

The Messenger - September 2025

Beloved Ones,

Autumn is in the air this week. Cicadas are singing. Early mornings are cool. A tint of yellow is showing in the luscious green of the foliage. We are entering the season which moves deeper into harvest as summer wanes. The earth is yielding up its abundance in both

what is wild and what is cultivated. The abundance provides for all the beings of the earth. The harvest is providing for the needs of the moment and of the future. The harvest is being gathered to provide for the winter and beyond. The harvest is also the seeds for future generations of plants and animals. We are celebrating the earth's abundant harvest while planning for the future. Harvest is a metaphor for our lives, individually and as a spiritual community. Our Divine Beloved has sown Love and Life. These seeds have sprouted, grown, and borne fruit. I invite you to join me in the following practice. Take some time to sit in reflection on the harvest of abundance in your life and in the life of Emmanuel. Take out a journal, and using prose, poetry, or art put on paper all the forms of abundance. Then, shift to considering what seeds from that abundance need to be set aside for the future.

It is also the season for returning to programming in schools and religious groups. I am holding teachers, staff, and students in my heart, my intentions, and my prayers as they begin a new school year. I am also doing the same with all faith communities who are enter into their spiritual/faith formation program year. Emmanuel is also offering new and renewed opportunities for spiritual formation. The ReFresh service will return to gathering in the sanctuary (unless we have a particular hot day). Soul Garden will be offering Soul walks once again. We will celebrate the harvest in ceremony and Sunday service the Autumn Equinox which is also called Mabon. The new art show debuts on Friday September 5. This show features the art of Deborah Lucas along with introducing her book, "Dance While the Fire Burns." We also begin our journey into Emmanuel's future by sharing a meal and our mission on Sunday September 7, and then throughout the month we will meet in small groups to consider the seeds, possible directions, for Emmanuel. I hope you will be able to participate in these opportunities for spiritual formation.

Autumn Blessings, *Pastor Frank*

Finally, a Sustainable Option for all that Plastic Film!

SUSTAIN ROCKFORD has been trying to engage our schools in a project to collect *plastic film* to keep it from landfills and/or the ocean. We hope that by encouraging our kids to recycle, they will develop habits that continue into adulthood and make a difference. So far, only the Montessori school has been willing to take up the TREX challenge--collecting 1000 pounds of plastic film and then receiving a bench for their school that is made of recycled plastic. So we want to support them by collecting plastic in the name of Montessori and getting it to TREX. If you would like to join in this endeavor, bring your items to church T/W/TH 8 – 1 or Friday 9 – 11, or text Catherine, 815-621-5329, who will happily pick it up from your location.

WE'RE TAKING...

GROCERY BAGS, BREAD BAGS, BUBBLE WRAP, NEWSPAPER BAGS, ICE BAGS, PLASTIC SHIPPING ENVELOPES, ZIPLOC AND OTHER RECLOSEABLE FOOD STORAGE BAGS, CEREAL BAGS, CASE OVERWRAP & SALT BAGS.

Who would have thought??? Save the Ocean, *please*. Thanks for helping!!! Catherine

Please collect:

Make sure the plastic film is clean and dry. Remove paper labels or tape by cutting them off.



Grocery bags



Bread bags



Bubble wrap



Dry cleaning bags



Newspaper sleeves



Ice bags



Plastic shipping envelopes



Ziploc & other reclosable food storage bags



Cereal bags



Case overwrap



Salt bags



Pallet wrap & stretch film



Wood pellet bags



Produce bags

Don't Include:

Frozen Food bags

Net or mesh produce bags

Hot dog or meat wrap packaging

Pre-washed salad mix bags

PPE- Gloves, masks, or protective wear

Bedding or linen packaging

Candy bar wrapper

Six-pack rings

Pool covers

Lamination film

Backyard ice rinks

Shiny, crinkly films like floral wrap

Chip bags

Pet food bags

Degradable/compostable bags or film packaging

Silage and hay bags

Vinyl shower curtains or tablecloths

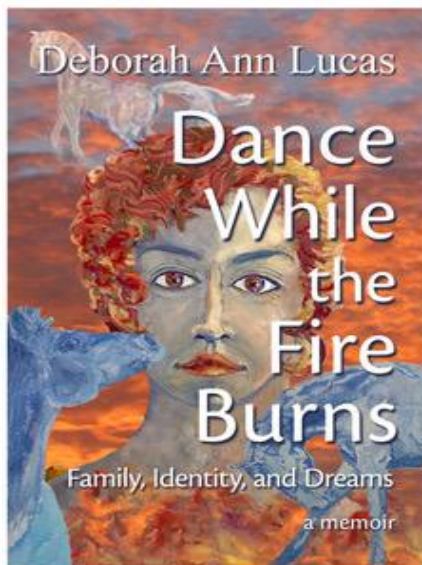


NEW ELCA PRESIDING BISHOP

The Rev. Yehiel Curry was elected July 30 to serve a six-year term as presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). The election took place during the 2025 ELCA Churchwide Assembly being held July 28–Aug. 2 at the Phoenix (Ariz.) Convention Center.

