



2025



The Mountain Top Messenger

July 2025

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
Zion Youth—NYG ✕ Travel there ✕ Youth Gathering ✕ Travel home		1	2 6:00pm Worship Service	3	4 	5
6 9:00am Worship Service 10:15am Bible Study 2:00pm LGP	7 Father Daugh- ter take a walk day	8	9 6:00pm Worship Service	10 9:30am LFOJ Clerihew Day	11	12
13 8:45am Sunday School 9:00am Worship Service	14	15 Gummi Worm Day	16 6:00pm Worship Service	17 9:00am Winkel	18✕	19 ✕ Toss away the “could haves” and “should haves” day
20 ✕ 8:45am Sunday School 9:00am Worship Service 2:00pm Mellen	21 ✕	22 ✕ Hammock Day	23 ✕ 6:00pm Worship Service	24✕ 1:30pm Northern Lights	25	26
27 8:45am Sunday School 9:00am Worship Service	28 Milk Chocolate Day	29	30 6:00pm Worship Service	31 Raspberry Cake Day	August 3rd 10:00am Picnic Prentice Park	

July [2 Doug] [6 Darryl] [9 Andy] [13 Randy] [16 JohnS] [20 Scott] [23 JohnP]
[27 Doug] [30 Darryl] **August** [3 JohnS] [6 Andy]

ALTAR GUILD - JULY
Lisa Warren 715-209-8547
Michelle Vyskocil 715-682-2498

YOUTH CONFIRMANDS
6-22-25 Sikander Walter Ellis
6-22-25 Kayan Laurence Ellis

I'm running a little behind this month, I am writing this on the last day of June, sorry for the delay. I find it difficult to believe that June is already behind us, we are rapidly approaching mid-summer, and the days are already starting to get shorter. I thought I would dive straight into this month's Commandment. This month we are looking at the fifth commandment. As it is written in the Large Catechism, "You are not to kill". This is the one commandment that everyone says; "Oh that's easy! I've never killed anyone, I'm good here!". To which I have to say, slow down, not so fast. Let's take a deeper look. Jesus himself lets us know, there is really far more to this commandment, he tells us in Matthew chapter five verses 21&22:

"You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.' ²² But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother¹ will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell of fire.

There is definitely more to this commandment than what first appears. Dr. Luther states it this way: "We must not kill, either by hand, heart, or word, by signs or gestures, or by aiding and abetting. It forbids anger except, as we have said, to persons who function in God's stead, that is parents and governing authorities. Anger, reproof, and punishment are the prerogatives of God and his representatives and are to be meted¹ out to those who transgress this and the other commandments.

Luther goes on to say that the reason we need this commandment is, that as God well knows, the world is evil, and life is full of misery. Because of that God puts this and other commandments in place to separate the good and evil. Luther goes on to say that we not only violate the commandment when we do evil, but we also do break the commandment when we knowingly fail to prevent or protect our neighbor from suffering bodily harm or injury. I want you to understand this meaning goes beyond just the infliction of bodily harm or injury, to include their mental wellbeing, reputation and relationships.

The world today could really use a refresher lesson on commandment number five. Watch the evening news, national or local, but in particular the national news. Watch it for the full half an hour, count up how many times you see individuals or groups of individuals blasting this commandment. On the national level you will see 85%-90% of the news is pretty much violence and evil, sometimes at the very end they may have what they call good news. If you watch, what you may be fortunate enough to see is someone actually following this commandment. People helping people, people watching out for their neighbor, whether they know them or not, people doing the good things the Lord asks us to do. Last week in our Epistle reading Paul said this;

¹dispense or allot justice, a punishment, or harsh treatment. (mete)

¹⁴For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (Gal. 5:14)

He also warns the following;

¹⁵But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another. (Gal. 5:25)

This fifth commandment is all about what we heard last week, we need to walk in the spirit. Remember what that is? It is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. In our sinful human nature, these things are hard for us, but through the grace of God and with the help of the Holy Spirit we can do better, not by our will but his.

It is really quite simple, when you see someone hungry, feed them, when you see someone in need of clothing, clothe them, when in need of shelter, help. When the opportunity arises, and it will, help those in need to the best of your ability. And then when one of my favorite pieces of scripture is fulfilled you will be fulfilled.

