



PASTORAL REFLECTIONS...

“RECOGNIZE WITH EYES THAT RECKON”

Augusta Cochran was a widowed, retired school teacher who maintained an elegance, a bearing even into her well-advanced years. She served me tea when I would visit her, before I served her Holy Communion. She required me to use “the King’s English” (as she called it) when we conversed (never chatted). I adored this elderly black lady who sat demurely at the edge of her seat, her skirt neatly folded under her with her knees at an angle and her ankles crossed. We spoke of history and literature and politics and the Christian faith. In her presence I sat up straight, chose words more carefully and enjoyed her tutelage from a wholly other perspective.

Mrs. Cochran lived about two blocks down the same street from Mathelda James. Mrs. James was a hard scrabbled woman. In her late eighties she no longer suffered fools or foolishness and she readily spoke her mind. On one occasion I visited her and as she greeted me at the door, her eyes went wide and she said, “Why Pastor, you are getting fat!” Not more than ten minutes later, she brought out two huge pieces of homemade lemon cake for me to eat. I said, “Mrs. James, two pieces? You just said I was getting fat. I shouldn’t eat two pieces.”

She put her hands on her hips and said, “Listen, what you do on your own time is your business, but in my house, you’ll do as I say. Now eat!” Of course, I ate every morsel.

This woman of African descent betrayed her stern words with fierce hugs when I both arrived at and left her home. She was effusive in both her love and discipline for me as a young pastor serving in the inner city of Detroit.

I liked to visit these ladies on the same day when I was out making shut-in calls. Usually I drove to each house but I remember one late winter/early spring day all those years ago where I chose a different course of action. The air was warmer than it had been, the sun was shining and I had a lilt to my step in hopes of spring fully blooming in the near future. After visiting and communing Mrs. Cochran, I decided to leave my car in front of her house and walk the two-two and a half blocks to Mrs. James house.

After getting about half a block down the street I heard a door slam. I looked up at the house I was about to pass and saw two of the biggest, meanest, toughest young men I’d ever seen. They literally stopped on the stoop and stared at me as I passed. I tried to smile as I nodded my head toward them. I heard them follow me as I walked on. My heart was in my throat as the hairs on my neck stood on end. I crossed the street on a diagonal hoping to distance myself from them. They crossed behind me on the same diagonal. Getting up on the other sidewalk, I turned and faced the fellas.

“Can I help you, fellas?” I asked. They looked me up and down and one said, “What are you doing in this neighborhood?”

Pastoral Reflections...cont'd

I had my black clerical shirt with the little white collar-tab on under my overcoat so I pushed the lapels out of the way and I said, "I'm a pastor bringing Holy Communion to some ladies on this street."

The other guy nodded and said, "We'll walk with you."

And so we walked down the street, each of these fellas on both sides of me. I tried to make small talk asking if they lived in the neighborhood. Neither said a word to me.

When we arrived at Mrs. James walkway I knew it was the moment of truth: either they would try to make me walk further, mug me there or just let me go. I was praying for the third option! And so it was. They simply walked away as I walked up to Mrs. James porch. When I got to her door, she was standing there and she said (this is absolutely true!) "Pastor, are you alright? You look whiter than usual."

I said, "Those guys just had me scared." She nodded and let me in and said she'd get me my coffee. When she came back, she was chuckling out loud. I demanded to know what was so funny.

After sitting a coffee mug in front of me she said, "I think that was the safest you've ever been in your life."

"How so?" I asked, quite bewildered.

She replied, "Well just think about it? Who would attack two hoods and a priest?" And of course, she was right.

Thinking of that event now, all these years later, I still wonder what was that really all about? Was it simply two young men escorting a young pastor through a dangerous neighborhood? Was it a couple of neighborhood guys wanting a young man of different pigmentation to feel welcome and comfortable? Or could it have been more?

Hebrews 13:2 states, "*Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it.*" Could these men have been angels preventing evil from being done to me? Or were they just angelic guarding me and guiding me as the angels of Scripture are said to do? I chose to believe they were angels and the two ladies I visited were angelic.

Now some would accuse me of over-spiritualizing this happenstance. That's OK. See, I'm convinced we too often do the opposite: we under-spiritualize people, places and events where God wants us to recognize His handiwork. I would have us recognize with eyes that reckon God is still active in our everyday lives.

