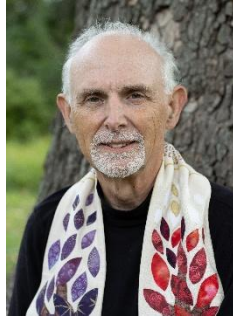


The Messenger – April 2026



Beloveds,

Spring is unfolding before us. There is an old saying, “April showers bring May flowers.” The earth continues to prepare for the vibrant growth of summer leading to the abundant harvest of fall. As I write this article the leaves have not begun to bud on the trees around my home. They may have done so by the time you read this. The winds of March have helped dry the earth as the frost eased from the ground. We wait now for the emerging signs of spring. We will see increasing signs of renewed and new life around us as April unfolds.

April begins this year with Easter...the festival of the Resurrection. This is the Christ story that death is not the final word. Instead, the life’s rhythm is death and resurrection, endings are followed by new beginnings, and the phoenix arises from the ashes. We welcome new Life with its promise that “all things have been made new.” We celebrate the resurrection with its promise of Life on Easter Sunday. Easter is not a single Sunday but a season of celebrating and reflection on the fullness of Life. We will reflect on various aspects of resurrection and renewal individually, and collectively throughout April. What hopes, new life, or emerging energy are appearing in your life? What hopes, new life, or emerging energy are appearing in Emmanuel? What hopes, new life, or emerging energy are appearing in the world?

Our holy week services include:

- Maundy Thursday: foot washing and sharing Communion, 6:30 pm.
- Good Friday: Stations of the Cross circling the block weather permitting, 5:00 pm.
- Holy Saturday: Service of Grace, Grief, and Gratitude journeying through the building, 5:00 pm.
- Easter Sunday: Sunrise service at 6:30 AM in the Labyrinth, and the Festival service at 10:30.

Be blessed in the renewal of Life in April

Pastor Frank

Happenings at Emmanuel

Yoga With Claudette Pirrello,

Mondays at 5:00 pm & Thursdays at 1:00 pm

Cardio Drumming With Beth Campisi Mondays at Emmanuel,
4:00 – 5:00pm

Spiritual Journeys on Tuesdays, 9:30-11:30 am on Zoom

Wednesday Noon Bible Study on ZOOM

Bible Study will start again Wednesday, April 8th, at noon.

Silent meditation practice in the Benson Room at Emmanuel.

Thursdays from 5:30 – 6:00pm – All are welcome.

Enter by parking lot entrance. Questions or text Sara 815-742-0581.



Emmanuel Lutheran Church Pantry— Fridays 9:30-11:30

Women of the ELCA

Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

All female members of the ELCA are considered a part of WELCA and are invited to join us on the third Thursday of each month, except July and August at 9:30 am at Emmanuel.

The Next WELCA gathering is April 16th at 9:30 am

The commitment of WELCA is to grow spiritually by praying, studying the Bible, and maturing in faith. As a community of women created in the image of God, called to discipleship in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves to growth in faith, affirm our gifts, support one another in our callings, engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness in the church, the society, and the world.



4/1 Paula Wittke-Anderson
4/2 Susan Hurley Whitacre
4/3 Gary Johnson
4/7 Betty Ralston
4/9 Sarah Seeber
4/9 Karen Van Howe
4/9 Michelle White-Hayes
4/13 Andrea Mahan
4/14 Thomas Wilson

4/15 Xander Olson
4/18 Beth Gleichman
4/21 Magdalena Aldana
4/25 Timothy Fenelon
4/26 Ann Canton
4/27 Eva Marie Helge
4/28 Graham Streed
4/29 Mary Seeber
4/30 William Schulz



In Our Prayers

Allison, Jonathan, Julaine, Ray, Jim, Ellie,
Wanie, Bob, Kathy, Steve

Norm, Jennie, Judy, Shannon, Mike, Matthew, Tom, Sophie,
Vince, Todd, Bina, Jeff, Deborah, Peg, Karen & Jerry, Nathaniel &
Hannah, Tim Geoppo, Mary Jo, Dr. Abu, Emi, Isaiah, Manny,
Leeza, Louis, Barbie, Janine, Mike, Wade, Cindy, Billy

Please pray for the family and friends of Donna Anderson who
passed away Thursday, March 12, 2026. Donna's memorial
service will be at Emmanuel on Friday, May 29th, at 11:00.
Luncheon after the service. Burial service for family only.

Does Prayer Really Work?