Matthew 25:31-40: ³¹ “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. ³² Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³ And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. ³⁴ Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. ³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶ I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.’ ³⁷ Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘**Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? ³⁸ And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? ³⁹ And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’ ⁴⁰ And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters,¹ you did it to me.’**

Please my friends, do your best to love your neighbor as yourself and the fifth commandment will be taken care of.

May the Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you, the Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

Pastor Rick

The Ten Commandments

The Fifth Commandment

"You Shall Not Kill"

(A Simple Definition)



THE GREAT COOKIE CAPER

Directions: Find the 20 words in the puzzle. Can you solve the riddle?

COOKIE	RIDDLE	FROSTING	CHOCOLATE	ECHO
HIDEOUT	GANG	NOTE	CRUMB	SHADOW
CLUES	TRACKS	JAZZBOOTS	TUNNEL	STATION
SUGAR	BAKERY	SCOOP	TRAIN	CAPER

V	Y	N	X	F	S	N	C	X	R	Y	B	O	E	L	X	S	Q
J	I	J	F	M	L	S	L	Y	O	L	A	T	B	G	F	Y	K
S	T	A	T	I	O	N	U	J	A	Y	K	S	H	D	S	Z	I
C	D	Z	Z	K	E	D	E	N	F	H	E	C	A	P	E	R	F
O	V	Z	B	J	F	S	S	Y	C	Z	R	Y	L	M	R	G	R
O	S	B	T	R	A	I	N	T	O	E	Y	E	M	E	K	N	Q
P	H	O	H	I	X	J	L	I	R	U	L	Y	C	O	T	B	J
W	A	O	B	I	E	H	A	P	I	H	E	H	O	N	Q	W	H
Q	D	T	Q	Y	D	I	S	C	D	U	I	L	O	N	O	T	E
A	O	S	I	I	M	E	U	F	D	M	N	X	K	Y	E	I	X
E	W	M	A	W	M	P	O	D	L	I	J	V	I	G	M	D	R
E	C	R	U	M	B	N	P	U	E	W	T	G	E	Q	H	B	L
A	V	H	Y	N	V	C	R	T	T	P	R	S	A	S	Z	T	D
X	L	F	O	N	R	Z	B	E	U	B	A	W	J	N	C	B	Z
F	R	O	S	T	I	N	G	X	N	B	C	H	X	G	G	L	L
E	Y	Z	U	A	R	P	G	O	N	U	K	D	Y	B	Q	D	Q
S	U	G	A	R	D	Q	B	J	E	W	S	U	C	E	S	A	S
C	H	O	C	O	L	A	T	E	L	W	N	L	V	T	H	R	T

Fruity Ice Cubes

Ok, so ice isn't exactly a "white" food, but vibrant red and blue berries suspended in big, clear cubes elevate any beverage—from [lemonade](#) to sparkling water—to new, flavorful heights. Use a regular ice cube tray, and be sure to chop or slice your fruit small enough that the ice has space to form all around it.

July Mission Helping Our Youth - The mission will be helping our youth with donations to help cover travel and motel expenses. There is a donation box on the table. There will be no August Mission. The next mission will be September/October.

THE GREAT COOKIE CAPER

In the heart of Jellybean Junction, Granny Gumdrop's Bakery was more than a sweet spot, it was the soul of the city. But this morning, it sat empty. Every cookie, crumb, and chocolate chip had vanished.

Granny Gumdrop sobbed, "I locked up tight! But when I opened this morning, all the sprinkle stacks were gone!"

Enter Detective Dottie "Jazzboots" Jones, pint-sized sleuth and professional puzzle-solver. A frosted envelope lay on the countertop with a wax seal shaped like... a cookie bite.

Inside was a riddle.

"By day I slumber, by night I roar,
I slink through tunnels, under the floor.
I wear no shoes, but I run on steel,
And vanish quick with a rhythmic feel.
You'll find our loot where the echo's loud—
Where shadows gather in a moving crowd."



Dottie raised one eyebrow. "Hmmm. No names. No demands. Just a riddle. But I know where to start looking."

She flipped to her Word Search Word List to see what matched the riddle's clues...