God the Father, who sent His Son Jesus to die for us, thus ensuring our future days, doesn't sound like the kind of God who will ignore, neglect or abandon us in our present days.

My hope now is that as we make our way through and get past this pandemic we would recognize more often and in more situations with eyes that reckon God's fingerprints in the moments of the days of our lives.

A blessed end of winter to you and yours!

Yours in Jesus, with much love,

Pastor William Yonker

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LWML & IMMANUEL LUTHERAN DORCAS SOCIETY

I woke up early today and was rewarded with this beautiful fuchsia sunrise. It was like God reminding me "I AM still here and with you always" then the color slowly faded to the grays of winter. We all need those "pops" of color in our lives especially in winter, so ladies wear a colorful scarf and buy a bouquet of flowers for your home. Tomorrow the sun will rise with color or not but with hope and the assurance that God is with us always.

LWML- Luther Women's Mission League and LCFS Lutheran Child and Family Services

Both charities are struggling, LWML is short \$150k for fulfilling their mission Grants for the year and LCFS foster families always need financial help because the state doesn't help much either. I want to thank our Immanuel families for their support of both charities this past Christmas season. Please consider splitting your loose change between both charities, using a zip lock bag for each marked LWML and LCFS, drop off at the church office or put in the weekend offering baskets. *Thank you dear friends! God bless and stay safe!*



2008 ILS Graduate

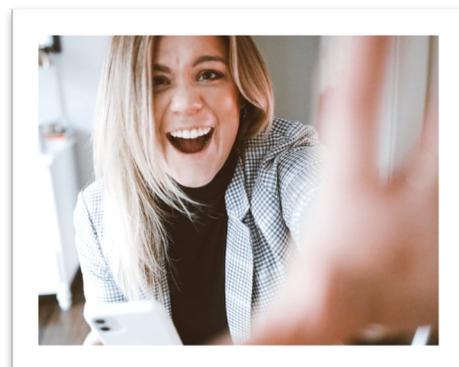
The Everygirl's Social Media Editor Shares How She Landed The Job and Her Best Social Media Advice

Social media jobs have a reputation for being one of the most challenging in the industry. If they're done wrong, company's accounts can sound impersonal and like an ad meant for the masses; but if they're done right, they develop a connection with their audience that sticks with them and feels like each caption and picture is speaking to them personally. The Everygirl's social media accounts have always strived to fall into the latter—and can credit the success of that to **Abigail Yonker**.

In April of 2018, I was sitting in my senior year college apartment, nervously watching the minutes of my morning tick by. I had just gotten a new internship at The Everygirl..

To read the complete article, click on the link below or copy and paste the link in your browser.

<https://theeverygirl.com/abigail-yonker-social-media-editor/>



We are thrilled to announce the promotion of Attorney **Tiffany M. (Mooney) Newton** to Senior Associate at Gehris & Associates.

Tiffany joined the firm five years ago and has advanced through progressively more responsible positions. She started our community outreach program and the G&A monthly newsletter. Tiffany has played a key role during our firm expansion and training of eight new attorneys and staff in 2020.

Attorney Newton brings a wealth of experience, compassion, and knowledge to her practice and we are excited about her new role at the firm.

Please join us in congratulating her on her promotion *(and her new company car)*.



2003 ILS Graduate

the *smile* Ministry

Sending My Intentional Love & Encouragement

Want to bring a *smile* to your favorite college student?
This new inspirational Women's ministry will meet several times
throughout the year to create a special care package.
The evening will also include time with a devotion and fellowship.

♥ Monday, March 8th at 7:00pm in Luther Hall ♥

What to expect.

Each attendee brings a fun item to donate to each care package:

- Fuzzy socks
- Toothbrush
- Cliff bars
- Hand-sanitizer
- Magazine
- Microwave popcorn
- Trail Mix
- The possibilities are endless!

Prior to our meeting, I will send out the total number of participants.
That number will be the quantity of items you will bring to the event!
I will be providing the boxes!

To register: <https://forms.gle/ZV9WzL4aaFDVow8E9> or scan the QR code:



Questions? Contact **Julie Schmidt** at 224-345-9339 or Julie.schmidt@judsonu.edu

~ Our smiles will be hidden - Masks required ~



Every time you smile at someone, it is an act of love,
a gift to that person, a beautiful thing.

Mother Teresa





Upcoming Worship, Music Events & Ministry Notes... For February

Lenten Services Upcoming in February & March ...