*Encouragement was found in a Facebook meme. Carolyn Myss, a
Christian mystic, tells of a multicar accident
in which a woman was horribly injured, so much so she actually
left her body in a near death experience.
The woman rose out of her body and saw the people in the cars
behind her either cursing or complaining
that they were going to be late, but five cars back there was a
woman praying. As the woman in her spirit
form watched all this unfold, she saw arcs of light going up into
the heavens from this praying woman and
coming down into her body that was damaged in the wrecked
car. As these arcs of light continued healing
her, she was able to go over to the car where the woman was
praying and memorize her license plate. After
enough prayer, the woman returned to her body. After
recovering later, she was able to track down the
woman through her license plate and confirm that yes, she was
in the accident, and yes, she was indeed*

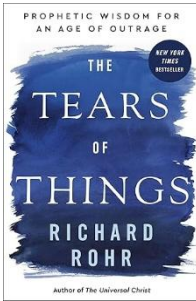
praying for her. This is powerful.

Grace & Peace,

Jeana

Jeana Fors, WELCA President

Spiritual Journeys



We are reading “The Tears of Things; Prophetic Wisdom for an age of Outrage,” by Richard Rohr. You can join us anytime, we read and discuss the book together. You can find more information about the book on Amazon. We meet every Tuesday 9:30 am to 11:00 am on zoom. Contact Karen Van Howe at karenvanhowe@gmail.com for question or if

you want to join the group.

Winnebago County Forest Preserves Interest Hikes

Come hike for an hour in Winnebago Counties Forest preserves. Text Holly if you want to join the hikes: 815-543-1191. Meet at the Forest preserve entrances unless otherwise instructed.



Wednesday, April 8th 10:00am

Cedar Cliff Forest Preserve

7901 Kishwaukee Road, Stillman Valley, IL 61084

Saturday, April 25th 10:00am

Deer Run Forest Preserve

5691 River Road, Cherry Valley, IL 61016

Link to Descriptions of all 44 Forest Preserves

<https://www.winnebagoforest.org/items>

All hikes begin at 10:00 a.m. Dress for the weather!



Breathe-in-Between is a continuation of Emmanuel's Breathe Meditation. Christyn Rittenhouse is the leader. Come and make a space for yourself and your spirit. 5:00 pm, Saturday, April 11th at Emmanuel.

Breathe and Breathe-in-Between will be on hiatus after April and during the summer. We will resume in September.

April Women's Interfaith Potluck

The April potluck will be
Monday, April 27, 2026,
at the Lakewood Hills Shelter House,
4188 Lakeside Drive, Rockford.

Information regarding the speaker and topic will follow up
in bulletins and constant contact.

The Love is... Art Exhibit is showing through April

in Emmanuel's Celebration Gallery.

Come enjoy the beautiful work of Rockford Area artists
during Church office hours, Tuesday, Wednesday, and
Thursday, 9-1 and Sundays 9:00 to Noon.

Arts@Emmanuel Workshop

Ancient Egyptian Coptic Journal

Join us to learn how to make your own journal using the ancient
technique of bookbinding, the Coptic Stitch, employed by early
Christians in Egypt in the 2nd Century A.D.

2-Session Workshop

Saturday, April 11, 9:00 – Noon

Collage covers and create signatures (book block)

Wednesday, April 15th, 6:00 pm – 8:30 pm

Create sewing holes and Coptic stitch journal together.

\$45 includes both sessions and all supplies needed held at
Emmanuel Lutheran Church
920 3rd Avenue, Rockford, IL 61104

Register by contacting Holly Blair Cascio
(815) 543-1191 or Hollyblair@mac.com

Faith Community Nurse Notes



Happy Spring!! I know you're enjoying our glimpses of pleasant weather, even if those days are bookended by remnants of winter. I hope your heart is warmed as our bodies are.

This note is a reminder to be really observant and cautious with your prescriptions medicines. I take a prescription, have for some time. I picked up my refill, checked the attached medication info sheet, found it had my name on it and went home. Every day I took that medicine as prescribed.

Then one day, I took a better look at the label and someone else's name was on it, as well as a different medication name and description, which didn't match the pills inside at all. Initially, I wasn't concerned, because the pills contained were the size, color, and appearance as I expected. BUT, the more I thought about it, the possibility that I had taken medication not prescribed to me was disconcerting. So I called the pharmacy, talked to a tech, got transferred to the corporate office. After telling my story a 2nd time, my call was transferred back to the local store and eventually to the pharmacist.

Thankfully, it was confirmed that I did have the right medicine, but in the wrong bottle. Phew! Crisis averted.

Moral of the story: before you leave the parking lot after picking up your prescriptions (or as soon as you receive your mail-order refills) CHECK the labels to make you have: the RIGHT name, RIGHT medicine, RIGHT prescriber and RIGHT dose.