Pastor Curry was elected on the fifth ballot. There were 799 votes cast, with 400 votes needed for an election. Curry received 562 votes, and the Rev. Kevin Strickland, bishop of the ELCA Southeastern Synod, received 237 votes. Curry is the first Black presiding bishop of the ELCA. Speaking to the assembly after his election, Curry reflected on his membership at Shekinah Chapel in Riverdale, Ill., where he eventually became a lay mission developer while he participated in the Theological Education for Emerging Ministries program, which prepares individuals for ordained ministry in the ELCA, with a focus on emerging ministry contexts like ethnic-specific, multicultural, rural and inner-city settings. He spoke to the assembly about his initial hesitation in accepting that first ministry role. “Perhaps I’m out there in one of you,” Curry said. “I never saw myself as good enough, so for two years, I said no. I finally said yes. When I said yes, your support, this church’s support, of that ministry meant everything. So if you want to know what your benevolence dollars look like, it looks like me, and I want to say thank you. Thank you for your investment.” Curry has served as bishop of the ELCA Metropolitan Chicago Synod since 2019. He previously served as mission developer (2009-2012) and pastor (2012-2019) of Shekinah. He received a Bachelor of Arts from Lewis University in Romeoville, Ill., in 1995 and a Master of Divinity from the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago (LSTC) in 2013. LSTC is one of seven ELCA seminaries.

Deborah Ann Lucas



Family, Identity, and Dreams
a memoir

You're Invited to the
**Book Release
Party & Art Show**

Sept. 5, 2025

Friday 6 to 9 pm

Celebration Gallery
Emmanuel Lutheran Church
920 Third Ave., Rockford, IL

Readings, Refreshments, Music
Free and open to all through October
(815) 963-4815
call for info or viewing by appointment

Meet Deborah Ann Lucas, Artist and Author,
to experience through art and words her
search for healing and home while
reaching for her dreams.



Deborah Ann Lucas



Blue Mare Bowing by Deborah Ann Lucas

All are invited to attend the Book Release Party and Art Show at Emmanuel Lutheran Church on Friday, September 5, 2025, from 6:00 p.m. until 9:00 pm. Readings, Refreshments, and Music. Free! All are welcome. Deborah's new book *Dance While the Fire Burns* is a memoir about family, identity, and Dreams. Deborah is an artist and author. She speaks of healing and her work with people and horses. You will be able to see an art exhibit of her work, as well.

Dear Emmanuel Family,

On September 7, 2025, after the 10:30 am service, we are having a community potluck to kick off Emmanuel's Congregational Envisioning. There is a sign-up sheet for contributing to the potluck which includes assisting with set up on Saturday, September 6th. The sign-up sheet is one the table near the Celebration room.

Yoga With Claudette Pirrello, Mondays at 5:00 pm

Cardio Drumming With Beth Campisi
Mondays at Emmanuel, 4:00 – 5:00pm
To sign up, contact Holly 815-543-1191

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

Bible Study on Wednesdays at Noon on zoom.
Dial 312-626-6799 Meeting ID: 893 5688 8344

We gather at 9 AM and 10:30 AM on Sundays. The Gospel will be read at the 9 AM service. I hope you can join in one of our services either in-person or on-line. To gather online by computer, tablet, or smartphone use the following link.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82726742888?pwd=WFEwOVBXZGd3OHFzSXQ1WXlVTHppZz09>

If you join by a landline or cell phone, you can use one of these numbers and then enter the meeting ID and passcode.

1 309 205 3325 US or +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)
Meeting ID: 827 2674 2888 Passcode: 830753

People have asked if someone can join the Wednesday Bible Study (12 noon) on a phone instead of by computer. A person can join the Bible Study with a cell phone or land line. To join by a land line or cell phone, dial the number below and then enter the meeting id and passcode when prompted.

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)
Meeting ID: 893 5688 8344 Passcode: 11999

Medical Care Comes to the Family Peace Center

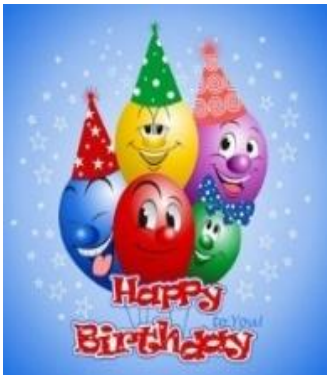
I'm incredibly proud to share that starting this July, survivors of domestic violence will have access to on-site medical care at the Family Peace Center—thanks to a powerful new partnership with Mercyhealth's Family Medicine Residency Program. Every Friday morning, resident doctors will be on hand to provide checkups, treat injuries, and support overall wellness—all with the compassion and trauma-informed care survivors deserve. This collaboration helps break down barriers and ensures survivors and their children get the care they need, when and where they need it most. It's another big step in our ongoing mission to create a safer, healthier Rockford for everyone.