Lent begins this year with Ash Wednesday services on Wednesday, Feb. 17th. Throughout Lent we have Wednesday morning (10:00 am) and evening services (7 pm)...see D-tails below. Please mark your calendars / plan to join us. (HOLY WEEK is March 28th - April 2nd / Easter is April 4th)

Lenten Worship



Ash Wednesday
February 17th

Lenten Midweek

February 24th

March 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th



Pastor Baerwolf will be sharing the messages for our midwk Lenten services this year:

“SENT-4-LENT”

SENT-4-LENT LENTEN SERMON SERIES

As we have come to see and hear from our study of our SENT ANCESTORS, God is always sending His people -- we are never settled -- the church of Jesus Christ is SENT.

As we look forward to Lent beginning on Ash Wednesday, we will focus on some more characters from the Old Testament who also were SENT by God to change the world:



- February 17th - Ash Wednesday: **MOSES** (Exodus 3:10)
- February 24th - **GIDEON** (Judges 6:14)
- March 3rd - **ISAIAH** (Isaiah 6:8)
- March 10th - **JEREMIAH** (Jeremiah 1:7)
- March 17th - **EZEKIEL** (Ezekiel 2:3-4)
- March 24th - **US** (Luke 10:2)

We consider those who have gone before us in the faith, and we marvel at their willingness to be used as an instrument in God's mighty hand to share the Good News of sins forgiven and life restored...

During the somber season of Lent we will gather on Wednesdays, beginning on Ash Wednesday, February 17, at 10 a.m. (mask mandatory) and at 7 p.m. (mask encouraged)

Our 7 PM worship service will be Live & LIVESTREAMED for those unable to attend - or for those who wish to worship with us from home or afar at a different time.



we love MOPS!



MOPS IS NOT CANCELED *It just looks a little different!*

If you're a Mom with young kids, COME!

You are invited to join us as we **Share MOPS LOVE!**

**Bring: \$5.00 and yourself! Be ready to Relax, Be Refreshed,
Be filled with LOVE!**

Wear comfy clothes—we will eat comfort foods and you will be taking home some calming inspiration. 😊

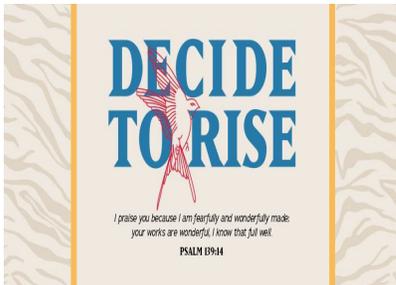
Come join in the opportunity to connect with moms from all walks of life to reclaim your joy, strength and courage like never before. We will continue social distancing safety and our many precautions are in place.



REGISTRATION RSVP

WHEN: Thursday, February 18th 6:30-8:00 p.m.

WHERE: Immanuel Lutheran Church—East Dundee



It is important to keep us Mama's together! We are committed to you!
We only have 24 live seats for our session so register today!

You can also join us via ZOOM if you choose.

Childcare available upon registration.

Questions and information—contact Courtney Dougherty

(MOPS Coordinator) at 847-428-4477 x264 or

cdougherty@immanuel-ed.org.

For group details and/or MOPS membership visit <https://www.mops.org/join/>

Our group code: 2UHS

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Children attending needing childcare:

Name: _____ Age: _____

Name: _____ Age: _____

SEND TO:
Immanuel Lutheran Church
310 East Main Street
East Dundee, IL 60118
or EMAIL TO:
cdougherty@immanuel-ed.org

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

On behalf of the Giving Tree Ministry, we would like to thank you for your abundant support this past Christmas. Through our congregation, God provided 12 families consisting of about 40 children gift cards for Christmas gifts, sweatshirts, hats & gloves, lunchbox snacks, hot chocolate kits and gift cards to be used for groceries. Not to mention many, many gift cards for Walmart and gas stations in support of the Compassion in Action Ministry. What an amazing reminder that God is good and provides abundantly even in the midst of changes and uncertainty. *Blessings on your 2021 and be on the lookout for the Giving Tree again in November!*

THANKS
FOR
GIVING



The staff and faculty of Immanuel Lutheran Church and School, would like to thank the congregation for their staff gift this Christmas season. We are so blessed to be part of such a loving and thoughtful congregation and are humbled by your generosity. Wishing you and yours the best in 2021!