be "put together" when we are at church. We need to smile and be nice, that church is not the place to bring our mess. We believe that if we let our mess through then we won't be good role models, or we will look weak.

Jesus said, "Come to me all who are weary and carrying heavy burdens" (Matthew 11:23-12:3) This invitation to bring our heavy burdens to God means that we don't always have to smile. Our faith community is intended as a safe and sacred space for all of us to be who we are, in whatever state we are, where we can be prayed for and supported in our struggles. God knows our struggles; God knows that sometimes it takes every ounce of strength and focus we have just to get up out of bed. God knows sometimes we just can't smile.

And God provides.

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PASTOR'S PAGE CONTINUED

God provides community to support us in prayer, and to be present when we would hide away, and God provides people with knowledge and skills to help us manage our mental health. This May, and every day really, please remember that you are loved and valued. If you or someone that you know is struggling with mental health, please don't hesitate to contact Pastor Jess or seek help at a mental health facility.

May God guide you in peace and surround you with their holy, healing presence.

Amen.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Jess

MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

Resources for those experiencing a mental health crisis:

National Mental Health Hotline 866-903-3787 <https://mentalhealthhotline.org>

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Michigan <https://namimi.org>

988 Lifeline Dial 988 988lifeline.org

Resources for the LGBTQIA community:

The Trevor Project Crisis Hotline 1-866-488-7386 thetrevorproject.org

Resources for Veterans:

Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency (MVAA) michigan.gov/mvaa

Veterans Crisis Line Dial 988 and then press 1

MVAA Suicide Prevention Program 1-800-642-4838 specially trained staff can help Veterans and their families address risk factors, access VA benefits, provide peer support and more.

EASTER SUNDAY

The children in our Easter Sunday service. April 20, 2025

I-r: Cooper and Makensie Adams, Pastor Jess and Tessa Letourneau.



Children's Sermon time. I-r: adults, Pastor Jess, Tim Adams, Eve Andrus, Rebecca Adams & Larry Heckel. I-r: children, foreground, Caroline Lindsley, Jackson, Becca Dixon with Toad, Tenley Letourneau, James Walker, Tessa Letourneau & Edwin Eisaman. Two children in background, Makensie and Cooper Adams.

LOOKING FOR QUILTING HELP

HELP!

No sewing or quilting skills needed

No experience necessary

We will teach you everything you need to know.

Do you love being creative? Do you love colors and working with color?

Do you love the feel of fabric in your hand?

Come join our quilting group. Come for the fellowship, the camaraderie, the feeling of a well done creative project.

We have large tasks and small, easy and more difficult.

Come for an hour or come for the day. We'd love to have you with us.

We meet Tuesdays 11:00 am - 3:00 pm,
except December.

Can't come during the day?

We have projects to work on at home.

Contact Sharon Wendt for more information:

616-399-0204

kiwiynk@yahoo.com



SPRING CLEAN-UP



Thank you!

Thank you to everyone who participated
in our Spring Clean-Up.

So nice to see everything neat and clean
and in its place again.

GRADUATE RECOGNITION SUNDAY

Graduate Recognition Sunday

May 18, 2025

Join us as in recognizing our 2025 graduates and bless them as they start the next steps in their journey. This year we are recognizing three graduates: Jacob Bacon, Alex McCaughan, and Jonas Pearson.



ONE COMMUNITY WEEKEND

One Community Worship

Come for a bilingual, multi-generational, community-wide time of prayer and worship as part of Movement West Michigan's One Community Weekend.



Thursday, May 15, 2025, 6:00 pm.

Maple Ave. Ministries.

427 Maple Ave, Holland, 49423

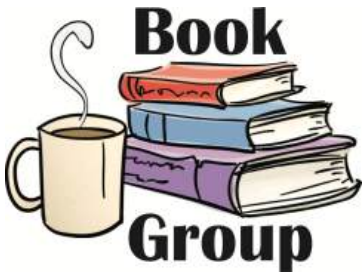
BOOK GROUP NEWS

May Selection:

The Only Woman in the Room by Marie Benedict

The Only Woman in the Room by Marie Benedict, an author many of us have read and enjoy. Who was this woman? And what do we know about her? She was a scientist. She was very beautiful. She lived in a castle and was married to an Austrian arms dealer. At her husband's side she learned of the Third Reich's plans. She had an idea to help fight the Nazis. Who was she?

The May Book Group will meet Wednesday, May 28 at 4:30. (This is a change from our normal date.) We do not have a book bag for this book. It is available in various formats at the library or locate your own copy. If you have questions see Vicki Russell.



PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING

Hello all,
Molly Lactchaw the Grants and Partnership Manager from CAH (Community Action House) emailed us and said they were “blown away” that we raised and donated \$621 from our noisy offering. They very much appreciate partnering with us to help our neighbors.

rec'd April 23, 2025

The Measure of Our Love

Computers connected via internet = Families

Total Sunday Attendance: 251

Families: 14

Average Sunday Attendance: 63



SUMMER OFFICE HOURS

Summer Office Hours
Memorial Day - Labor Day

Begin: Tuesday, May 27, 2025
Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday
9:00 am - 2:00 pm

End: Tuesday, September 2, 2025
Monday, Wednesday, Friday
9:00 am - 2:00 pm



NOISY OFFERING

May/June Noisy Offering: Paws for a Cause



For 45 years, Paws With A Cause (PAWS) has assisted thousands of people living with disabilities in embracing the journey of life through our amazing Assistance Dogs. Each custom trained PAWS Dog opens a world of possibilities – inspiring independence, confidence, companionship, and dignity for individuals, families, and communities.



The facility improvements needed to support the expansion of our mission and reach more of these qualified applicants will cost \$9.5 million to complete. We're excited to share that PAWS has raised \$9.1 million in charitable gifts towards our \$9.5 million capital campaign goal already. Now we need the help of our community to raise the remaining funds needed!

More than 400 qualified individuals apply for their own PAWS Assistance Dog each year, far beyond our current capacity to serve. We are determined to answer the growing need for more custom-trained Assistance Dogs through strategic improvements that will maximize efficiency and support expanded programs in the world-class breeding, care, and training of our dogs. This will allow us to serve more qualified applicants and support them on their PAWS journeys.

Mission and Outreach Committee

Carolyn, Suzanne, Branden, Julie, and Pastor Jessica

**EMBRACE
THE JOURNEY**
A CAPITAL CAMPAIGN FOR PAWS WITH A CAUSE



SUNDAY SERVANTS

Sunday Servants Needed for May

Please help us fill the spaces. Volunteer to be a Sunday Servant

Use the form in the Commons or contact Deb in the office.

616.772.4075 or gslc.office@icloud.com

Date	Worship Leader/ Communion Assistant	Reader(s)	Usher	Communion Set-Up/ Clean-Up
May 4 3rd Sunday of Easter	WL- CA-	Floyd Norvell		Mary Sue Dawsey
May 11 4th Sunday of Easter	WL - Eric Mueller CA- Eric Mueller	Brian Underhill		
May 18 5th Sunday of Easter	WL - graduate CA - graduate	Graduate		Vicki Russell Suzanne House
May 26 6th Sunday of Easter	WL - CA -			

FELLOWSHIP SIGN-UP - MAY

Fellowship Sign-up.



Treats and Set Up & Clean Up	
May 4, 2025	White & Dykstra
May 11, 2025	
May 18, 2025	
May 25, 2025	

May

Birthdays

Ellen Lichtman 5
Chris Simoni 5
Donna Vargo 7
Jessica Underhill 8
Lynda Parrott 10
Tiffany Letourneau 19
Terry Grossman 22
Corinne Becker 23
Jonathan Hurt 26
Tenley Letourneau 26
Kris Norvell 27
Vicki Russell 28



Anniversaries

Andre & Jill Letourneau 11
Sam Rogers
& Naomi Wahl 16
Ron Meyer & Deb
DeYoung Meyer 24
Kris & Floyd Norvell 24
Perry & Lisa Pearson 25
Bill & Karrie Foster 28
Laurie & Duane Schuldt 28

SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES

Sunday Services are also on-line.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87525508195?pwd=MmtjVENGaUg3ODFuaXhhUHR1TVR3Zz09>

Meeting ID: 875 2550 8195

Passcode: 022399

Sunday Services, 10:00 -11:00 am, also available via Zoom
Choir Rehearsals, Mondays at 6:30 pm, September - May
Quilter's Meet, Tuesdays, 11:00 am on site. No Quilting in December.
Women's Bible Study, Wednesdays, 10:30 am, September - May
Book Group, 3rd Wednesday of the month, 4:30 pm. September - May

PASTOR JESS' SCHEDULE



Pastor Jessica is available Monday - Thursday
via phone, text, email and Facebook messenger.

Phone: (616) 403-4660

Email: pj.gslc@gmail.com

To view Pastor's weekly in-office hours, look on the Breeze
calendar on our website at goodshepherdhollandmi.com

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Church Council Members:

Branden Bacon (VP)	(920) 889-8707, branden.bacon@gmail.com
Dylana Eisaman	(616) 953-0603, dylana.pinter@gmail.com
Suzanne House	(616) 655-9732 wlsmhouse@icloud.com
Michael Russell	(616) 283-6723 miker163@yahoo.com
Brian Underhill (Pres)	(616) 292-7194, underhillbrian@yahoo.com
Pastor Jess	(616) 403-4660, pj.gslc@gmail.com

IN OUR APRIL PRAYERS

In Our April Prayers...

