

LIFE IN EDEN

Eden Evangelical Lutheran Church
Munising, Michigan
January 2025



Welcome, Vicar Elaine Robbins

Elaine Robbins begins her calling as Vicar on January 1. A vicar is a candidate for ordained pastoral ministry who is serving the church while completing seminary.

At Eden, Elaine will lead worship with Holy Communion. She will also lead funeral services, baptize, and officiate at weddings. Because she is considered a part-time employee (2/3) and student (1/3), worship may be led by a lay person or guest pastor on occasion.

As a student at the Wartburg Theological Seminary, Elaine will have mentors from the Northern Great Lakes Synod and the Seminary.

Please support Elaine with your prayers and encouragement as she strives to complete her studies and serve Eden Evangelical Lutheran Church.

* * *

From the Pulpit

Reprinted from the *Munising Beacon*, December 2024

Dr. Lon Hider

Chasing a Mirage or Soaking in a Miracle

In *The Twilight Zone* episode “A Nice Place to Visit,” petty criminal Rocky Valentine dies and wakes up in a luxurious afterlife where he gets everything he wants. He wins every jackpot at the casino, and every woman finds him desirable. At first, he revels in his newfound “heaven.” But as time passes, Rocky realizes that winning the roulette wheel every time is meaningless. There’s no challenge, no joy—just an endless void. When he asks to go to “the other place,” his guide reveals the twist: he’s already in hell, where endless gratification is his eternal punishment.

Rocky’s story is a warning. Chasing external satisfaction—things that promise happiness but can never deliver—leaves us empty. It’s a vivid reminder that true fulfillment doesn’t come from chasing the next big win but from something deeper.

We’ve been reflecting on the Lord’s Prayer and have found that the reward of prayer is always present, always available. The reward is not some future prize; it’s the

presence of God in the **now**. This raises an interesting question: If we already have the thing we most need—the presence of God—why pray at all? Where is the challenge in that?

Last week, we got a clue. When we say, “Our Father,” we aren’t just praying for ourselves. We are bringing others into this experience of God’s presence. Prayer is not about adding to our emptiness; it’s about sharing from the fullness we’ve already received. And so, the most important thing we can ask for is not a specific request but an **awareness** of God’s presence, here and now.

Before making any requests in prayer, take a moment to fill up with God’s presence. Jesus said to go into your room, shut the door, and pray to your Father in secret. Find a quiet space, take a few deep breaths, and focus on this simple truth: **“God, you are here. And that is enough.”** Rest in that awareness, letting God’s love fill you. Then, when you pray, pray from fullness—not emptiness—and let your prayer invite others into that same overflowing grace.

The problem is, like Rocky, we often leave the spring of living water to chase the end of the rainbow. We want the forbidden fruit. We want to be God rather than enjoy God. But the Lord’s Prayer calls us back to the spring. It’s not about asking God to fill our bank account; it’s about staying connected to the overflowing spring that’s always available in God’s presence.

The Lord’s prayer is like a chain, with each link connected to the next. The first link is our own personal experience of God’s presence: “Hallowed be your name.” Without this foundation, the prayer becomes a series of disconnected requests—things we chase but never truly find. We risk finding ourselves in hell in the pursuit of heaven.

The next link, after “hallowed be your name,” is “your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.” There can be no heaven on earth without experiencing God in the now. Without this awareness, we become like Rocky, chasing illusions that lead to emptiness. But when we live in the presence of God, the Kingdom comes alive—on earth, as it is in heaven.