Thank You from the Zion Lutheran Youth Group!
 We want to extend a heartfelt *thank you* for your incredible support! Our recent grocery bagging fundraiser at Super One was a big success—we raised nearly \$800!
 The youth are getting more and more excited for the upcoming ELCA Youth Gathering in New Orleans, which is now just three weeks away. This event is a wonderful opportunity for our young people to grow in their faith and draw closer to Christ Jesus.
 We are deeply grateful to the church for fronting the cost of the trip. Please know that we are committed to repaying that support through various fundraisers planned throughout the summer.
 We're still working out the details for our brat/hot dog/lemonade sale, a car wash, and a bake sale—so stay tuned for dates and times!
 Thank you again for walking alongside us on this journey of faith and fellowship.
 —The Zion Lutheran Youth Group



ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH
 1111-11TH AVE WEST
 ASHLAND, WI 54806

Sunday Worship Service 9:00am live streamed
Wednesday Evening Service 6:30pm
Sunday School - 1st – 7th grade Sunday 8:45am (Sept.-May)
Bible Studies
 Sunday 10:15am Monday 10:00am (Sept.-May)

Pastor Rick Williams - 715-209-0479
Office Hours: M & Th 9-5 T off Wed. 12-8 Fri. 9-5
 Please call ahead if you need to speak with Pastor.

Office Secretary Lynn Ladd 715-682-6075 Office Hours M/T/Wed 8:30-2:30
 Days and times may change.

Church President: John Pruss 715-292-4825 **Head Elder:** Darryl Warren 715-492-0488

Little Friends of Jesus Child Care Center: 715-682-5185
LFOJ Administrator: JoAnn Martkonis 715-682-6075

Website www.zionashland.org **E-mail** secretary@zionlutheranashland.com

PRAYERS for Home-bound, Assisted Living, Nursing Home
 Those who aren't able to attend common worship that they would find comfort knowing that the Lord is with them.

*Ingrid Pocernich
 Arlene Zimmerman
 Violet Basina*

PRAYERS FOR PROTECTION
 For our full-time troops and public servants, for travel, missionaries, and for peace and protection for families.

*David Wright
 Jordan Thimm
 Andrew Pruss*

PRAYERS FOR HEALTH AND HEALING
 For good test results, treatment, positive thinking, healing, and comfort during cancer treatments, for those suffering from addiction, mental illness and for healing, strength, comfort, and peace for family we pray for:

Brad Prill	Vi Basina	James Fletcher
Harold Larson	Linda Stenroos	Steve Key
Tim Erickson	Patty Hmielewski	Pam Ekholm
Nick Frisco	Don Pocernich	Jamie Klema
Ingrid Pocernich	Karen Piff	Riley Bretting
Mike Trimble	Molly Colgrove	Linda Parrish
Chuck Sandor	Mary Dahl	Sandy Bosma
Sheryl Hildebrandt	Dwayne Lynch	Tom Anderson
Don Pocernich	Bill Swartz	Rick Kallio
Larry Hildibrandt	Octavia Pearce	Cindy Lazorik
Keith Tveit	Karl Wellnitz	Dylan Osmak
Tracy Thompson	Karen Wayne	Casey Chuck Betsy

And those in our hearts
 Trinity Lutheran, Bergland Our Redeemer Lutheran Bessemer

Dear Lord, "We come to You today with heavy hearts, as we lift up those who are in need of prayer. We ask that You would bring healing and restoration to their body, mind, and spirit" Amen.

Micah Herndon on How Faith Helped Him Survive

The Marine veteran recalls how Sarah McLachlan’s *In the Arms of an Angel* reassured him when he regained consciousness following an IED explosion in Afghanistan.

That first IED that we did take in Afghanistan was January 9th, 2010. Later on, maybe a month and a half later, we were involved in an operation. We were escorting packs and supplies to the main hub. So we were traveling down that road, two o’clock in the morning, pitch black.

It was a 50-pound bomb, pressure plate. Extremely lucky, everyone, there was no casualties and what not. I got injured, that was the hardest I’ve ever been hit in my entire life. It knocked me out, they said, for three minutes. They said I suffered a grade three concussion.

First instinct that I went to was to check myself. Check to see if I still had my legs still, my arms. I had everything. At that very moment, that was the happiest moment of my entire life. I had just survived something that was set out to kill me. When you survive something like that, it’s a very surreal feeling. I started laughing uncontrollably because I was so happy.

