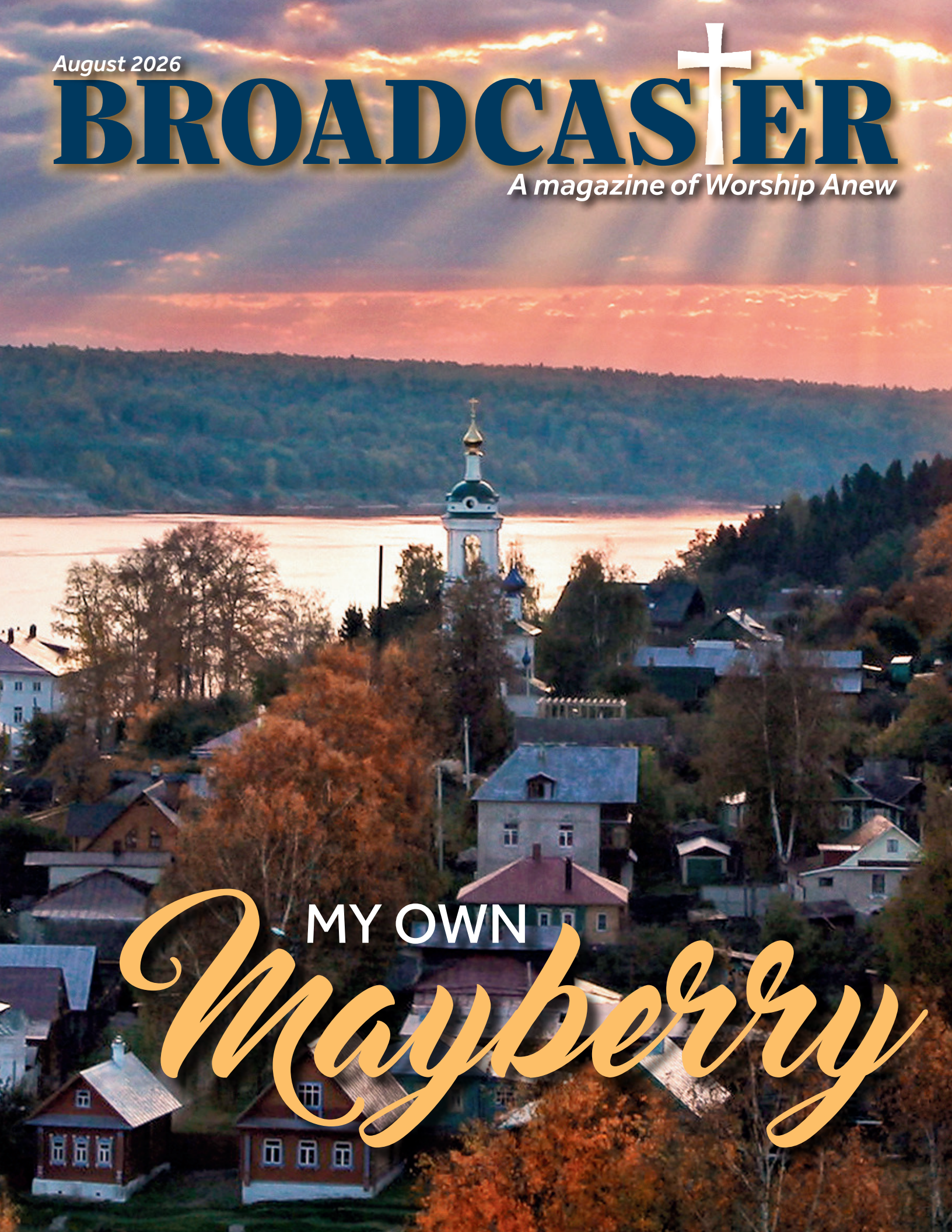


August 2026

BROADCASTER

A magazine of Worship Anew



MY OWN

Mayberry



Matthew F. Leighty

Matthew F. Leighty
Executive Director

For all nations and neighbors

At the end of my freshman year, I applied to serve that next school year as a resident assistant in my college dormitory. Most first-year students didn't get selected — the odds weren't in my favor, and I knew it. But when the university announced they were forming an all-international floor, made up of men who had traveled to the United States to learn English and study abroad, something stirred in me.

I applied anyway.

I didn't expect to get it. I was still a teenager. There were older, more experienced students eager for the same opportunity. But the thought of living and serving alongside young men from around the world — at a Lutheran university like Concordia University-Chicago (known as CURF, Concordia University-River Forest, back in my day), no less — moved me in a way I couldn't quite explain at the time. It wasn't just the novelty of it. It was the possibility of sharing with

them, in the middle of ordinary dorm life, something far more important than English vocabulary or American customs. The love of Christ.

I was stunned when I learned I had been selected.

What followed was my first real, lived experience of Matthew 28. Right there in a dormitory hallway, leading devotions and getting to know each of them personally — their stories, their families, their questions, their lives — all nations, right down the hall.

Jesus explained the scope of sharing the Gospel when He gave the Great Commission — all nations, every people, every tongue, and every corner of the earth. He sent His disciples forward with the most powerful assurance imaginable: "I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20b).

That promise is still alive today. I think



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Worship Anew engages and equips aging adults with resources to live a full and abundant life in Jesus Christ.

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“And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.’”

Matthew 28:18-20

about that when I consider the reach of this ministry, and I think it might surprise you. When you tune in to watch “Worship Anew,” you might picture others like yourself — a neighbor across town, a fellow senior down the road, or someone who now worships from their living room because the drive to church has become too difficult. And the signal reaches even further than that.

“Worship Anew” airs on TCT, a network with an international presence, and through WorshipAnew.org, our mobile app, YouTube, and streaming platforms, the broadcast is accessible to viewers virtually anywhere in the world with a screen and a connection. And for American service members stationed overseas, “Worship Anew” is there too through the American Forces Network — the familiar voice of an LCMS pastor proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ, bringing the comfort

of home and the hope of the Gospel to an unfamiliar place. Wherever and however someone can access a screen — smartphone, tablet, or a television set, the Gospel can find them there.

All nations. Jesus meant it.

You may be thinking: I’m just one person. What can I really do? And yet, consider what you already do. You pray. You give. You share your faith with your grandchild who calls on Sunday afternoon, with the neighbor who notices your peace in hardship, with the caregiver who wonders where your hope comes from. That is the Great Commission, too.

Every one of the disciples on that hillside was sent — to their families, their neighbors, their communities — carrying the same glorious truth: that Jesus Christ has died for sinners, has risen from the

grave, and reigns with all authority in heaven and on earth. His authority is what makes the mission possible. His strength carries it forward. And His promise, “I am with you always,” is the assurance we need every day.

The Commission goes forward. Through a satellite over Africa. Through a dormitory hallway in Chicago. Through you, right where you are.

“Jesus shall reign where’er the sun
does its successive journeys run;
His kingdom stretch from shore to
shore, till moons shall wax and
wane no more.”

— “Jesus Shall Reign” (LSB #832),
Isaac Watts, 1719

All nations. All neighbors. All of us —
together — in Him.

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Merv Koehlinger (center) was honored for his longtime service to Worship Anew and in the Fort Wayne, Ind., community. At right, Mark Dixon, President & CEO of The Lutheran Foundation, presented the award during a pastor production. Also shown at left, Matthew Leighty, Worship Anew executive director.