Scripture Readings for January

January 5	Jeremiah 31:7-14	Psalms 147:12-20	Ephesians 1:3-14	John 1:[1-9] 10-18
<i>Worship the Lord, O Jerusalem; praise your God, O Zion. (Ps. 147:12)</i>				
January 12	Isaiah 43:1-7	Psalms 29	Acts 8:14-17	Luke 3:15-17, 21-22
<i>The voice of the Lord is upon the waters. (Ps. 29:3)</i>				
January 19	Isaiah 62:1-5	Psalms 36:5-10	1 Corinthians 12:1-11	John 2:1-11
<i>We feast upon the abundance of your house, O Lord. (Ps. 36:8)</i>				
January 26	Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10	Psalms 19	1 Corinthians 12:12- 31a	Luke 4:14-21
<i>The teaching of the Lord revives the soul. (Ps. 19:7)</i>				

A Message from the Nominating Committee

Our Congregation Annual Meeting is coming up on February 2 and we need YOU.

There are a number of ways we can serve our church. The following areas that will need to be filled at the annual meeting are:

Congregation Council

We need three more people to fill upcoming vacancies. This is a 2-year term (2025-2026). The Council meets once a month and basically handles the business of the church. The Council reviews the financial reports and deals with any old and new business.

Altar Guild

We need three more people to fill upcoming vacancies. This is a 3-year term (2025-2027). Three years might sound like a big commitment, but since the Altar Guild has 12 members, each person serves one month per year. The Altar Guild prepares the worship space for worship each week. The duties include changing the paraments and banners to the proper colors for the church season (white, blue, purple, green, red), setting up the Table of the Lord for communion, filling the candles with oil and trimming the wicks, posting the hymn numbers listed in the weekly bulletin, watering the plants, etc. We will train you and help you whenever you need assistance.

Audit Committee

We need one person to fill this 3-year term (2025-2027). The Audit Committee meets once a year to audit year-end financial reports of various committees.

Synod Assembly

We need two people to fill this 1-year term (2025). This requires attendance at the Synod Assembly which is usually held in May. Some years it is “in person” and other years it is “on line”. We are not sure what 2025 is going to be, but we should know at our annual meeting. The Synod Assembly is a great way to meet fellow members in our Synod and learn what’s happening in the Synod and churchwide.

Nominating Committee

We need two people to fill this 2-year term (2025-2026). The Nominating Committee tries to find willing members of the church to serve on the Council, Altar Guild, Audit Committee, Synod Assembly and Nominating Committee prior to the Congregation Annual Meeting.

If you would like to serve in any of these areas, please contact us or our church secretary, Terry.

May the Holy Spirit open our hearts to hear where God is calling us to serve in His church.

God Bless,

The Nominating Committee:

Claudia VanLandschoot and Joanie Hinsä

What are the 12 days of Christmas?

By [Cory Driver](#)

As published in The Living Lutheran

Editor's note: This article originally ran on Dec. 27, 2019

Christmas, according to the liturgical calendar, isn't just a day, but a season. Many Christians know the song "The Twelve Days of Christmas" or recall that Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* is about the last night of Christmas. But what defines the Christmas season?

The 12 days of Christmas are a reversal of the season of [Advent](#). Traditionally, Christians have fasted during Advent as we await the celebration of the birth of our Savior. The period from Christmas Day to the day before Epiphany (the celebration of the magi visiting Jesus, the baptism of Jesus and the beginning of his earthly ministry) is a period of daily feasting. This is surprising, given the reason for celebrating several of the days.

The first day of Christmas, the Feast of the Nativity, is obvious enough as a reason to celebrate. The Messiah has been born into the world! The next day, however, is the feast of St. Stephan, the first Christian martyr, who was killed under the authority of Saul of Tarsus/Paul (Acts 8:1). The emotional whiplash of celebrating the birth of the Savior and then the next day celebrating the life and martyrdom of the first person to die for Christ is stunning. However, tradition calls for a joyful feast to celebrate the faithfulness of Stephen, even unto death.

These 12 days help Christians remember that the life of faith is full of challenges and hardships but also contains plenty of reasons to celebrate as we remember the heroes and heroines of the church, and most importantly, our Lord and Savior.