For every convoy, for every mission in Iraq and Afghanistan, we did listen to music on an iPod player. For whatever reason...I don’t know how that iPod survived that blast, but it was still playing. And I was still kind of dazed and shook from the whole blast. My doc was checking my vitals, making sure I was all right. I heard the one song that was playing...really, that was all I could hear. So the heartbeat, breathing and of course that song was *In the Arms of an Angel*. Pretty weird that that song was playing at that time.

Our docs, you know they heal us, they save our lives. It kind of just fit that moment. Opened my eyes to a lot of things because before that, being deployed and what I saw up to that point, you kind of start questioning your faith in God. I think He answered me right there. I was here for a reason.

After he checked me, that Sarah McLachlan song was on, I got out of my vehicle. I saw what it did to the truck, and that’s when it kinda hit me. Right there I just lost it uncontrollably. I just broke down on my knees and stared balling.

Two IEDs I survived. I’m whole. I got my arms and my legs. I’m definitely here for a reason. After that, it makes you wonder what that reason is. I know a little bit of the reason why I’m still here: Me and my wife just had a little baby girl. I think He kept me here for her.



JUNE LFOJ NEWSLETTER

LFOJ WISH LIST/NEEDS

Monthly: Regular paper towel and/or Tri Fold paper towel Toilet paper
Hand soap (unscented is best, Must be antibacterial)
8 gallon scented garbage bags
Great value brand canned fruits Natural peanut butter

COOK’S CORNER

Fruit Kabobs

Ingredients: Fruit suitable for cookie cutters (watermelon, pineapple, cantaloupe), berries, grapes, wooden skewers

Instructions: To make shapes, slice the melons or pineapple into ½ inch to 1-inch slabs. For pineapple, make sure you slice width-wise through the core. Use a small cookie cutter to make shapes for the kabobs.

Skewer cut-out fruits alternating with berries and grapes.

Devour! Store leftovers (if there are any) in the fridge.

LEARNER LANE: Our themes this month have included gardening, Father’s Day, camping and fishing!
A few of our Bible stories: A poor widow’s gift, The true King, Lazarus and Zacchaeus.

This month, we welcomed Zoe and Kaylani into the Learner room, and all of our 4k friends are with us for the summer. We have a full house!

Over the 4th of July break, we will be getting rid of the cubbies and will be replacing them with hooks along the wall. Please be sure to bring home any excess items, such as winter gear, toys, art work, etc.

We are super excited to be spending extra time outside in the warmer weather!
-Ms. Hanna

Parent’s choice gentle baby formula (must be iron-fortified) Ragu spaghetti sauce Prego alfredo sauce All natural ketchup (no high fructose corn syrup) Tomato soup Other wish list items: Crockpot TOTVILLE NEWS: Greetings from the Infant Room!

This month we’ve said goodbye to Reagan for the summer. We look forward to having her join us again in the fall. Welcome to Julie who recently joined our group. We are happy to get to know her.

Happy 1st birthday to Elouise on June 6th.

Our little ones are all mobile in some way. If not walking, then crawling, scooting or rolling around the room.

Happy Father’s Day!

As a father shows compassion to his children, so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear Him. -Psalm 103:13

- Denise and Nikki

TODDLER TIDBITS: Toddler room has been working on creating a solar system that will hang from the ceiling!

They are loving playing outside, and have been especially enjoying the swings, hitting balls, and playing in the sandbox/dirt!

The kids are so photogenic, and we love taking pictures of their smiling faces to send to their families!

-Ms Jane and Ms Jordan/Desiree

UPDATES: We are closed Wednesday, July 2nd, Thursday, July 3rd and Friday, July 4th to celebrate the 4th of July.

We will be doing a float for the 4th of July. We need help decorating and could also use a few families to ride the float! Please let me know if you are interested!

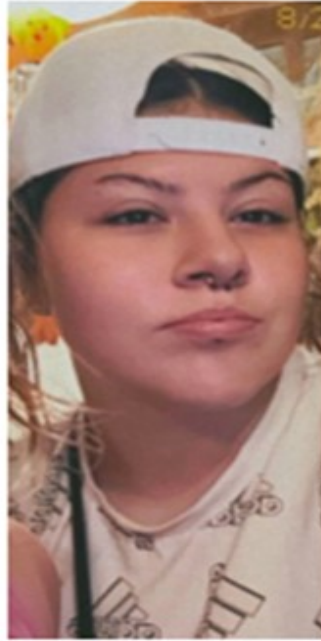
God Bless, Tressa Groom Director JoAnn Martikonis Administrator

Zion's Graduating Students

Ayeisha Deragon

Parents Harry Deragon and Shalee Conley
She graduated from Ashland High School
June 1, 2025.