- **Praise and Thanksgiving:** Dennis Willaman is at home recovering. Rob Parrott is healing well.
- **Congratulations:** to Kris and Floyd Norvell on their new great granddaughter, Eleanor Sage Visser, born March 28, 2025, 7 lbs, 5 oz. Ellie and Mom, Madi, are doing well, Dad and brother, Theo, are over the moon!
- **Our Sympathies:** to the friends and family of Michelle Christensen, daughter of the late Rev. and Mrs. Leroy Beck, and former member, who passed away recently; to the family and friends of Roland Rivera, Pastor Jess's father, who passed away Wednesday, April 9, 2025; and to family and friends on the passing of Elmer Henry, (Joan Maring's father) Tuesday, April 22, 2025. Services to be held in Pennsylvania.
- **Ministries of the Month, April:** Kids' Food Basket and our Membership Events Team.
- **Healing/Peace:** Kirk & Roberta Addis, (decades long friends of Norvells), Kirk's treatments for liver and bone cancer causing severe side effects. Andrew (Cathy Sytsma's nephew), dealing with neurological condition, Annie & Chris, Annie has leukemia (friends of Carolyn & Dennis W.'s daughter Elizabeth), Lucas Barton, diagnosed with Dushanes Muscular Dystrophy (son of friends of Julie Wolff), Zach Bergland (Beckers' nephew), Jake Bird, cancer treatment (Corinne's son-in-law), Greg Bolton, (friend of Julie Wolff), Patricia Bradfield, Tom & Elizabeth Brookover, (friends of the Wentz's) Tom has a rare form of ocular cancer, Dylan Brophy, age 26, (nephew of Kris Norvell's friend), stage 4 melanoma, Mark DeGraaf, stage 4 cancer, Diane (close friend of Kris Norvell) for new cancer treatment success, cancer diagnosis, Steve Dwyer (Lynda Parrott's cousin), Jayce Genzinger (Tammy Walter's step-niece's son) born preemie in July, twin died, needs our prayers, Jessie George (Deb P-G's daughter), Brent Havalka in ICU (husband of Laurie Schuldt's niece), Elmer Henry (Joan Maring's 100 yr. old father) fell-is in ICU, Tessa Hurt (out-of-town member) diagnosed with Myelofibrosis, Jan (Cathy Sytsma's sister), Steve Johnson, foot surgery recovery, Beth Lefever (friend of Tammy Walters) for housing and employment as she returns to the Holland Area. Tiffany Letourneau, being treated for breast cancer, Iris Mears, (PJ's godmother), Ron Meyer, Richard Mueller (Terry Grossman's dad), Rob Parrott, recovery from foot surgery, Perry Pearson, ankle surgery recovery, Dorothy Postema (Deb PG's mom), Roland Rivera, Casey Rosel (Norvell in-law relation) diagnosed with cancer in her skull, surgery occurred July 9, Janice Russell (Mike & Vicki's sister-in-law) cancer diagnosis, Jerry Shoup, Kathy Shoup, Katherine Slee (friend of Beckers), Claire Smith (Norvell's grandniece) recovery from transplant surgery, Stella, 6 yrs old, (Sally Ponstein's friend's granddaughter) needs a kidney transplant, Rick Taylor, (Julie Wolff's cousin), Russ & Rita Taylor (Julie Wolff's parents), Sara Thompson (Corinne's friend) cancer diagnosis, Justin Walker (Pastor's husband), Julia Wentz, chemotherapy treatments, Dennis Willaman.
- **Healthy Pregnancy:** Madison Visser, (Norvell's granddaughter).
- **Assisted Living/Nursing Home/Homebound:** Christopher St. John (Son of Bonita Zielke), Bonita Zielke,
- **Serving Our Country:** John Bounthapanya (Som's nephew), Ryan Felgenhauer, William Felgenhauer, and Evan Felgenhauer (great-nephews of Kerry Johnson), Cortney and Konstantin Ivanov (Gigi Howard's daughter and son-in-law), Mitchell Johnson (Parrott's nephew), Zachery Wiesner (Gigi Howard's son-in-law).
- **Prayer Partners:** Grace Lutheran Church, Rev. Max Miller, East Tawas; Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Free. John Autio - Stated Supply, Edmore; Calvary Lutheran Church, Rev. Zac Nelson, Elk Rapids; Trinity Lutheran Church, Rev. Richard Stieve, Frankfort.