The next day, the third of the 12, celebrates the life of St. John the Apostle. He was, traditionally, the only disciple who wasn't martyred. Tradition holds that John took care of Mary, the mother of Jesus, made disciples, grew old and finally died a natural death in Ephesus.

The fourth day of Christmas is the most shocking. The Feast of the Holy Innocents commemorates the death of all boys in Bethlehem, aged 2 and under, at the hands of Herod the Great's soldiers (Matthew 2:16-18). Again, we feel the emotional rollercoaster, as we're reminded that the Christian life isn't simply one of sweetness and joy, but also of pain, hardship and injustice. Nevertheless, the fourth day of Christmas is the *Feast* of the Holy Innocents, rather than a fast, because we celebrate the One who has conquered sin and death and doesn't surrender these precious little ones, or any others, to the grave forever.

The following days celebrate Archbishop of Canterbury Thomas Becket's resistance to injustice; the holy family; Pope Sylvester, who resisted the Donatist and Arian controversies (in many Germanic-speaking countries, New Year's Eve is still called "Sylvester"); the circumcision of Jesus; St. Basil the Great and St. Gregory Nazianzen, who defended the doctrine of the Trinity; Jesus' presentation and naming in the Jerusalem

temple; the hermitage of St. Simon on the pillar; and even two American saints: Elizabeth Ann Seton and John Neumann.

These 12 days help Christians remember that the life of faith is full of challenges and hardships but also contains plenty of reasons to celebrate as we remember the heroes and heroines of the church, and most importantly, our Lord and Savior.

Help Wanted

(A few resumes have been received for the treasurer position; a job offer will likely be made soon.)

Treasurer/Financial Secretary

This position is vacant as of January 1, 2025. Please bring resumes to the office.

Principal duties include:

- 1) Acting as the primary financial officer of the congregation, overseeing accounting, bookkeeping, and financial activities including tax filings and compliance.
- 2) As financial secretary, entering all offerings and donations in the bookkeeping system and maintaining records by donor.
- 3) Overseeing payroll and insurance matters and issuing payroll checks.
- 4) Providing financial recommendations and reports to the congregation including annual budgets and financial statements.

Organist and/or pianist

Primarily for the Sunday service, Eden needs a musician, such as an organist or pianist.

Thank you for everyone who shared poinsettias, whether in honor of or in memory of loved ones, or to adorn our sanctuary to the Glory of God!

In memory of Evelyn and Norman Balko from George and Anne Balko.

In memory of Emil and Hilia Ihamaki from George and Anne Balko.

In memory of our parents from Dan and Joanie Hinsä.

In memory of Carl Lindquist Jr. from his Family.

In memory of our loved ones from Harry and Ruth Lindquist.

In memory of Paul Baij and Tina Baij from Brenda and Tom St. Martin.

Eden Lutheran Church Council Meeting November 10, 2024

Council Members Present: Pastor Lon Hider, President Nathaniel Wood, Vice President Jean Hayes, Secretary Jennifer Wood, Treasurer Ruth Lindquist, Lynn DeRoche, Brenda St. Martin, Elaine Robbins

Nathaniel called the meeting to order 11:54 AM

Opening devotion: Devotion by Lon Hider, followed by discussion

Additions to the Agenda:

NEW: Congregational meeting, Holiday Schedule, Full liturgy service, Piano Laptop

OLD: Ad for musician follow up

Review and Approval of Previous Meeting

Minutes: Jean makes a motion to approve, Lynn seconds, all in favor, motion carried.

Review and Approval of Financial

Report: Nathaniel entertains a motion to approve the financial report, Jean makes a motion to approve the financial report, Elaine seconds, all in favor, motion carries.

Pastor's Report:

- Lon will work on the ad for another musician.
- Lon's time here will end in January and Elaine will pick up thereafter.
- Lon will investigate purchasing a new laptop for the church - council agrees.
- Lon will look into joining the Chamber of Commerce.