Merv Koehlinger, longtime Worship Anew volunteer, receives Maxine Rippe Award

Merv Koehlinger has faithfully served Worship Anew, a ministry of Lutheran Ministries Media, for more than 10 years as a dedicated volunteer and current Board member. He has now been selected as one of the 2026 Maxine Rippe Award recipients.

The Maxine Rippe Award recognizes an individual whose past and present service to the Allen County (Indiana) community exemplifies Christian compassion.

Contributing both behind the scenes and at the leadership level, he supports weekly productions as a camera operator and provides closed captioning to ensure accessibility for hearing-impaired viewers.

Known for his humility, strong work ethic, and commitment to excellence, Merv consistently goes above and beyond by giving his time, talents, and expertise to advance the organization's mission of supporting

aging adults. He also plays an active role in donor engagement, personally writing letters of appreciation and encouragement.

Beyond Worship Anew, Merv demonstrates a deep commitment to service throughout the community. He donates platelets to the Red Cross every two weeks, volunteers with his church, and supports local programs, including driving for Concordia Lutheran High School.

A retired physics teacher and engineer, Merv combines intellect with compassion, embodying a lifelong dedication to giving back. His selfless service and quiet leadership make him a highly deserving recipient for this award.

Learn more by visiting <https://thelutheranfoundation.org/our-impact/maxine-rippe-award>.



NEWS FROM OUR MINISTRY TEAM



Lauren Banks
Multi-Media Specialist

We are blessed to announce that Lauren Banks has joined the Worship Anew team as the multi-media specialist. She started in May. She works on graphic design as well as audio and video projects. She has a bachelor's degree in communication with minors in English and marketing from Trine University, Angola, Ind.



Continue the work of the Broadcaster magazine

As you know, the Broadcaster magazine has great practical articles for aging adults and their caregivers. One reader shared that it is "so beautiful and needed in this season of life." Donations make this magazine possible. If you feel so moved, please use the enclosed envelope to send in your donation to support this magazine and the ministry work of Worship Anew. Thank you!



Listen to devotions for seniors, by seniors

Hope-Full Living is a quarterly devotional that provides a daily dive into God's Word to inspire and uplift you. The devotions are written for seniors, by seniors in an easy-to-understand format that includes Scripture and a prayer that address the current hopes, fears, and struggles of aging adults.

Learn more at HopeFullLiving.org

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God's grace was sufficient

The telling of the first missionaries to Hawaii

By Mary Thurston Hedstrom

All during my childhood, I heard that my mother's family was related to the first missionaries to Hawaii. I often wondered what that meant. Then in 2010, my older brother discovered that the memoirs of our distant ancestor, Lucy Thurston, had been published and were available on Amazon. Finally, we could read her own words about her life as a missionary to Hawaii!

When the book arrived, I was enchanted by Lucy's story but challenged by her manner of writing. Her use of Victorian English and frequent passive voice forced me to read her story carefully.

Here is what intrigued me right from the start: Lucy was a schoolteacher, boarding at a town a few miles from her childhood home. She wrote:

Marlboro, Massachusetts, Sept. 18, 1819

"Yesterday, during my noontide intermission, I received, at my boarding house, an unexpected call from cousin Wm. Goodell. He gave me information that a Mission to the Sandwich Islands (the Hawaiian Islands) was to sail in four or six weeks. He dwelt upon it with interest and feeling, and now and then I saw a tear start in his eye. His conversation and appearance made me tremble. At length, he made the proposition. 'Will Lucy, by becoming connected with a missionary (now an entire stranger) attach herself to this little band of pilgrims, and travel to this far distant land?'"

Thus began the first pages of Lucy's 300-page memoir. One week later, she did meet the Rev. Asa Thurston. They

spent a single evening together in the sitting room of her family home. The next morning, Lucy announced that she would agree to marry Asa, like Rebekah agreed to marry Isaac in the Genesis account.

Later, after the five-month voyage to Hawaii, Lucy wrote in her journal: "When I gave my hand to Mr. Thurston in marriage, I felt assured of the care and friendship of one precious friend, but my expectations have been more than realized. Of all situations in life, this is what I choose."

I started and stopped reading Lucy's book several times. The busyness of motherhood, homeschooling, and church work demanded my attention. But in the back of my mind, a dim candle glowed with the notion that someday, I should re-write Lucy's story to make it more accessible to the modern reader. In late 2019, 200 years after Lucy married Asa, I worked in earnest and published her story by Christmas of that year.

Many aspects of Lucy's life amazed me. When Lucy and Asa and the other first missionaries arrived in Hawaii in April 1820, they were aware that the law of the land included idol worship, human sacrifice, nearly naked Hawaiians, and polygamy, as well as strict rules for women (the lesser class). Breaking any of these *kapus* (later translated taboos) was punishable by death or dismemberment.

However, God arrived in Hawaii before them. He prepared the way for the missionaries by moving the heart of the young king to abolish most of the taboos and forbid idol

worship shortly before their arrival. But there was nothing to take its place.

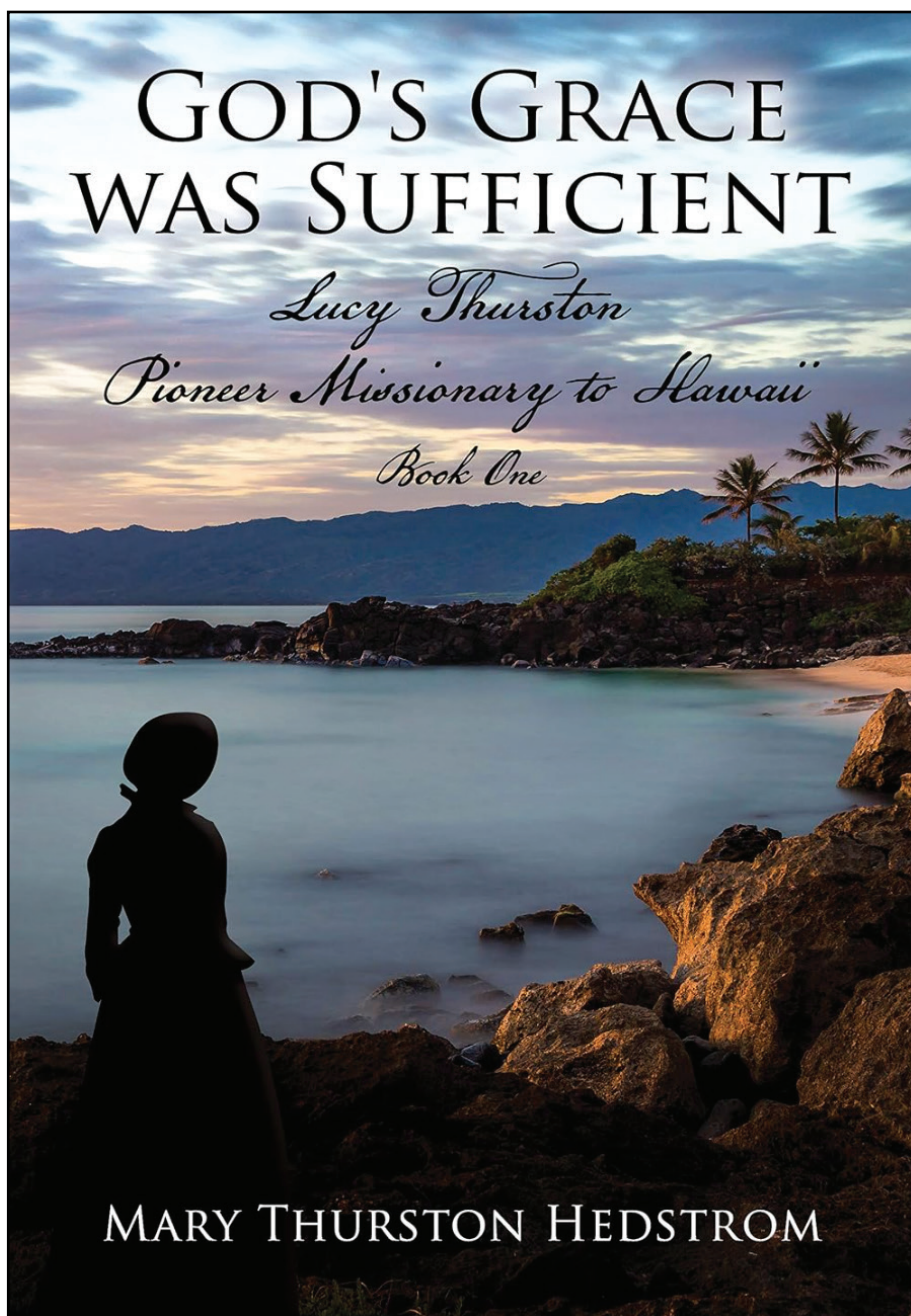
At first, the missionaries needed permission to land. In their company were a few native Hawaiians who had become Christians. They understood the cultural rules and politely requested that the new king allow the missionaries' ship to land so they could settle there. These two Hawaiians tried to impress upon the new king that the missionaries could teach the king and his people to read and write. However, when the missionaries wrote the king's name as an example, the king was unimpressed. "It looks not like me nor anyone I know," he retorted.

