

APRIL 2021

Trinity Lutheran Church

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Pastor's Reflections/Mental Health Corner

Honest, Vulnerable Talk About Mental Health
by Rev. Dr. Sarah Griffith Lund

(This article slightly abridged was first published Feb 18, 2021
on [https://faithlead.luthersem.edu/honest-vulnerable-talk-about-mental-](https://faithlead.luthersem.edu/honest-vulnerable-talk-about-mental-health/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=sharpspring&sslid=MzMzNTa3MDQ1MbG0AAA&sseid=MzK0MDI2sbAwMAIA&jobid=c66051f1-0281-4493-8f72-9792b2b78be4)

[health/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=sharpspring&sslid=MzMzNTa3MDQ1MbG0AAA&sseid=MzK0MDI2sbAwMAIA&jobid=c66051f1-0281-4493-8f72-9792b2b78be4](https://faithlead.luthersem.edu/honest-vulnerable-talk-about-mental-health/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=sharpspring&sslid=MzMzNTa3MDQ1MbG0AAA&sseid=MzK0MDI2sbAwMAIA&jobid=c66051f1-0281-4493-8f72-9792b2b78be4))

It is my testimony that God's love is with us in the midst of mental health challenges. I know this because I've lived my whole life in the shadows of mental illness. For too long, the stigma and shame of mental illness in the church has kept too many of us isolated and alone in our struggles. When surveyed in 2013, more Christians said they would rather have leprosy than mental illness. It's time to start telling the true stories of how our lives are impacted by mental health challenges. Having a mental illness does not make us unclean, unworthy, or unwanted. People living with mental health challenges are beloved by God.

Before the pandemic, one in four people reported experiences of mental health challenges. As we move into the second year of the global pandemic, we remain isolated physically for safety reasons *at the very time when half of the American public report symptoms of depression and anxiety.* This means that people in our churches (and the people leading our churches) are hurting: emotionally, psychologically, spiritually, and physically. Add to this the burden of caregiving, whether for children or aging parents, and pretty much everyone is feeling the extra stress and hardship of what it takes to survive a global pandemic.

This is what I know: when we break the silence about mental illness, we break free. We break free

from feeling like we are the only ones. We break free from perfectionism. We *break free from toxic spirituality and theology* that says mental illness is God's punishment for sin. We break free from shame that says we did something wrong. In our freedom, we experience the fullness of God's grace and mercy.

As people of faith, our spiritual healing comes through liberating theology that affirms we are all created in the image of God no matter what our mental health challenges or where we are on the mental health spectrum. *God wants us to flourish emotionally and mentally, and often this means getting mental health support* through the use of medications, therapy, and support groups. We can pray, read the Bible, and take anti-depressants, too.

As faith leaders, taking care of our own mental health is part of our calling. It means having an annual "check-up from the neck up." It means engaging in wellness practices to prevent serious mental illness, to promote recovery, and for symptom management. It means taking our Sabbath days seriously and using all of the vacation days gifted to us. Do you know your mental health status? To get started, you can use this [free online mental health screening](https://screening.mhanational.org/screening-tools/) (<https://screening.mhanational.org/screening-tools/>) provided by Mental Health America.

- Encourage people to know their mental health status by using [a free online mental health screening](https://screening.mhanational.org/screening-tools/)
- Include in your pastoral prayers people living with mental illness, naming the real issues of depression, anxiety, ADHD, PTSD, eating disorders, bipolar disorder, suicidality, and schizophrenia
- Lift up the promises of scripture that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, not even mental illness (Romans 8:39) and that even though we walk through the valley of the shadow of mental illness, God is with us (Psalm 23)
- Remind people of God's love and compassion for people living with mental illness and their loved ones
- Know that mental health challenges impact our relationships, our partners, our family members, our friendships and our loved ones. Symptoms of

mental illness impact how we communicate and how we relate to others, and how we connect. It can be hard for someone going through a mental health crisis to know how to get help or be able to ask for help.