Old Business:

- Range Telecommunications service agreement: Nathaniel will look into that this month.
- Musician ad - Lon will finish that up this month.

New Business:

- 2025 Budget - council discussed. Nathaniel entertained a motion to approve the 2025 budget, Lynn made a motion, Jean seconded, all approved, motion carried.
- City of Munising - Lead notification. Jean will look into having the water tested and possible filtration.
- Congregational meeting: February 2, 2025 (snow date: February 9) following Sunday's service.
- Holiday Schedule: Christmas Eve service - Tuesday, December 24 at 7 p.m.
- Lon's thank you luncheon December 15 after the Sunday service.
- Full liturgy service: will no longer be full liturgy service on the fourth Sunday.
- Piano being moved upstairs: council discussed. The piano will not be moved upstairs.
- Treasurer ad - Lynn will create an Indeed ad for treasurer.

Significant Church Events:

Burial of Helen True

Next Council Meeting: December 8, 2024

Meeting adjourned: 1:18PM

Closed with the Lord's Prayer

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Wood, Council Secretary

Our Heartfelt Sympathy

To the family and friends of Paul Baij, who passed away on November 25. A memorial gathering will be held at a later date.

Our Heartfelt Sympathy

To the family and friends of Ray Berg, who passed away on November 30. Her memorial service was held at Eden on December 5.

Thank You

“A note of thanks to let you know you are much appreciated.
Thank you for the thoughts, prayers and flowers.”

Anne Balko

Thank you!

Many tasks occur at Eden quietly, with little fanfare. We mention a few here.

Thank you to George Balko for setting up the Advent wreath.

Thank you to Dave Eglsaer for setting up the Christmas tree.

Thank you to George and Dave for keeping the front entrances shoveled.

Thank you to Lynn DeRoche for clearing snow from the basement emergency exit.

Thank you to Jean Hayes for coordinating the farewell gathering for Pastor Lon.

Thank you to Jean and the entire kitchen crew for the funeral ministry and wonderful luncheons.

Thank you to Anne Balko for faithfully sending birthday cards to Eden members.

Weekly Tuesday prayer group, 10 a.m.

All are welcome to join us for Morning Prayer. We take time to talk about what is going on in our lives and those who are on our prayer list. We use a brief Morning Prayer service to pray for everyone on our prayer list by name.

Quilting Bee

Thursday, January 9, 10 a.m.

The Quilters meet at 10 a.m. on the second Thursday of each month, except in summer.

Book club, Wednesday, January 15, noon to 1 p.m. (third Wednesday)

The book club selection for January and February is “Searching for Sunday” by Rachel Held Evans. There are a couple copies available in the kitchen for those who might need them. We plan to cover sections I - IV of the book in January and finish up in February. If you have suggestions for a future book club reading, please let Lynn DeRoche or Joanie Hinsä know. Everyone is welcome to join.

Free Store, Thursday, January 16

Open 1-3 p.m. and 4-6 p.m., third Thursday. Volunteers are needed.



Happy Birthday!
Birthstone for January is garnet.
The flower is carnation.

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

Volunteers Needed

Eden is looking for two volunteers to join the offering counters team. This involves one Sunday a month following the worship service. Please contact Joanie Hinsa or the office.



Looking Ahead

- Annual Meeting, Sunday, February 2
- Ash Wednesday, March 5
- Easter, April 20

Financial Snapshot (as of 12/23/2024)

Income:	\$7,300.95
YTD	\$107,458.37
Expenses:	\$4,246.20
YTD	\$94,369.52

Revolving Fund Balances

As of 11/30/2024

Scholarship Fund	\$24,649.25
Free Store	\$1,710.36

Please support our **Youth Ministry Fund** by dropping off returnable cans and bottles to the church.

Happy Belated Birthday!
Birthstone for December is turquoise.
The flower is holly.