The missionaries prayed all the more. Eventually, the king agreed that they could land and that they could settle for one year.

Lucy's first sight of the natives was memorable. Imagine her as a well-dressed New England lady, leaning over the side of the ship to accept a banana from the beautiful, brown-skinned Hawaiians. The men paddled the canoe in perfect symmetry, and the women had loving smiles that soothed Lucy's shock that they were dressed, in her own words, as "children of Eden."

When I consider that Lucy and Asa Thurston had no formal missionary training, no previous exposure to other cultures, and no idea of how to live in a tropical climate, their mature response of Christian love amazes me. They also possessed a tenacity rarely seen today.

At the end of Lucy's book, there is a tea party for the grandmothers in the missionary family, many of whom have lived in Hawaii for decades. Lucy is in her late 70s now, having served in Hawaii for more than 50 years. She is asked to address these ladies who have all supported their husbands in the missionary calling, raised their children in challenging circumstances, and yet, stayed firm in their faith.



Lucy led the women in this prayer: "Our Father, who art in heaven, we thank Thee that Thou dost satisfy us with long life. Enable us to yield fruit in old age. May our last days be emphatically our best days."

Lucy's attitude toward growing old is admirable. She prayed that God would enable her to bear fruit in her old age. As I read her own words, I am motivated to press on in the race of life and not settle for living out my days in restful earthly comfort.

May that be true of all of us. May God help us to bear fruit in our old age — may our last days be our best ones!

For more information about the first missionaries to Hawaii, you can read "God's Grace was Sufficient: Lucy Thurston, Pioneer Missionary to Hawaii" by Mary Thurston Hedstrom, or Lucy's own compilation of her letters and journal entries in "The Life and Times of Lucy Goodale Thurston, Pioneer Missionary to the Sandwich Islands." Both are available on Amazon.com.

THE FEAST IS ALREADY SET

*By Thomas Moll
Director of Content*



There is a particular kind of hunger that has nothing to do with food. It is the ache of feeling cut off — from community, from worship, from the rhythm of a life that once included Sunday mornings in a familiar pew, a pastor who knew your name, and a congregation that felt like home. For many who watch “Worship Anew,” that ache is real, and it does not go away simply because the television is on.

For that hunger, the prophet Isaiah speaks with startling directness. “Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price” (Isaiah 55:1). This invitation in Isaiah is not a gentle suggestion. It is an urgent, wide-open call — and the one issuing it is God Himself. He has prepared the feast and is standing at the door, wondering why His guests are still outside.

This month, the Rev. William Mueller preaches from that passage in his message on Aug. 2 titled, “Come and Get It!” His question cuts right to the heart of it: Why do we spend our days on things that do not satisfy when God has already set the table and thrown open the doors?

For those who feel disconnected from a church family, that question is worth sitting with. The banquet is not only for those who can attend in person. It belongs to you, too — through the Word preached into your living room, through the Sacrament a pastor can bring to your door, through a congregation willing to count you among its own even when the miles or the health or the years make Sunday mornings impossible.

C.S. Lewis once described the search for a church home as standing in a hallway — a necessary place but not a place to live. The rooms are where the warmth is. Finding yours may be simpler than it seems, and this month’s “Worship Anew” programs and Bible study (page 20-21) are a good place to begin that search.

If you are needing a church home, please contact Worship Anew so that we can help connect you to a church in your area. Please contact us at (888) 286-8002 or info@worshipanew.org.



Come and Get It!

August 2, 2026 – Tenth Sunday after Pentecost ~ Rev. William Mueller

Through the prophet Isaiah, our Lord issues such a gracious invitation to an exquisite banquet. There is no cover cost for admission to this banquet. God Himself has supplied everything and charges nothing! So, why spend our time and energies on things that do not last? Hear the invitation and “Come and Get It!”

Sermon Text: Isaiah 55:1-5

Readings: Psalm 136:1-9; Isaiah 55:1-5; Matthew 14:13-21

Featured Choirs: St. Paul's Choristers, Fort Wayne, Ind.; Holy Cross Men's Chorus, Fort Wayne, Ind.

Featured Art and Architecture: St. Paul Lutheran Church (Frankenlust), Bay City, Mich.



Eyes on Jesus!

August 9, 2026 – Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost ~ Rev. Scott Zeckzer

Things happen in life, and we think to ourselves, “I do not remember signing up for this!” What can you do when “curveballs” are thrown at you? Jesus says, “Keep your eyes on me!”

Sermon Text: Matthew 14:27

Readings: Psalm 18:1-6; Job 38:4-18; Matthew 14:22-33

Featured Choirs: Holy Cross Men's Chorus, Fort Wayne, Ind.; St. Paul's Choristers, Fort Wayne, Ind.; Holy Cross Treble Choir, Fort Wayne, Ind.

Featured Art and Architecture: St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Three Rivers, Mich.



Are You Hearing Me, God?

August 16, 2026 – Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost ~ Rev. Dr. Walter Maier III

As believers, we pray to the Lord, but despite our prayers, sometimes things do not change, or we do not get what we prayed for. We wonder, “Is God hearing me?” The account of Jesus and the Canaanite woman answers that question.

Sermon Text: Matthew 15:21-28

Readings: Psalm 67; Isaiah 56:1, 6-8; Matthew 15:21-28

Featured Choir: Indiana LWML District Choir

Featured Art and Architecture: St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Elizabeth, Ill.



Is That Your Final Answer?

August 23, 2026 – Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost ~ Rev. Dr. Thomas Ahlersmeyer

The host of a popular television game show was known for asking contestants, “Is that your final answer?” Jesus asks us the same question, and the stakes are so much higher! The answer? Jesus is the Christ!