Practices you can try in your congregation

- Break the silence about mental illness in your congregation by reading a book together and having discussion. *Blessed are The Crazy: Breaking the Silence About Mental Illness, Family, and Church* has a [free, online group discussion guide](#) and *Blessed Union: Breaking the Silence About Mental Illness and Marriage* contains within the book discussion questions, prayers, and a guided journal for reflection. (In addition, buying in bulk orders of 10 or more from Chalice Press will provide you a one-hour complimentary zoom session for me to guide a conversation about mental health with your group.)

- Start a spiritual support group. My congregation began meeting on Zoom last May every week on Thursday for a time to check-in, share about how we are doing, and get prayer support. Faith communities can create healing circles where it is safe to share our stories without fear, shame or judgement. The United Church of Christ Mental Health Network has developed [a guide](#) for how to start a spiritual support group.

- Deaths by suicide are increasing in the United States and are the 10th leading cause of death. Suicide is the second leading cause of death for young people ages 10-24. The church can help be a protective factor for youth by communicating and showing young people that God loves them as they explore their gender and sexual identities because LGBTQ youth are at heightened risk for suicide. [The Trevor Project](#) has excellent resources for supporting youth mental health. If you are in crisis, call the toll-free [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) at **1-800-273-TALK (8255)**, available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The service is available to anyone. All calls are confidential.

Your Turn

- Educate yourself about mental health. Get certified in [Mental Health First Aid](#), which is now a virtual training that will prepare you for how to respond to a mental health crisis.

- Become a stigma buster. Be mindful of the language you use and how you talk about mental health. Help to normalize the full spectrum of

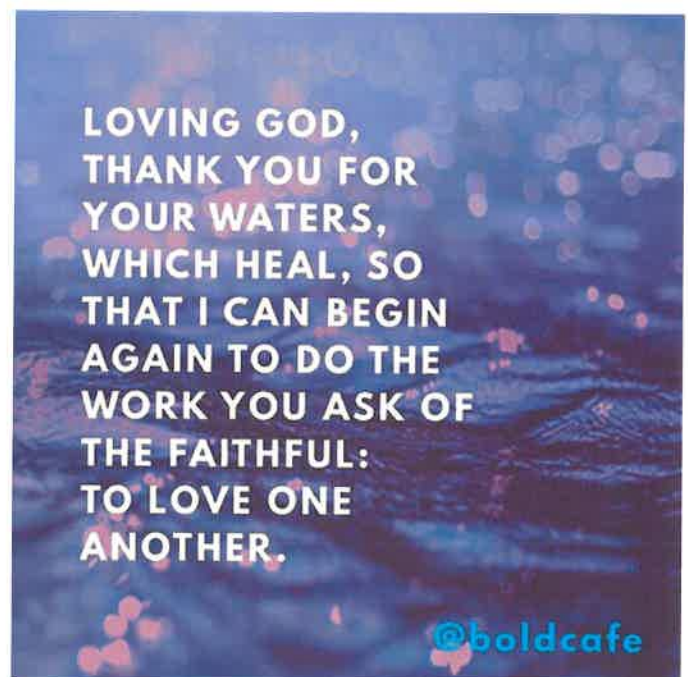
mental health experiences by acknowledging that for many of us our mental health can be fluid, changing day to day, or even hour by hour. It's okay to not be okay.

- Pray for people living with mental health challenges and their loved ones. Pray for people to be connected to affordable, quality mental healthcare.

- Advocate for mental health services in your local community. Ask your elected officials to provide funding to mental health services and to provide mental health professionals in the public schools.

Today is the day to take steps to break the silence about mental illness. Connect to mental health resources in your community. Create spaces for support so that no one experiences extreme forms of loneliness resulting from stigma and shame. Invest in your own mental wellness by being proactive to care for your whole self: mind, body, and spirit. Know that you are not alone and that you are loved.

Rev. Dr. Sarah Griffith Lund is an author, advocate, and pastor partnering with others to share God's hope and healing. She is senior pastor of First Congregational United Church of Christ in Indianapolis and serves on the national staff of the UCC as Minister for Disabilities and Mental Health Justice. Sarah is the award-winning author of *Blessed Are the Crazy: Breaking the Silence About Mental Illness, Family, and Church* (Chalice Press, 2014) and *Blessed Union: Breaking the Silence About Mental Illness and Marriage* (Chalice Press, 2021). She blogs at www.sarahgriffithlund.com and her books are available for purchase everywhere books are sold.





