

# Living Faith



Dear Faith Shapers,

If your calendar is anything like mine, the coming weeks are filled to the brim with events that demand attention: piano recitals, band concerts, choir concerts, field trips, confirmation, graduation, Mother's Day, Father's Day, and on and on. Permission slips need to be signed, lunches need to be packed, cards need to be purchased, inventive gifts need to be created (or so Pinterest tells me). It's easy to become overwhelmed by the sheer volume of details and quickly lose sight of what's truly important. Lately, I've been taking more time to wander in the woods, to spend time surveying nature, to relish the beauty of God's creation. During these walks, God reminds me that the weight of the world does not rest on my shoulders. I can stop. I can rest. I can fail to send the cards on time. I can forgo the Pinterest-inspired gifts. And it will be ok. God's got this thing under control.

So maybe you'd like to consider taking out your calendar right now and scheduling some time for walks in the woods with God. I'll look for you there. Peace, Stacey Nalean-Carlson  
Pastor, Glenwood & Canoe Ridge  
Lutheran Churches, Decorah

An invitation to ponder...

“Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.” (Matthew 11:28)

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What if we walked without counting our steps  
What if we moved without measurable goals  
What if we lived led

Free to stop and sit and notice  
Free to wander  
Free to not know

Our only destination the journey  
Love our everlasting end

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Was there ever a more beautiful word  
than meandering?

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**Northeastern Iowa Synod-Home Life Network**  
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# God as Bulldozer

Here's a conversation starter: What does God look like to you right now? I once asked high school students to draw an image of God that spoke to them on their faith journey. One student drew a simple path with a bulldozer at the front, clearing the way.



I love the image of God as bulldozer, creating a new path to follow, knocking down any and all obstacles.

Are you captive to your calendar?

Controlled by your addiction?

Are you ruled by your fear?

Bound by your guilt?

Even now, God is clearing a path for you—leading you out from slavery into freedom. The bulldozer goes before you.

## Pentecost Poetry

Pentecost will be celebrated on June 4 this year. As we give thanks to God for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in our lives, perhaps that same Spirit will inspire you to write some poetry. Try a haiku poem—three lines of five, seven, and five syllables.

*Spirit of life comes  
Breath of hope and joy and peace  
Fire of blazing grace*

Consider printing your poem on a piece of paper decorated with straw blown art. Water down some paint and use a straw to blow it across the paper. Read John 3:8 and recall how the Holy Spirit moves like wind in our lives.

## Family Camp

As you're making plans for summer vacations, consider spending some time at family camp. Many of our ELCA Bible Camps offer family camp as an opportunity for extended families to grow in faith together.

At Camp Ewalu, family camp will be June 30-July 2. Learn more at [ewalu.org](http://ewalu.org) or call 563-933-4700.

At Riverside Lutheran Bible Camp, family camp is offered July 2-5 and August 13-16. Learn more at [riversidelbc.org](http://riversidelbc.org) or call 515-733-5271.

All types and sizes of families are welcome. You'll enjoy classic campfires, Bible studies, games and quality time together. Happy camping!