Sermon Text: Matthew 16:15-16

Readings: Psalm 138; Romans 11:33-12:8; Matthew 16:13-20

Featured Choir: Holy Cross Sanctuary Choir, Fort Wayne, Ind.

Featured Art and Architecture: Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Evansville, Ind.



Dying to Live

August 30, 2026 – Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost ~ Rev. Shayne Jonker

What can you give in exchange for your life? The answer is nothing. But here's the glory of the cross: Jesus gave His life in exchange for your life. In fact, He gave His life in exchange for the life of the world. So, take up the cross that Jesus gives you. In Jesus, embrace your death to sin. You have nothing to lose and a whole life to gain.

Sermon Text: Matthew 16:24

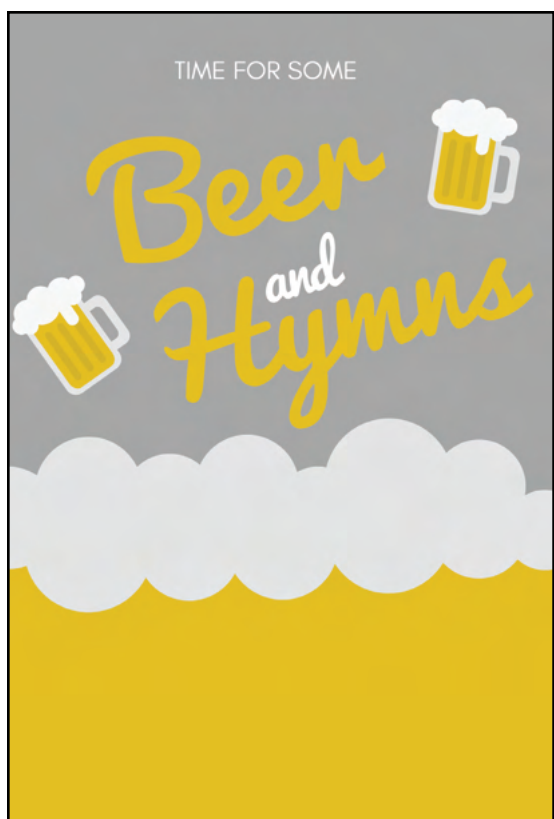
Readings: Psalm 26; Jeremiah 15:15-21; Matthew 16:21-28

Featured Choirs: Holy Cross Treble Choir, Fort Wayne, Ind.; St. Paul Jubilate, Munster, Ind.

Featured Art and Architecture: St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Munster, Ind.

Beer & Hymns: A journey of fellowship, music, and faith

By Deaconess Michelle Schultz



“Beer and Hymns” began as a cherished tradition at New Holland Brewing Company in Grand Rapids, Mich., where a large group would gather to sing hymns, enjoy good beer, and build meaningful fellowship.

When my husband, Andy Schultz, a longtime attendee, moved to the Chicagoland area for school, he carried those memories with him. Though he missed the monthly gatherings, he hoped that one day, he would revive the event in a new community.

While in Chicago, we met, and I was a singer who was studying at Concordia University Chicago to become a Deaconess. This connection brought his hopes one step closer to reality.

I later received a call to serve at Suburban Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Fort Wayne, Ind., where I now oversee family life ministries. After settling into our new congregation and community, we began laying the foundation for the first “Beer and Hymns” event.

Planning the First Gathering

When we started, a small group of couples gathered, hymnals in hand, to thoughtfully compile a list of well-known favorites. I then crafted the event’s logo and hymnal booklet, now staples of “Beer and Hymns.”

The first event took place in our backyard with musicians set up on a trailer stage and members of our church invited. The weather was cold, rainy, and damp — and to top it off, the kegerator malfunctioned. Yet, despite the setbacks, attendees came together in joyful fellowship and worship.

Growing the Vision

Three months later, the second “Beer and Hymns” was held at the Greener’s family barn, owned by one of our church members. This Christmastime event was so well attended that the space could barely hold everyone. The barn echoed with beloved Christmas hymns and warmth from patio heaters and propane fireplaces.

Quarterly events then continued at their barn. By Christmas



2024, it was clear the event had outgrown its space. The desire to welcome more congregations led to a new partnership, and Lutheran connections introduced us to Scott Fergusson, a member of Emmanuel Lutheran Church, also in Fort Wayne, and owner of Chapman's Brewing Company in Fort Wayne. Chapman's became the venue for a landmark celebration.

A Community Celebration

That Christmas, members from five Lutheran churches and several seminary attendees filled the room with music and celebration. More than 150 people came together to rejoice in the birth of Christ.

A few months later, "Beer and Hymns" returned to the Greener's Barn for a smaller, more intimate evening with our church.

As excitement for the event continued to grow, the second community-wide "Beer and Hymns" was held at Kuehnert Dairy Farm in July 2025 with seven churches attending. In December 2025, members from many area churches once again filled Chapman's Brewing Company with song and fellowship!

With Gratitude

With deep gratitude, thank you to all who have supported "Beer and Hymns" through the years. This event is built on shared dreams, generous hearts, and a love of music that brings people closer to each other and to our Lord. Please pray it continues to inspire joy, fellowship, and praise.



Photos provided

The "Beer and Hymns" program has seen many locations and lots of fellowship. The events see multiple churches come together to sing.

POPULATION: BELOVED

Stories of God's goodness in community

Introduction by Katelin Moquin, Copy Editor

In popular culture, Mayberry represents idyllic, small-town America. The town is sleepy yet satisfying, quick to solve community problems with common sense. Mayberry boasts the warm nostalgia of a bygone era.

Mayberry is the fictional setting of “The Andy Griffith Show” which aired from 1960 to 1968. The town is comprised of a church, a theater, a courthouse, a drug store, and the like. Its comedic cast of characters included the widowed Sheriff Andy Taylor (Andy Griffith), Deputy Barney Fife (Don Knotts), and cousins Gomer and Gooper Pyle (Jim Nabors and George Lindsey). The show was a comedy, so something always had to complicate the plots. Mayberry was never perfect — but goodness prevailed.

Six decades later, Mayberry endures as a metaphor for the communities we can't help but love. And community, it turns out, is a deeply theological idea.

God uses our communities as extensions of His providential hand. He places us in real towns and neighborhoods — the places we worship, work, eat, and play, where we do our banking and our buying. Communities can look vastly different: a Mayberry or a metropolis, a familiar street or a place we never expected to call home. But in each of them,

God is at work.

Not only does God give us the gift of community, He gives us a real cast of characters and the neighbors within it. Some of us have many neighbors under one roof; others travel a distance to reach the nearest one. Throughout Scripture, God places a clear emphasis on neighbors. And we know that by neighbor, He means not only those next door but all those we encounter.

Sin, of course, erodes the idyllic landscapes of our lives. We fall short of loving our neighbors as ourselves (Mark 12:31). And yet, in Jesus, perfect goodness prevails. Despite our failures, God works out His perfect plans for every person, in every home, across every nation. We are each part of that story — both giving and receiving in the communities where God has planted us.

In this month's Broadcaster, four Hope-Full Living authors reflect on the “Mayberry” communities that have been the God-given settings of their lives, both past and present. Their stories remind us that we are never just residents of a place. We are neighbors, and that is no small calling.

stories continued on page 13

Photos courtesy of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod
The Village Lutheran Church in Ladue, Mo., is shown on a quiet street.