12-02 Anne Balko
 12-02 Yvonne Robbins
 12-08 Kate Mattson
 12-16 Lew Behning
 12-16 Candy Simonen
 12-22 Tammy Huotari
 12-25 Alexis Walther
 12-26 Sylvia Bosley
 12-27 Alex Nelson
 12-31 Steven Foster

Serving in January 2025

Date	Assisting Minister	Ushers	Fellowship Hosts
Captain			
Saturday, January 4	George Balko		
Sunday, January 5			
Saturday, January 11	George Balko		
Sunday, January 12			
Saturday, January 18	George Balko		
Sunday, January 19			
Saturday, January 25	George Balko		
Sunday, January 26			
Altar Guild for January - Brenda St. Martin			
Flower sponsor for January – needed			

Date	Musician	Offering Counters
January 5	Candace Dennis	Norma Dick and Joanie Hinsa
January 12		Jean Hayes and Lynn DeRoche
January 19		Helen Scheuneman and Patsy LaCombe
January 26		Norma Dick and Joanie Hinsa

Serving the congregation during worship

Please consider volunteering on Saturday evenings and Sunday mornings to usher, read lessons and prayers, assist with communion, or host fellowship.

Worship captains recruit people to help with worship. *Thank you!*

Flower Sponsors Are always appreciated. Flower sponsorship is \$30 a month. Your gift may be placed in the offering with a notation for flowers and your selected month.

Flowers from your home garden are also welcome. *Thank you!*

Eden Evangelical Lutheran Church

Worship Services

3:30 p.m. Saturday

10:30 a.m. Sunday

Physical address: 1150 West M-28, Munising, MI 49862

Mailing address: P.O. Box 360, Munising MI 49862

906-387-2520

www.edenonthebay.org

eden@jamadots.com

Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Friday

9 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Elaine Robbins, Vicar

edenevangelicalpastor@gmail.com

906-450-3344

Administrative Assistant and Accounts Payable Clerk: Terry Kolbus

Treasurer and Financial Secretary: Vacant

Maintenance: John Cromell

Custodian: Emily Cook

The Congregational Council generally meets on the second Sunday of each month, after worship. All Eden members are welcome to attend.

Serving through 2024: Lynn DeRoche, Jean Hayes (Vice President),
Nathanial Wood (President)

Serving through 2025: Ryan Graves, Brenda St. Martin, Jennifer Wood (Secretary)

Does Eden have your current contact info (mailing address, email, phone)?

Please complete the directory update form in the narthex or
contact the church office to update your information.



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America



January 2025

Eden Evangelical Lutheran Church

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 <i>Office closed</i> Happy New Year!	2	3 <i>9-2 Office Open</i>	4 3:30 p.m. Worship
5 10:30 a.m. Worship	6 <i>9-2 Office Open</i> Epiphany	7 10 a.m. Prayer Group	8 <i>9-2 Office Open</i>	9 Quilting 10 a.m.	10 <i>9-2 Office Open</i>	11 3:30 p.m. Worship
12 10:30 a.m. Worship 11:45 a.m. Council mtg	13 <i>9-2 Office Open</i>	14 10 a.m. Prayer Group	15 <i>9-2 Office Open</i> 12 p.m. Book Club	16 Free Store 1-3, 4-6 p.m.	17 <i>9-2 Office Open</i>	18 3:30 p.m. Worship
19 10:30 a.m. Worship	20 <i>9-2 Office Open</i> MLK Day	21 10 a.m. Prayer Group	22 <i>9-2 Office Open</i>	23	24 <i>9-2 Office Open</i>	25 3:30 p.m. Worship
26 10:30 a.m. Worship	27 <i>9-2 Office Open</i>	28 10 a.m. Prayer Group	29 <i>9-2 Office Open</i>	30	31 <i>9-2 Office Open</i>	February 1 3:30 p.m. Worship



GIVE USING VANCO ONLINE OR IN THE APP

You can now use Vanco to give online or using the mobile app. Make a one-time gift, or set up a recurring offering.