Her plans are to be working after school.



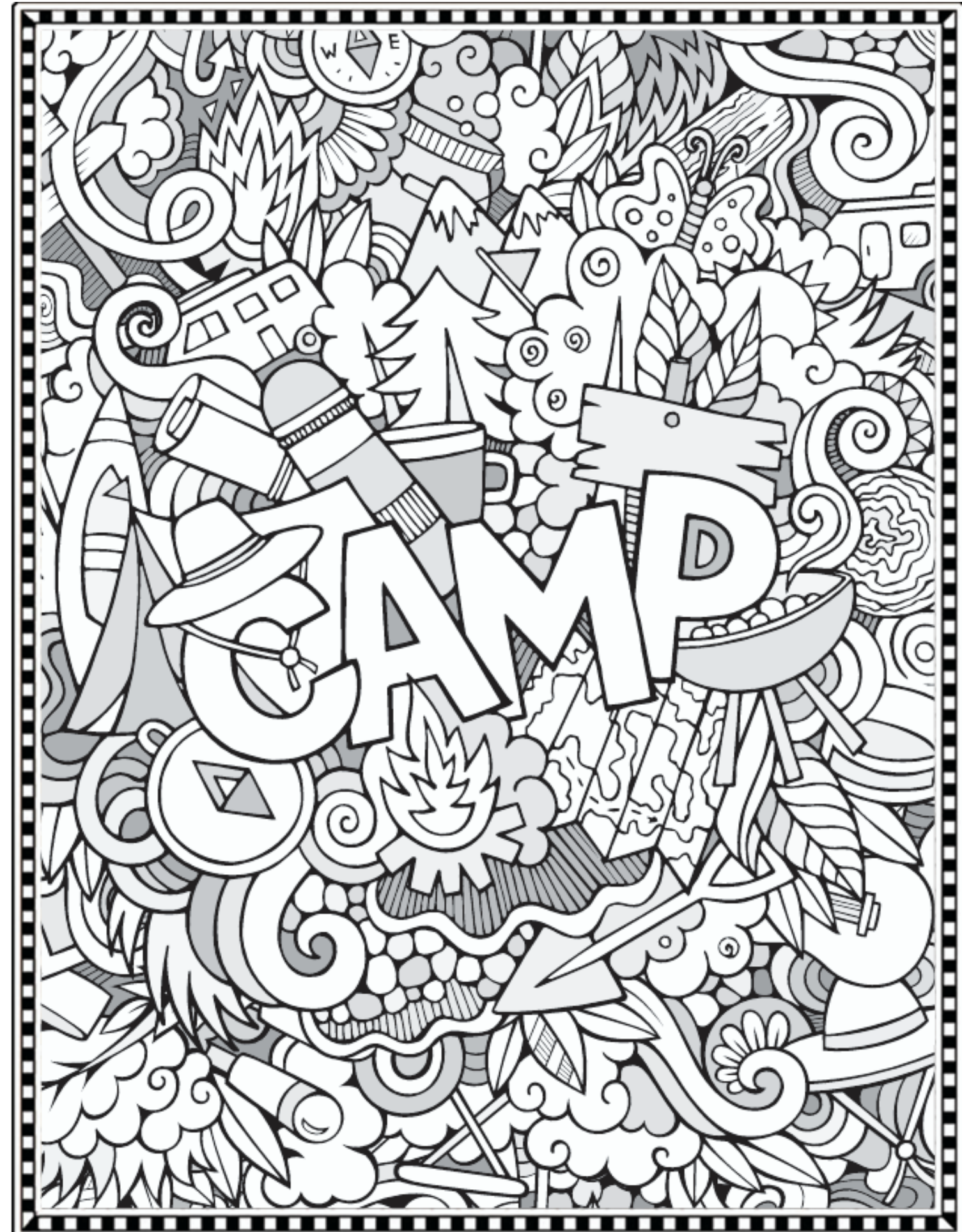
Daniel Truchon

William & Jodi Truchon
South Shore High School
Attending the University of
Minnesota - Twin Cities in the
fall, majoring in Mechanical
Engineering



Heather Dickrell

Doug Jr and Jennifer Dickrell graduated from UW Green Bay grad school on May 17, 2025 with her Masters in Social Work. She will be continuing her work as a school social worker at Putnam Heights Elementary School in Eau Claire.