EUGENE, OREGON — 1960s

By the Rev. Don Schatz

Eugene, Oregon, is the home to the University of Oregon. Eugene has more than tripled in population since my story began there in the 1960s, when it had a population around 50,000. In the late 1960s, Eugene became a hub of spiritually seeking youth and played a significant role in my life. More importantly, it was, and remains, the home of Grace Lutheran Church, my spiritual home. Grace had a wonderful pastor and a long tradition of vicars.

Grace Lutheran, through our pastor, several vicars, and the spiritual renewal happening around us, became the Lord's canvas. On that canvas, He painted our town and our congregation. He added one dynamic vicar that particularly stood out. God painted in some young adult members who had been spiritually searching, and our vicar nurtured them, steering their Lutheran spiritual formation and bringing them into a helping role with Grace's youth ministry.

I was one of many high school students whom the Lord included in His Eugene artwork. With the breath of His Holy Spirit, the still image became active reality. In that reality, we grew together in Christ. High school and college students together became family. We studied Scripture, worshiped, and prayed. We were invited to other LCMS churches in our county to (hopefully) be a blessing to their youth. We lived together in unity and were actively involved in the life of our congregation.

From what He began in Eugene, the Lord led seven youth into lifelong ministry in the church. Four couples married. We were all blessed by God.

Throughout my life, that formative season — where roots sank deep into the soil of the Word and were watered by Sacrament and community — has inspired me to love and serve God and my neighbor.

It is remarkable how the Lord works to create a season of life and a community of believers that become a spiritual crucible in which one is formed as a follower of Jesus. For me, that spiritual crucible became foundational for my grounding in faith and living in the world — touched by grace.

BUCKLEY, ILL. — 1960s

By Harriet Monn Stennfeld

What is special about Buckley, Ill., that makes it my favorite spot on earth? I decided I am going to try to answer that question. However, I really feel you almost have to live there to really experience and absorb the magic of that place. I so thank my Lord that He gave me that experience. I sometimes make the

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continued from page 13

remark “everyone should have a Buckley in their life!”

My husband received and accepted a pastoral call to Buckley in July 1961. We drove into town in our convertible with our 6-month-old daughter, Kristin. We left 10 years later in the fall of 1971 with four children, ages 10, 8, 5, and 2. As we drove out of town, the carillon was playing one of my husband’s favorite hymns: “Behold a Host Arrayed in White” followed by “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God.”

Buckley is a community of sincere, friendly, loving, non-judgmental Christians. When we lived there, the population was 700 and the church membership was 1,100.

Here are three snapshots of my Buckley neighbors:

A car salesman learns a lesson.

One of our elderly neighbors was buying a car from the Ford dealer. She kept getting in and out of the back seat of a two-door sedan. Finally, the salesman said, “Edna, you’re the driver. You don’t have to get in and out of the back.” She replied, “But some of the ladies I take to doctor’s appointments and Ladies’ Aid have bad knees and hips, and I have to know if they can manage!” Christian love in action.

Can pastor play? My husband Fred was into sports and always enjoyed playing outdoor sports with our own kids. Before long, our son John’s friends caught on and started including Fred in their invitations to play. I always thought it was so cute when neighborhood kids would come to the door and ask if John and Pastor could play.

One day several of the kids (and Pastor Fred) got into a water gun fight. Fred ended up on the roof of our house with a bucket of water. When

one of the kids ran by, Fred poured the entire bucket of water on him. The boy — thoroughly soaked and quite shocked — ran quickly home. I always wondered how the boy answered his mother as to why he was drenched. I can only imagine how odd it must have sounded to hear the explanation.

Church bells

ringing. One Good Friday afternoon, my husband asked the church janitor to toll the church bell at 3 p.m. to mark the hour of Jesus’ death. St. John’s would still toll the church bell when a member died. It would toll the number of times equal to the person’s age. So, when we heard it, we could count the rings and quietly guess who had passed. I warned my husband that the lady who reported items of interest to the local paper would probably call me and ask. My husband thought that after hearing 33 rings, she would realize it was for Jesus and not call. However, he was wrong ... and I was right. At about 3:10, she called and asked me who had passed away! I was a bit reluctant to say, but had to reply, “Well, it was Jesus.”

We left Buckley in 1971, and years later, in 2003, a dear friend at my present congregation — Mt. Calvary in Waynedale, Ind. — said to me, “Do you realize how much of your speech is sprinkled with Buckley?” I didn’t, but even after all those years, I still remember so much about the love



Photos courtesy of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod
The steeple bells at Our Savior Lutheran Church in Baltimore, Md., are a reminder of community for the city.

shown daily among the people there.

I have been extremely blessed throughout my 93 years with each congregation that we were privileged to serve, and I cannot thank my Lord and Savior enough for putting St. John’s, Buckley, Ill., into my life.

GREER, S.C. — 2010s

By Marilyn Nutter

When my husband and I retired to a North Carolina lake community, life was idyllic. New friends and an excellent Bible-teaching church made our residence one we wanted to last the rest of our lives. But three years later, he suffered a fatal heart attack and retirement dreams shattered like glass. After my daughter married, she invited me to relocate to South Carolina to be near family.

In Deuteronomy 31:8 (NIV), Moses

told Joshua, “The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.” In life changes, uncertainties, and a new location, it’s a promise to hang on to. God not only plans, but He goes ahead of us.

I had left a community I loved, but with my status from married to widow, I was the only widow in my circle. Once my house sold and I arrived in South Carolina, I was welcomed at my new church by several widows who invited me to coffee, day trips, and lunches. It’s as if God had positioned these widows in my life for a fresh start in the unfamiliar.

More friendships developed and our widows’ group has expanded to a first Sunday lunch and a Friday night Bible study. During COVID, we supported each other with a parking lot picnic once a week. Yes, seated six feet apart on lawn chairs, we laughed saying we were like school kids with our lunchboxes. I also joined a writing group and found new ministry opportunities as a Bible teacher and grief support facilitator.

But aside from seeing God’s provision of new friends and ministries, my biggest perk is being a local grandmother to two boys who enjoy all things sports and Legos. Life with prime seating at their events is generously mixed with hugs and Sunday dinners. And, as one who grew up in New York, the sight of my blooming azaleas in my front yard gives me a smile each time I exit my driveway. There’s no doubt; God went before and has accompanied me every day since my arrival.

CARMEL, IND. — TODAY

By Barry and Donna Bobb

It was quite a jolt in 2008. We had lived comfortably in St. Louis, Mo.,

for 35-plus years and suddenly we were moving 300 miles to a new ministry in Carmel, Ind.

Happily, Carmel, which is a city of 100,000 plus just north of Indianapolis, has the wonderful feel of a small town with metro-area benefits.

There is a big focus on family in Carmel. It is a place where hopes and aspirations are nurtured, and our congregation is an important part of that with an outstanding Fine Arts Academy, a big VBS (Vacation Bible School), a wonderful preschool, and a fabulous Oktoberfest.

There is also an ease to life here. Carmel decided early on to be “off the grid.” There are few stoplights, and about 160 roundabouts. Traffic — and life — just seem to flow gently.

Carmel enjoys a very diverse population which enriches our cultural life. Our congregation has a vital “international friends” ministry offering all kinds of assistance for living in the United States.

It is also striking how freely folks speak about their Christian faith, including local TV and sports personalities. (We especially like one of our meteorologists — a Valparaiso University graduate!)

There is much intergenerational caring and sharing here. We see it in the community, in our church (especially our small group) and our preschool, where parents almost daily consult Donna with child development and faith formation questions.