Mar 28 – Apr 4 Services
 Palm Sun 10:30 am
 Maundy Thurs 5:30 pm
 Good Fri 5:30 pm
 Easter Sun 10:30 am

Together Here Ministries



Northeastern Minnesota Synod,
 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Thank you for your support. I have appreciated meeting some of you in person. - Colleen

Easter Sun Worship

Come celebrate the resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ at 10:30 am Sun Apr 4! Because of space limitations within our building, we are asking that you please call (335-6393) or email (tlcclsecretary@gmail.com) by 11:30 am Fri Apr 2 to let us know that you are attending and how many others will be with you. Thank you!!



Our sincere thank you to our Lenten sub-committee members: Pr Amanda, Tom and Pam Shepherd, Mary Nord and Laurie Buehler. We appreciate all the planning for Lent and work involved making the many personal Lenten packets. Well done!!

Worship & Education Board



God bless you and thank you for your support of "March - Food Share Month". Your financial contributions and product donations were split between the Cass Lake and Bemidji food shelves. We at Trinity support both food shelves though our donation of time, and the citizens from the community of Cass Lake also go to the Bemidji food shelf to obtain assistance.

Members and friends at Trinity Lutheran,

Thank you for your contribution of \$935 to Together Here Ministries during 2020. Your partnership helped our ministry thrive despite the pandemic. This year we reached nearly 1000 people by:

- Adding online resources (like Zoom),
- Redesigning our teaching tools (we moved online),
- Deepening our partner relationships within NEMN Synod, neighboring synods, ecumenical partners and the ELCA,
- Facilitating conversations, leading book studies and hosting workshops centering on justice and reconciliation (nationwide participation), and
- Providing a stipend of 15 hours a week to our Mission Developer, Colleen Bernu.

Without partners like you, our ministry would not be possible. We are truly grateful for you!

Together Here Ministries Leads

April Service Groups

Date	Reader	Singers
4/1 Maundy Thursday	Howard H	Roy B & Laurie B
4/2 Good Friday	Howard H & Ardean B	Roy B & Laurie B
4/4 Easter Sunday	Gary or Bev L	Gary & Bev L
4/11	Pr Bill or Almina B	Pr Bill or Almina B
4/18	Gary or Bev L	Gary & Bev L
4/25	Roy B & Laurie B	Roy B & Laurie B

Ushers for April

Laurie Buehler & Roy Blackwood

Financials for Trinity

February Financials	Month	YTD
Giving	\$11,907	\$ 20,551
Actual Expenses	\$ 9,226	\$ 24,126
Budgeted Expenses	\$10,795	\$ 26,436

No matter how much you push the envelope, it'll still be stationary.



**2021 NE MN
SYNOD
ASSEMBLY
REMOTE
MEETING**

Love Ignites Us
Friday, April 30,
2021 – Sunday,
May 2, 2021

Theme verse - 2 Corinthians 5:14-15

Remember in prayer our pastor and voting member(s) and all who will be voting on important ELCA and NEMN Synod matters.



Tip

In a surprising development, a growing movement of highly educated, ex-urban, first-time farmers are capitalizing on booming consumer demand for have a broad impact on the food system. According to Kathleen Merrigan, the head of the Food Institute at George Washington University and a former deputy secretary at the USDA, the growth of the local-food movement could help preserve the place of small and midsize farms in the rural landscape, with the number of farmers under 35 years old beginning to increase for only the second time in the past century. The 2014 USDA census shows that the number of farmers age 25 to 34 (with a majority from non-agricultural families) grew 2.2 percent between 2007 and 2012. This new group of young farmers is also far more likely to grow organically, limit pesticide and fertilizer use, diversity their crops or animals, and be deeply involved in their local food systems via community supported agriculture (CSA) programs and farmers markets. Today's young farmers, who tend to operate small farms of less than 50 acres, are also creating their own "food hubs," allowing them to store, process and market food collectively, and supply grocery and restaurant chains at a price competitive with national suppliers. There are hopes that this movement will help counter the aging of American agriculture, as well as the decimation of midsize family farms and the growth of very large farms that increasingly consolidate their acreage. Midsize farms are critical to rural economies, generating jobs, spending and tax revenue, and can supply mainstream markets while responding to environmental changes and consumer demand.