We Pray for Healing

Allison, Jerry, Tim, Jonathan, Julaine, Kathy, Ray, Jim, Ellie

Jennie, Char, Judy, Shannon, Ian, Miguel, Mike, Matthew, Tom, Sophie, Vince, Todd, Bina, Deborah, Jeff, Peg, Karen & Jerry, Nathaniel & Hannah, Tim Geoppo, Mary Jo, Dr. Abu, Emmy, Isaiah, Manny, Leeza, Louis

Happy September Birthdays



9/4 Jason Birch
9/15 Susan Goldberg
Jean Welker
9/20 Gwen Fleming
Philip Seeber
9/21 Eli Hoffman
9/25 Debbie Roose
9/26 Alex Novak
9/26 Victoria Schiess
9/29 Fran Hamm

Prairie Dedication—Acts of Restorative Kindness
August 3, 2025



Thank you to Rich Lundin for determining how we would go about cooling the celebration room and installing the portable air conditioners.



Thank you to Logan, Dan, Catherine, Jack and crew for donating their time and talent to rebuilding the mission house ramp on August 2, 2025



Sue Scott, our Faith Community Nurse will be in her office for Blood Pressure screening on Sunday, September 21st, 8:30 – 10:30am. Stop in to get your blood pressure checked or if you have any medical questions. Have questions? Sue Scott, Faith Community Nurse. 815-222-1299

Flu (Influenza) & Covid Vaccine Clinic
9:00 am-Noon Friday, Sept. 26, 2025
Held at Emmanuel Lutheran Church, 920 Third Ave.
Enter by North Parking lot entrance.

Vaccines provided by Walgreens.

Medicare, some Medicaid insurers, private insurances, cash or check accepted. Insurance card must be presented. Limited scholarships available, inquire upon arrival.

Lifescape's Senior Expo

Saturday, Sept. 20, 2025 9:00 am-2:00 pm FREE admission

Rock Valley College PE Center

3301 N Mulford Road, Rockford

70 vendor booths, flu vaccines & SO much health information.

www.lifescapeservices.org or call 815-963-1609 for more info.

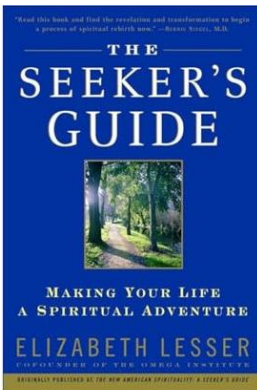


Breathe - September 13

5:00pm at Emmanuel

At Emmanuel's Breathe Meditation Service, we gather for one hour to enter a sacred time -- the "thin place" between the worlds -- and Breathe. We listen to sacred scriptures and poetry from many

traditions, we chant, and we sit in silence as we open ourselves to the Great Mystery. Enter by the North, parking lot entrance. Breath is held every second Saturday at 5:00pm at Emmanuel, September thru May. All are welcome.



Spiritual Journeys Tuesdays

9:30 – 11:00am

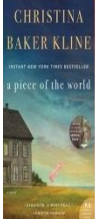
We are reading The Seeker's Guide, by Elizabeth Lesser on zoom.

It is available on Amazon and from other sources. We read together and discuss it, so no need to read ahead. Please join us with this Zoom link on Tuesday mornings at 9:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89838350099?pwd=O4Hu08ruXp2VHLOZLm9lsHyRKypPv9.1>.



*Katie's Choice
Book Club*
Thursday
September 11
10 am



A Piece of the World
By Christina Baker Kline

Free and open to all – Discussion at Katie's Cup

Katie's Cup

502 7th St, Rockford, IL

From the New York Times best-selling author of the smash best seller Orphan Train, a stunning and atmospheric novel of friendship, passion, and art, inspired by Andrew Wyeth's mysterious and iconic painting Christina's World.

Join Us For Salem's Annual
Men's Banquet
HONORING OUR
VETERANS

6:00pm
SEPT 11
THURSDAY

COST \$15
VETERANS EAT FREE

PLEASE RSVP BY SEPTEMBER 5TH

*Call Pastor Bill at 815-721-2550
or call the church office 815-965-5131*

1629 South Sixth Street, Rockford IL



*Serving the people who live, work, worship, and play
in the neighborhoods of Midtown*

September 2025 MLP Newsletter

<https://www.facebook.com/Midtown-Lutheran-Parish-101030175425386>

Katie's Cup, 502 7th St, Rockford, IL 61104-1266,

Katie's Cup is open Tuesday thru Friday 8:00 am – 2:00 pm

**Midtown Market—9 a.m.—1 p.m., Thursdays through
September 25 Indoor Music**

Katie's Walking Club—Thursdays at 9:15 a.m.

**Katie's Choice Book Club—Second Thursday of the month,
10 am.—11:15 am. Check with Katie's Cup for book selection**

Katie's Cup Conversations— noon (11:30 room open):

***September 16, 2025 Transgender—We see you!**

Speaker Janet Moore from Our Savior's

***October 14, 2025 Christian Nationalism and Indigenous
People—the Doctrine of Discovery by Pastor Michael Thomas
and Richard Rundall (of Eliminate Racism)**

Cars and Coffee—First Saturday through October. 9 - Noon.

***September 6—First Responders' Day and Blood Drive (sign up
through Cars& Coffee FB page) Lunch grill between 10-12.**

***September 30—Dorothy Paige-Turner (10:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m.)**