In short, we had nothing to be apprehensive about — our good and gracious God provides us with all we need for a fullness of life here. We discovered a family, a community, a church and a living faith which are, through the Holy Spirit, active and

dynamic.

(By the way, in May 2026, “U.S. News & World Report” ranked Carmel as the No. 1 place in America to live and raise a family. We couldn’t agree more!)

A last note: As we approach age 75, and with both sons firmly established in their own homes in St. Louis, we’re preparing to move back there. In fact, we’re on the list for a couple of retirement centers nearby to both of them. We have a few qualms about another move, but we stand firmly on Scriptural truths. Like Abraham and Sarah, we know that, in reality, God’s people are always on the move. And we have Paul’s promise that Christ is with us everywhere we go.

And it’s going to be like that until the day our heavenly Father smiles and says, “Welcome — you’re home, now.”

CONCLUSION

From Katelin Moquin

You may not live in a town of 700. You may never have a carillon play you out of a place you loved. But you have been placed — by the same gracious God — in your own version of Mayberry. Your own cast of characters. Your own canvas.

The question is not whether God is at work in your community. He is. The question is whether we have the eyes to see it — in the neighbor who shows up, the widow who invites a stranger to coffee, and the pastor on the roof with a bucket of water.

We receive the communities God gives us, love the neighbors He sends us, and hold them with open hands because the only foundation that lasts was never made of brick or memory or belonging.

It was, and is, and always will be, Christ alone.



A faithful legacy: The importance of being prepared

By Jon Dize, CFRE
Director of Development

August is National Write a Will Month, a gentle and timely reminder for us, especially those in our later years, to pause, reflect, and prepare. As we age, planning for the future becomes increasingly important. While conversations surrounding legal documents, including wills, powers of attorney, and healthcare directives, can feel difficult, they help us care for our families, honor our wishes, and trust God with both our present and our future.

Scripture reminds us, “For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it?” (Luke 14:28). Planning is a wise and faithful step. It is not about fear but about preparation and peace.

Will: Sharing Your Blessings

A will allows you to thoughtfully decide how your earthly possessions will be distributed after your passing. More importantly, it provides clarity and comfort for your loved ones during a time that can otherwise feel overwhelming. You also create opportunities to bless ministries, churches, or causes that have shaped your faith journey, including your church and Worship Anew. In this way, your legacy continues to reflect your love for Christ and His work in the world. Without a current will, families may face confusion or conflict, and your wishes may be eventually decided by the government, not you.

Power of Attorney: Trusting Another to Care

A power of attorney appoints someone you trust to make financial or legal decisions on your behalf if you are unable to do so. This document ensures that your affairs are

handled responsibly and according to your wishes by a child or spouse, a close friend, or another faithful steward. By naming someone ahead of time, you spare your family the burden of uncertainty and allow them to act confidently, knowing they are honoring your desires.

Advance Healthcare Directive: Speaking with Peace

An advance healthcare directive, sometimes called a living will, gives guidance about your medical care if you are unable to communicate. It may include your preferences regarding treatments, life support, and comfort care, as well as appointing someone to make healthcare decisions on your behalf. Having them written down lifts a tremendous weight from loved ones, who might otherwise struggle with uncertainty. It allows them to focus on being present with you, rather than wondering what you would have wanted.

How Worship Anew Can Help

Our mission is to provide resources for aging adults to live a full and abundant life in Christ, and we want to help ensure that you have these documents in place. We recognize that sometimes cost or selecting an attorney may keep you from moving forward.

If you live in the greater Fort Wayne, Ind. area, you can contact us to schedule a meeting with an attorney in August to help you draft these documents. For those needing a simple will and who set aside a gift for your church or Worship Anew, our provided attorneys will draft these three documents at no cost. There may be a reduced cost if your personal situation requires a more



advanced plan. If you live outside Northeast Indiana, please contact us and we can help connect you to an attorney closer to your home.

Don't Delay

For these three important documents, if you wait until you need these resources, it may be too late. We understand that these conversations can stir feelings of discomfort. Yet, for us as Christ followers, we know that preparation is not rooted in fear of the unknown but in the confidence in God's promises. Our future rests securely in His hands.

As you consider National Write a Will Month, take this opportunity to review or create your will, power of attorney, and advance healthcare directive. In doing so, you create not only practical peace of mind but also a lasting testimony of faith, love, and thoughtful stewardship.

And in all things, rest assured: The God who has walked with you throughout your life will continue to hold you and those you love securely in His grace.

Why is it important to have communion even if I'm not going to church?

The Lord's Supper is one of the most personal gifts Christ gives to His people — bread and wine, body and blood. It is not a symbol of something distant. It is Christ Himself, present and given for you for the forgiveness of sins. That intimacy is exactly why it matters so much, especially when you cannot be in the pew.

For many aging adults, the inability to attend worship regularly can carry a quiet grief and a sense of being on the outside of something that once formed the rhythm of your life. Communion speaks directly into that grief. It says you have not been forgotten. You are still part of the Body of Christ. His table reaches further than the walls of any church building.

The Lord's Supper is not something we do for God; it is something God does for us. He comes to us in it. That means when a pastor brings communion to your home, hospital room, or care facility, the gift is no less real and no less complete than what is celebrated on Sunday morning in your home church.

If you have not been receiving communion and would like to, please reach out to your church. If you don't have a local church, please contact us at Worship Anew so that we can help connect you to a church in your area. Many are eager to serve in exactly this way and that visit may open a door to a connection you did not expect.

How do I go about finding a home church, even if I can't go to church?

It may seem like a contradiction: finding a church home when attending church isn't possible. But membership in a congregation was never meant to be defined by whether you can walk through the doors on Sunday. A church family is precisely that: a family. And families show up for one another, including members who cannot show up themselves.

A good place to start is the LCMS church locator at locator.lcms.org, which allows you to search by zip code for Lutheran congregations near you. Once you have a name or two, a simple phone call to the church office is enough to begin. You don't need to explain everything at once. Saying "I'm not able to attend in person, but I'm looking for a pastor and a congregation to be connected to" is more than enough to open a conversation.

What you are looking for is a congregation that will come to you through pastoral visits, communion, phone calls, or maybe even a deaconess or lay minister who checks in regularly. These connections exist in more congregations than people realize. You belong in a church family, and pastors are trained and called to care for their flock.

A note from the Editor ...

In our letters to the editor section, we would like to answer any and all questions that you have about Scripture, aging well, and our ministry. Please send your questions to editor@worshipanew.org. Please know that we will try to answer as many questions as we can. Thank you and enjoy!



More than loneliness

*By Thomas Moll
Director of Content*

There is a particular kind of loneliness that doesn't announce itself. It doesn't arrive all at once. It comes gradually — a Sunday missed here, a phone call that doesn't happen there, a friendship that quietly fades because the places where it used to be maintained are no longer accessible. For many older adults, it settles in so slowly that it never feels like an event. It simply becomes the shape of things.

Researchers have a word for it: isolation. And the more closely they study it, the more urgent their findings become.

According to a 2024 University of Michigan study, one in three older adults reports feeling lonely often or sometimes. Nearly one in four is socially isolated. Those numbers are large enough to be striking, but they can also have the opposite of their intended effect, making an individual feel like just another statistic in a very large problem. Consider what those numbers mean up close:

millions of people sitting in quiet houses, watching the days pass, and wondering if anyone notices.