**NOW THE GREEN
BLADE RISES**

STORYTELLING FOR THE HEALING OF CREATION

PROFESSOR BARBARA ROSSING
AND DIVERSE STORYTELLERS

EcoFaith Summit
Saturday, April 17th
9am-12:30pm via Zoom
Register and learn more at
https://ecofaithsummit_4-17-2021.eventbrite.com

In addition to the guest speaker and storytellers, this event will include small group breakout sessions to provide the opportunity to react, dream, consider future actions and share. Along with worship, biblical and other stories, the purpose is to strengthen the grassroots movement among the people of God, to hear the cry of creation and heed God's call to respond. All are welcome! Register (free) and learn more at <http://bit.ly/ecofaithsummit21> If you have issues with registration, see Pr Amanda.

A little boy was overheard praying:

"Lord, if you can't make me a better boy, don't worry about it. I'm having a real good time like I am."

GREETINGS FROM PASTOR EMILY

It's such a wonder and a gift to be beginning this new year in Bemidji, MN at the Lutheran Campus Center!

After three months in this community already I know ministry on campus with BSU and NTC students will be both creative and engaging. It is a blessing to be a part of Lutheran Campus Ministry here in the Northwoods!

Thanks to Covid, our LCM activities have been closer to home these past few months. We're gratefully taking this time to get to know each other as a community of students and staff and grow deeper in our faith.

We look forward to the incredible adventures God will invite us into this year and next! Don't hesitate to reach out. We want to stay connected to you and your faith community!

Bemidji Lutheran Campus Ministry invites you to:

ALL ARE WELCOME!
JOIN US FOR SPRING SEMESTER

Zoom Church

April 21 @ 8pm
May 19 @ 8pm

Meeting ID: 932 1079 6818
Passcode: 223944

Summer Camp Staff Needed

Our camps need our help to identify and connect young adults to a summer learning leadership skills that will last a lifetime! There are a variety of positions - counselors, canoe guides, kitchen staff, maintenance, health care, lifeguards, cooks, on site leadership and more. **Who can you share this information with today?** The links below will take you to employment pages!

[Camp Onomia](https://www.camponomia.org/employment)

<https://www.camponomia.org/employment>

[Voyageurs Lutheran Ministry](https://www.vlmcamps.org/summer-employment)

<https://www.vlmcamps.org/summer-employment>

[Luther Crest Bible Camp](https://www.luthercrest.org/employment.html)

<https://www.luthercrest.org/employment.html>

[Amnicon Adventures & Retreats](https://amnicon.org/employment/)

<https://amnicon.org/employment/>

how many dogs does it take to change a lightbulb?



◆ **Golden Retriever:** The sun is shining, the day is young, we've got our whole lives ahead of us, and you're inside worrying about a stupid burned out bulb?

◆ **Border Collie:** Just one. And then I'll replace any wiring that's not up to code.

◆ **Dachshund:** You know I can't reach that stupid lamp!

◆ **Rottweiler:** Make me.

◆ **Boxer:** Who cares? I can still play with my squeaky toys in the dark.

◆ **Lab:** Oh, me, me!!!! Pleaseeeeeeeze let me change the light bulb! Can I? Can I? Huh? Huh? Can I? Pleaseeeeeeeze, please, please, please!

◆ **German Shepherd:** I'll change it as soon as I've led these people from the dark, check to make sure I haven't missed any, and make just one more perimeter patrol to see that no one has tried

to take advantage of the situation.

◆ **Jack Russell Terrier:** I'll just pop it in while I'm bouncing off the walls and furniture.

◆ **Old English Sheep Dog:** Light bulb? I'm

sorry, but I don't see a light bulb.

◆ **Cocker Spaniel:** Why change it? I can still pee on the carpet in the dark.

◆ **Pointer:** I see it, there it is, there it is, right there...

◆ **Greyhound:** It isn't moving. Who cares?