3 John 1:2 “Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, as it goes well with your soul.”

(Sue Scott will be on vacation starting Friday, March 27th and returning Monday, April 6th.)

6 red flags that may indicate you’re being scammed

Reaching out without warning: Be wary when a company or government agency unexpectedly contacts you, either by phone or email. Scammers can do what’s called spoofing to make their call or message look like it’s coming from a legitimate source. Contact the business or agency directly to find out if the contact was legitimate. If it’s not, it’s best to delete the communication.

Pressuring you to take quick action: With time and careful thought, scams are often found out. That’s why scammers pressure you to act immediately. They don’t want you to slow down and think more critically, and they certainly don’t want you checking in with a trusted friend or family member. Take the time to investigate before proceeding.

Sounding the alarm: Scammers will also use scare tactics. They’ll tell you a loved one is in danger or that your computer has been hacked. They’ll make up an emergency related to the IRS or Social Security Administration and tell you to pay immediately or face arrest or financial ruin. Again, it’s best to take a breath and go to the source for verification.

Winning, but there's a catch: A common part of sweepstakes and lottery scams is to let you know you've won a prize, but you must pay a fee in advance to collect it. If you're asked to provide your bank account information, wire money or purchase gift cards, you're most likely not a real winner.

Getting way too personal: A good rule of thumb: Do not share personal information — passwords, authentication codes, date of birth, Social Security number, bank account numbers — with a stranger or an unverified source. Scammers will often use your personal information to steal your identity.

Paying, especially in unusual ways: If you're being pressured to wire money or pay by gift card, you're probably being scammed. Scammers love gift card payments because they're readily available, virtually untraceable and easily converted to cash. When you use payment apps or purchase a gift card, you can lose out on the buyer protection offered by other payment options, like your credit card.

6 common types of fraud

Romance scams are when someone misrepresents themselves, often online, as a potential romantic partner. As the relationship builds, a financial need will arise, like purchasing a plane ticket or dealing with a medical emergency.

Investment scams involve the scammer tricking you into giving them money by promising big payouts with little to no risk — usually by investing in cryptocurrency, real estate or precious metals and coins.

Tech support scams usually start with a phone call or pop-up box that suggests your computer has an urgent issue. The

scammer may impersonate companies like Apple, Microsoft or Norton. They typically ask for payment information to fix the problem.

Imposter scams can vary. They generally start with an unsolicited phone call, email or text. They can pose as someone you'd trust, like a representative of the IRS or the Social Security Administration, or from a company you do business with. They may even pose as a family member. Whoever the imposter, the message will be urgent, and they'll eventually ask for money or personal information.

Lottery and sweepstakes scams exploit your eagerness to win a fabulous prize. The message in the initial contact is a congratulations, but there's a catch. You'll be asked to pay a fee or taxes to claim your big prize. Again, to create urgency, a deadline for responding will be included.

Online shopping scams involve scammers pretending to be legitimate online sellers with a fake website or ad/offer. To combat this, go directly to trusted sites rather than using search. Scammers will buy domains that somebody could possibly mistype to take you to their site. Also, if you see a product at a price that is too good to be true, it probably is. Avoid big discount offers you receive by text, email, social media or online ads.

What should you do if you feel you or a loved one is a victim of fraud? First, acknowledge how vulnerable this can make someone feel. Victims can struggle with feelings of embarrassment or that they should have known better. So, be

patient and remember scammers are good at what they do, and almost everyone has some vulnerability that can be exploited. By reporting it, you can help prevent others from being victimized.

- File a police report.
- Alert the FTC at reportfraud.ftc.gov.
- Contact the FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center at ic3.gov.
- Report it to your state attorney general.
- If it involves Social Security, call the Administration's fraud hotline at 800-269-0271.
- Finally, reach out to your Banking Institution or financial advisor for further guidance. There are steps you can take to help protect your accounts.

(Taken from an Edward-Jones Newsletter)

Emmanuel's Congregational Council

Members and Officers

President: Karen Van Howe, Worship & Music

Vice-President: Kelli Luebke

Treasurer: Rich Lundin, Finance

Secretary: Kathlyn Wright, Outreach/Pantry

Taj Guzzardo, at large

Dena Rasmussen, at large

Dan Goldberg, at large

Kristie Heath-White, at large

Susan Hurley-Whitacre, Art @ Emmanuel

Marcia Terrill, at large

Emmanuel Lutheran Church

P. O. Box 4362

Rockford, IL 61110

815-963-4815 Fax: 815-963-4808

Emmanuelchurch07@gmail.com

Elcrockford.org

Pastor Frank Langholf

309-509-5241

fslangholf@gmail.com