The U.S. Surgeon General's 2023 report put it in terms that are hard to set aside. Chronic loneliness carries health risks comparable to smoking 15 cigarettes a day. It is associated with a 29% increased risk of coronary heart disease, a quadrupled mortality rate among heart failure patients, and a 50% increased risk of dementia. Loneliness is not a mood. It is a condition with consequences, and older adults are among the most vulnerable to it.

Understanding why isolation takes hold matters as much as knowing that it does. For many older adults, the path into isolation is not a single event but a convergence of circumstances. Nearly all (93%) of older adults are managing at least one chronic condition, and 80% are managing two or more. Mobility limitations make getting out difficult. Depression, which often accompanies



chronic pain and physical decline, quietly erodes the motivation to try. And for those without a car or access to reliable transportation (64% of older adults cite it as a significant barrier), the outside world can feel genuinely out of reach.

What makes this particularly difficult is the way these circumstances reinforce each other. Loneliness leads to depression. Depression deepens isolation. Financial stress makes transportation and care harder to access. Health declines further, and the cycle tightens.

A 2022 study that Worship Anew conducted in partnership with the Barna Group found that older adults, managing two or more areas of physical dependence, were nearly three times more likely to be lonely and isolated, and yet, they were less likely to feel cared for than their more independent peers. The people who need connection most are often the ones receiving it least.

Here is where the picture changes. The same research that maps the problem also points clearly toward what interrupts it — and having a faith community is near the top of every list.

Regular participation in a faith community is associated with a 46% reduction in all-cause mortality. Social support measurably reduces depression and anxiety. Spiritual community provides a sense of meaning and purpose that research consistently links to better health outcomes. Safe spaces to voice doubt and struggle — rather than perform wellness — are associated with improved mental and physical health over time.

The downward spiral the research describes is real, but it is not inevitable. And the church has the unique capacity to break it at any point along the way.

The mechanism is not complicated. It is regular contact. It is being known by name. It is having somewhere to belong and someone who notices when you are absent. These are things the church has always been designed to provide, and they turn out to be exactly what the body needs.

Not everyone reading this is on the far end of that spiral. Some have full calendars, strong friendships, a congregation that knows their name. If that describes you, the research has something to say to you, as well. The same studies that document the damage of isolation also show that a single consistent relationship — one

person who calls, one person who visits, one person who notices — can interrupt the cycle entirely. You may not be able to solve loneliness. But you very likely know someone who is living inside it, and you may be more equipped to help than you realize.

If any of this feels familiar — whether you are the one sitting in the quiet house or the one who knows someone who is — the question worth asking is not, “Why didn’t someone reach out?” but “What is one thing I can do today?” Connection rarely arrives fully formed. It is built from small, repeated acts and the spiral works in both directions.

Call your pastor, even if it has been a while or even if you are not sure what to say. A phone call is enough to open a door that may have felt closed. Ask for a visit. Many congregations have visitation ministries, but they may not be aware of your need. If you are in a position to give rather than receive, offer to be that visit for someone else. Start smaller than you think: one phone call a week, one note written, one person told that you are thinking of them. Use what is already in front of you — the “Worship Anew” program, Hope-Full Living devotionals, and this magazine. These are not substitutes for community, but they are threads of it, connecting you to something larger than your four walls.

Tell someone the truth because isolation sustains itself in silence and naming it to one trusted person begins to loosen its hold. And look for ways to give, not only to receive. A homebound person can still pray for others by name, write encouraging notes, and make a call. Giving is not reserved for those who are well.

The research is clear, and it is worth taking seriously. But research only goes so far. What it cannot fully account for is this: You are not an at-risk demographic; you are a person known by name. You are known by neighbors who may not yet know they are needed, by a congregation that may not yet know you are missing, and by a God who has never once lost track of you.

The silence in the house may feel very loud right now. But it is not the last word. Reach toward one person today. Let one person reach toward you. The Body of Christ was built for exactly this, and it is never too late to find your place in it. He has already promised as much: “I will never leave you nor forsake you” (Hebrews 13:5b).



COME AND GET IT

By Rev. William Mueller

In the message for the Aug. 2 “Worship Anew” program (sermon is based on Isaiah 55:1-5), I tell the story about the bells at St. Paul Lutheran Church (Frankenlust) outside of Bay City, Mich. Growing up in the parsonage, we knew the routine of the bells. Mr. Helmreich would ring the bells at 7 a.m. every Sunday morning. The ringing of the bells served as a reminder to everyone who could hear the bells that it was only one hour until the first worship service would begin. It was time to come and get it!

In a recent Broadcaster magazine, the question was asked whether a home church was still needed if a person regularly worshiped via “Worship Anew.” I wholeheartedly endorse the answer given: Yes! Here are some reasons why it is good for everyone to have a home church:

Word and Sacrament. “Worship Anew” services do a great job getting the Word into people’s homes and hearts. But you can’t do Sacraments over the

broadcasting airwaves or digital access. In this text from Isaiah 55, the Lord speaks through the prophet with a great Gospel invitation to “come and get it!” When the Lord’s Supper is offered in a worship service, it is an opportunity for Jesus Christ to again feed His people with His very own real and true body and blood. This is for the strengthening of our faith and life in Him. He knows that this world is constantly draining us. In His meal, He gives us the very thing we need: Himself! He forgives us our sins and strengthens our faith in Him.

If you are not physically able to get to a house of worship, there are pastors and churches who are ready and able to come to you. As a parish pastor, one of my greatest joys is to visit the sick and shut-ins of our church. There are countless stories I’ve discovered over the years of people so glad to participate in the Lord’s Supper even though it isn’t at the altar or sanctuary of their home church. But that’s just the point — they know they

**Prayer:**

Lord Jesus Christ, You have given Your life for me and through Your resurrection You raise me from the death of sin to life with You. Instill within me a hunger and thirst for Your Word and Sacrament. Stir my heart that I long for each opportunity to gather with Your people to receive Your goodness and mercy. Guide me into Your house. For in Your Name we pray, Amen.

are participating in something much larger than just themselves! They are receiving Jesus!

Another aspect that in-person worship brings (that “Worship Anew” can’t quite deliver) is the community dimension — at least being able to see the community!

Since the congregation I serve has another full-time pastor, on occasion I am blessed with the opportunity to simply sit in the pew for a worship service. I get to see up close the families with their children as the children learn how to worship, to sing, to pray, and to listen. I get to see up close the encouraging comments and conversations that are had before and after worship services. Being able to worship in person brings all of this together. God’s people can see you, they can ask you how you are doing — just as you can encourage them as they too live out their Christian faith. Sure, there will be problems and difficulties with the people in your church, but remember no one in your church is perfect. Only Jesus is perfect! The pastor will make mistakes, some people might be rude, but the vast majority of people in a church understand that you and they are in the perfect place for imperfect people: the presence of Jesus!

If you need help to find a church near you, please reach out to us at “Worship Anew” (888-286-8002 or info@worshipanew.org), and we will be happy to help you! God’s invitation through the prophet Isaiah is still true today: Come and Get It!

The Rev. William Mueller serves as the senior pastor at Suburban Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Fort Wayne, Ind., and has served as a pastor on “Worship Anew” since 2016.