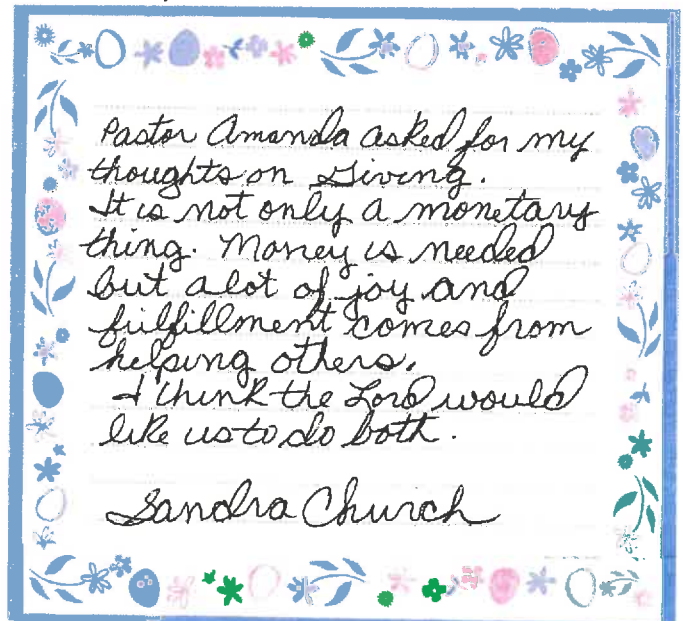
◆ **Australian Shepherd:** First, I'll put all the light bulbs in a little circle...

◆ **Poodle:** I'll just blow in the Border Collie's ear and he'll do it. By the time he finishes rewiring the house, my nails will be dry.

◆ **The Cat's Answer:** Dogs do not change light bulbs. People change light bulbs. So, the real question is: How long will it be before I can expect some light, some dinner, and a massage?

Why I Give

From: Sandy Church





WRAPPING OUR QUILTS AROUND HUNGER 2021

(A quilt auction for the ELCA World Hunger Appeal)
(update)

Dear Northeastern Minnesota Synod quilters,
below you will find information about the Synod
Assembly Quilt and Marketplace auction 2021.

The quilt and marketplace auction will be on-line
only since the synod assembly will be on-line as
well. The website link is
<https://nemnquilts2021.givesmart.com/>

**Welcome back marketplace donators! We are
hoping to expand the auction this year to
include your beautiful handmade items. For the
most part, everything you read below will apply
to marketplace items as well as the quilts.**

The auction will open Thursday, April 29th at 9 am
and close on Sunday May 2nd at 6 PM, day light
savings time.

We are excited that we will be using the same
auction site as last year, provided graciously again
by Voyageurs Lutheran Ministry!

Those of you who donated a quilt last year will be
familiar with how the auction works, but if you not,
do not worry- it is straightforward and non-
threatening. There will be an information sheet with
all you need to know mailed out in March to each
congregation, plus it will be posted on the synod
web site.

For now please note: **you do not need to send us
your quilt or market place item to us, what we
will need are pictures and information about
your quilt or handcrafted item to put up on the
auction site.** You also will not need a bid card, just
an ID card for the winning bidder (you will find one
included in the synod packet mailed to each
congregation with all info needed for the synod
assembly, or you can simply make one.) Your
quilts/marketplace items will be added to the site as
the pictures and info come in. You can send your
pictures and information at any time, however, in

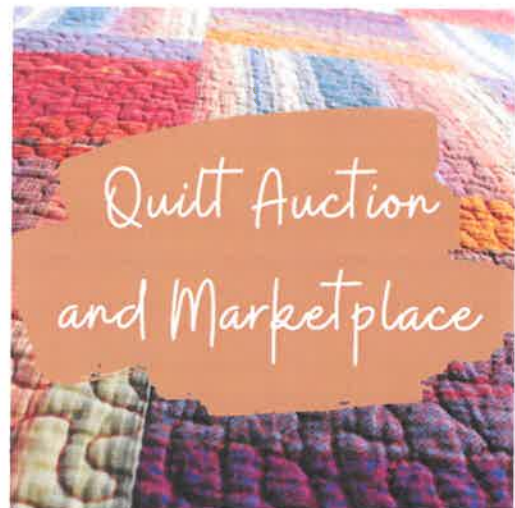
order to give Gretchen enough time to input all the
items, send your photos and information to
vlm@vlmcamps.org by April 22nd, 2021.