The Dog Who Loves the 4th of July

by Peggy Frezon
Most dogs aren't thrilled by the sound and fury of fireworks on the 4th of July. But then, Peggy Frezon's spaniel Kelly isn't just any dog.

Fireworks on the 4th of July isn't usually an event you can share with your dog.

Most dogs I know are fearful of the thunderous crashes and booms. Every 4th of July you'd find my childhood dog, Happy, hiding under the bed. Some dogs are so distressed, they can't be left alone, or they need medication to keep them calm.



At the time, my son was at college, my daughter was married and living out of state, and I was struggling with living in an empty nest. That day, also, my husband was away on business. So I was celebrating my favorite holiday alone. But I couldn't miss the fireworks!

As a kid, the 4th of July included picnics, swimming, three-legged races in the Vermont sun. And then, at dusk, the breathtaking fireworks display. I was fascinated by the colors, watching them grow and morph into circles, spirals and hearts. I clapped as showers of sparkles rained down. I was mesmerized. I still feel that way.

As I got ready to go out on my own that night, my spaniel Kelly sat by the door and cocked her head.

"You don't want to go," I said. "Fireworks are noisy."

She just sat there and looked at me, her rust-colored hair brushing down atop her big, pleading eyes.

"Wait here," I said. "I won't be long. You'll be happier here."

But no, Kelly seemed to say. I'll be happier with you.

So I clipped on Kelly's leash and took her along. There was a viewing area a short walk from my house—far enough away that the clamor of explosions would be dampened and close enough that we could return home if necessary. Kelly pranced along happily.

I spread out a blanket and sat among the crowd, Kelly pressed in close at my side. The setting sun cast a lovely glow. I waited in anticipation until, at last, the first great burst appeared. A distant boom, and then a gentle crackle echoed.

Kelly raised her head and looked up at the sky. Her ears perked. She stared. Then another color spread across the night sky, and another. The crashes and bangs didn't faze her. The whole time she kept her gaze on the sky, as if in awe. Just like me. Was she fascinated by the remarkable display, too? I patted her neck as we watched together.

When the show was over we walked home quietly, bonded by the shared experience of flowers blooming in the sky.

This year I can't wait for the 4th of July fireworks display, to share with my whole family—husband, kids, new granddaughter...and our golden retriever Ike, if he's willing. And of course my furry friend Kelly, who maybe loves fireworks as much as I do.



Confirmation Sunday, July 22, 2025

Sikander Walter Ellis Baptized February 10, 2011
Matthew 28:20 Behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Kayan Laurence Ellis Baptized July 5, 2013
Revelation 2:10 Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life.

Parents: Joseph Allen Ellis and Kalpana Singh
Grandparents: Herbert Eugene and Alice Joan Ellis
Ajay and Kamla Ram
Godparents: Jeffrey and Roya Ellis (Sikander)
Jeremy Ellis and Julie Calahan (Kayan)



Berry Trifle
Blueberries, raspberries and Greek yogurt—oh my! This is one of many possible layered desserts that look as beautiful as they taste. Try cubed store-bought pound cake, strawberries and blackberries. Or use whipped cream for a decadent "white" touch. Drizzle some honey over the top, and you're ready for a memorable sweet treat.

A 4th of July Prayer

[Michelle Medlock Adams](#)

I bet you have fun family Fourth of July traditions and hometown hoopla planned as well. But, in the midst of all the backyard barbecues, patriotic parades and fabulous fireworks, I hope you'll take a minute to pray.

Prayer is a powerful force for good. We can believe in the strength of prayer to bring comfort, hope, and healing.

I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercessions and thanksgiving be made for all people—for kings and all those in authority. (1 Timothy 2:1-2, NIV)

The Fourth of July is precious to me for several reasons. First, I get to celebrate a nation I love and honor. Second, I get to enjoy my hometown Fourth of July Parade that passes right by my house. Third, I get to spend quality time with my extended family, eating hot dogs, a fruit tray that resembles the American flag, homemade ice cream, and several other family favorites. And fourth, I get to sit next to my handsome hubby and watch the fantastic fireworks light up the night sky.