This month’s study text:***The Compassion of the LORD***

*“Come, everyone who thirsts,
come to the waters;
and he who has no money,
come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk
without money and without price.
2 Why do you spend your money for that which is not
bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy?
Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good,
and delight yourselves in rich food.
3 Incline your ear, and come to me;
hear, that your soul may live;
and I will make with you an everlasting covenant,
my steadfast, sure love for David.
4 Behold, I made him a witness to the peoples,
a leader and commander for the peoples.
5 Behold, you shall call a nation that you do not know,
and a nation that did not know you shall run to you,
because of the Lord your God, and of the Holy One of
Israel, for he has glorified you.*

Isaiah 55:1-5**Reflection Questions:**

What obstacles are present in your life that prevent you from worshipping Jesus in person?

Isaiah 55:1-5 contains a number of what we call “Gospel Imperatives” — technically commands (imperatives) — but commands that invite us to receive what God wants to give us. Which ones are especially meaningful to you? Why?

One of these Gospel imperatives is “Come, buy wine and milk, without money and without price” (Isaiah 55:1). Because of Jesus, how is it possible to “buy” without money? What impact does that have on your faith in Him?

Create Your Own Christian Preamble

A Personal Statement of Faith

A Christian Preamble is a declaration of faith placed at the beginning of a will or other important document. It bears witness to what you believe — about life, death, forgiveness, and hope — and leaves a spiritual legacy for those who come after you. This should be short and sweet and act as an introduction to your last will and testament.

Use the three prompts below to write your own.

Part 1: Your confidence in your Lord and Savior

In your own words, describe where you place your trust in the face of death — and why. You may reference a Scripture passage that gives you comfort.

Example of this:

“Realizing the uncertainty of this life, I place full confidence and trust in my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who promised: ‘I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live’ (John 11:25b).”

Suggested Scriptures: John 11:25–26, Psalm 23:4, Romans 8:38–39

Part 2: Your belief in forgiveness and grace

Describe what you believe about sin, Christ’s sacrifice, and the gift of forgiveness. What does it mean to you that salvation is not earned but freely given?

Example of this:

“Knowing that the wages of sin is death, I believe that Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, suffered and died for the forgiveness of my sins, which I neither deserve nor merit, but receive as a free gift of God, who is rich in grace and mercy.”

Suggested Scriptures: Romans 6:23, Ephesians 2:8–9, 1 John 1:9

Part 3: Your message to those you leave behind

What hope or encouragement do you want to pass on to your family and loved ones? What matters most for them to hold onto?

Example of this:

“I urge my heirs not to set their hopes on uncertain riches, but to take hold of the life which is life indeed through faith in Jesus Christ.”

Suggested Scriptures: Joshua 24:15b, Proverbs 3:5–6, Proverbs 22:6, 1 Timothy 6:17

When you have finished, read your preamble aloud. Please share it with a trusted family member, your pastor, or keep it with your important documents as a gift of faith to those you love.

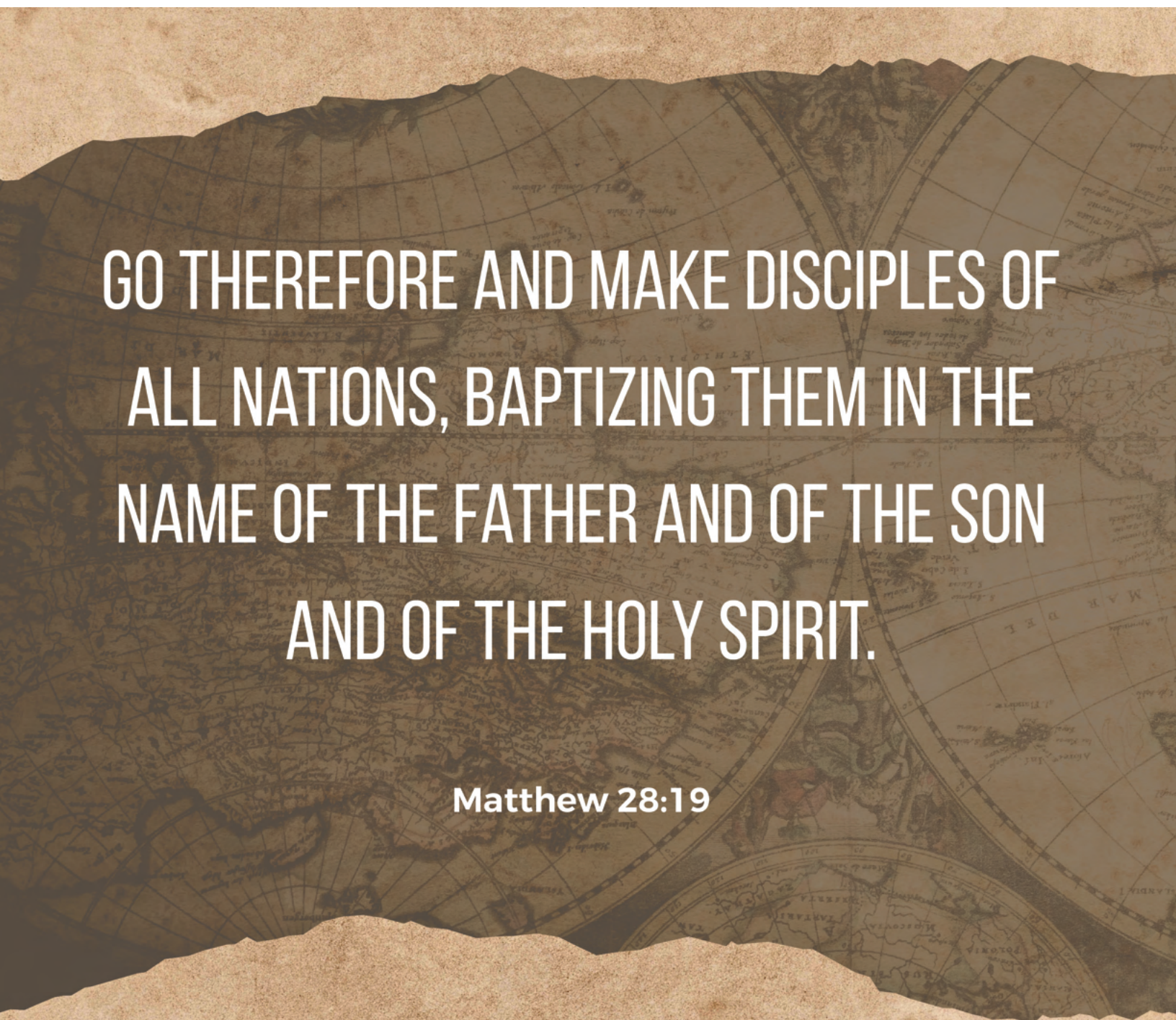


Sudoku

	6	1	3	9			5	
8		2						
9	3		6	2	7			
	1					9	4	
6	9					1	8	
3	5	8				2	7	6
5	4		2	8				7
1		3	9		6			4
	2				3			

7	2	6	4	5	3	8	9	1
1	8	3	9	7	6	5	2	4
5	4	9	2	8	1	6	3	7
3	5	8	1	4	9	2	7	6
6	9	4	7	3	2	1	8	5
2	1	7	8	6	5	9	4	3
9	3	5	6	2	7	4	1	8
8	7	2	5	1	4	3	6	9
4	6	1	3	9	8	7	5	2

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



GO THEREFORE AND MAKE DISCIPLES OF
ALL NATIONS, BAPTIZING THEM IN THE
NAME OF THE FATHER AND OF THE SON
AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Matthew 28:19