After the auction is over, we will let you know who
won your quilt or marketplace item, send you all
their contact information and work with you to figure
out the best way to get the quilt to them. Winning
bidders may be from within the synod and live close
enough to come and pick it up, but some will not,
since we will be reaching bidders from across the
United States now. **This year the auction site will
include shipping costs for each winning bidder.
We don't think this will be an issue because we
are all used to paying shipping costs for that we
buy on-line.**

Thank you for being the heart and soul of this
ministry.

For further details:

<https://files.constantcontact.com/226aeac6001/9d1c148e-1996-4cc9-bc7c-f037c12e1342.pdf>



ONLINE QUILT AUCTION

benefitting the ELCA World Hunger Appeal

<https://nemnquilts2021.givesmart.com/>

April 29th - 9:00 am through

May 2nd - 6:00 pm

**At this point I am
about 97.3% feral
and will not be able
to be integrated
back into society.**



Diane Krauszer, ELCA pastor, leads a Generosity Project workshop at Epiphany Lutheran Episcopal Church, Valdez, Alaska.



A NEW LENS FOR GENEROSITY

Sharing God's gifts with one another through stewardship is an integral part of the Lutheran faith. But sometimes stewardship is misunderstood, equated simply with giving money rather than sharing time, spirit and love. **Linda Staats is trying to change that with the Generosity Project, a stewardship resource funded in part by Mission Support.**

Developed through a partnership between Staats, the Rocky Mountain Synod and the churchwide organization, the Generosity Project challenges Lutherans to rethink stewardship through innovative, intergenerational programming.

When Diane Krauszer, pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, Palmer, Alaska, introduced her congregation to the Generosity Project two years ago, it shifted perspectives.

"One [person] exclaimed, 'We never talked about any of this when I was a kid, and I wish we had,'" Krauszer said. Believing this resource could benefit neighbors at Epiphany Lutheran Episcopal Church, Valdez, Alaska, she took a cue from the project and shared it with them.

In 2019, Krauszer partnered with Kaitlin Pabo-Eulberg, Epiphany's pastor, to introduce the blended Lutheran-Episcopal congregation and a neighboring Catholic church to the Generosity Project.

"It [was] a very natural partnership to invite them," Pabo-Eulberg said of Epiphany's Catholic neighbors. "They were really excited to talk about giving from their perspective."

The event included participants ranging in age from 8 to 89, and Pabo-Eulberg recalled enthusiastic listening and understanding across the generations.

"WE NEVER TALKED ABOUT ANY OF THIS WHEN I WAS A KID, AND I WISH WE HAD."

Among them were Epiphany members Donna Newcomer, a baby boomer, and Steve Newcomer, of the Greatest Generation. "[Now] every time somebody comes to [our] house, when they leave, I say, 'Thank you for spending time with us,'" Donna said. "Because that's the greatest thing you can give somebody — they noticed you and spent time with you."

Staats said this new lens for generosity is the project's aim.

"The goal is not to increase giving by a percentage," she said. "The goal is to change the culture in a congregation [and in homes]. We're building a culture to bring all generations together ... and equipping the home as a place where generosity is practiced."

Thank you for your generous gifts of Mission Support, which made this story of faith in action possible. Mission Support is the portion of your offering your congregation shares with your synod, and your synod shares with the churchwide organization. To learn more, visit ELCA.org/SOFIA.

RPM = Resident Peer Ministry

MEET A STUDENT!

-RPM BIO-



I am Harrison Segero an international student from Kenya, in Bemidji State University majoring in computer science with a minor in mathematics.

Staying at Lutheran Campus Ministry has provided a conducive environment to deepen my relationship with Christ and to learn about the community of Bemidji.

Discipleship to students - inspiring, influencing and informing them about Jesus Christ is the epitome of my stay here at Lutheran Campus Ministry.



Lutheran Campus Ministry announcement:
LCM needs your help in connecting online and spreading the word about our shared ministry! We are planning to create an online email directory so future newsletters, invitations to events and programs, pictures of our adventures and some good news can be shared quickly and efficiently with you! Please send an email to: luthrean@paulbunyan.net or call (218) 751-5326 to be added to our directory