



The Mountain Top Messenger

AUGUST 2026

Summer is moving right along, and I hope you're finding moments to rest, recharge, and enjoy the beauty of God's creation around us here in the great Northwoods, I know June and I have been enjoying God's creation at Little Girls Point, the sunsets are amazing. As we head into August, I want to share a few updates and reminders with you.

Outdoor Worship & Picnic — August 2 at 10:00 AM Mark your calendars! We'll be gathering at the Prentice Park pavilion for outdoor worship followed by a church picnic. It's always a wonderful time of fellowship, food, and worship under the open sky. Bring a dish to share, bring a lawn chair, and bring a neighbor! Let's make the most of this opportunity to gather as a church family outside our walls.

Sunday School & Confirmation — Resuming in September As summer winds down, we're looking ahead to the fall. Sunday School and Confirmation classes will resume in September. Watch for more details in the coming weeks regarding schedules and any updates to the program. We're excited to get back into God's Word together with our young people!

Building Updates A couple of quick notes on what's happening around the church:

- **Elevator Repair:** The parts for our elevator have been ordered, and it will be repaired as soon as they arrive. We appreciate your patience and understanding while we've been working through this.
- **New AED:** We've selected a new Automated External Defibrillator for the church, and it should be arriving soon. Keeping our congregation safe is a priority, and we're grateful to have this life-saving equipment in place.

A Word on Patience

"But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience." — Romans 8:25

Waiting is hard, isn't it? Whether it's waiting for elevator parts to arrive, waiting for a new season of ministry to begin, or waiting on God to answer a prayer that's been on your heart for a long time — patience doesn't come naturally to most of us.

But here's the beautiful thing: when Scripture calls us to patience, it's not asking us to grit our teeth and white-knuckle our way through the waiting. Biblical patience — the kind Paul writes about in Romans 8 as we have been hearing over that last few Sundays— is rooted in hope. We wait *patiently* because we wait *hopefully*. We trust that the God who began a good work in us will see it through to completion.

Patience is really an act of faith. It says, "I don't see the full picture yet, but I trust the One who does." It says, "My timing isn't always God's timing, and His timing is always better."

So whatever you're waiting on this summer — a medical result, a restored relationship, a door to open or a door to close — take heart. The Lord sees you. He has not forgotten you. And His promises are as sure today as they have ever been.

Wait on Him. He is worth the wait.

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

Matthew 14:13-21

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

BELIEVE
BREAD
CARE
COMPASSION
DELIVERANCE
DISCIPLES
FEED
HUNGRY
KNOWS
LONGINGS
MEAL
MORE
MOSES
NEED
PROVIDE
SOLVE
TELL
THOUSAND
TRUST
WILDERNESS



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

Sunday Worship Service 9:00am live-streamed

Wednesday Evening Service 6:00pm

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 /T/Th 9-5 Wed. 12-8 Fri. off

Please call ahead if you need to speak with Pastor.

Office 715-682-6075

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 Director: Tressa Groom 715-682-6075

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

PRAYERS for Homebound, 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.

*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
Gavin Neibauer*

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	Don Pocernich
Tim Erickson	Patty Hmielewski	Pam Ekholm
Don Pocernich	Jamie Klema	Keith Tveit
Rick Kallio	Sheryl Hildebrandt	Mary Dahl
Mike Trimble	Linda Parrish	Judy Nevela
Chuck Sandor	Dwayne Lynch	Camden & Brooks
Tom Anderson	Octavia Pearce	Kevin Heggie
Larry Hildebrandt	Cindy Lazorik	Tracy Thompson
Severt Dahl	Jesse Riemer	Magnolia & Iris Butler
Clarence Osmak	Jake Anderson	Charles Schudar
Karen Wahl	Sonia Balmer	Dale Nelson
Wayne	Casey	Chuck
David	<i>and those in our hearts</i>	

**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.**



Mustard Seed

Daily Devotions

ICYMI — IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

Devotion

“For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul?” (Matthew 16:26a).

Acronyms abound in the texting world we live in and some, like ICYMI, have become almost a second language to many. It is a shorthand that often does not even need translation for either the sender or receiver. FYI (For Your Information), LOL (Laughing Out Loud), TBD (To Be Determined) are other ready examples that most of us know and use often.

In case you missed it, ICYMI stands for “in case you missed it.” The ensuing message, of course, shares an event or news-worthy tidbit that might have slipped by you. “In case you missed it” gets your attention. What if it is something important? What if this is your only chance to find out about it? It is hard to keep up and we often do miss it.

The Bible offers an ICYMI reference in Matthew 16:26, “For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul?” Talk about missing it! This is not about a world event or a social opportunity. Forfeiting your soul is the ultimate, eternal ICYMI. The biggest ever “oops” — the everlasting “I missed the boat” — the worst-case scenario for humanity.

This verse is preceded by Christ’s admonition to His disciples in verse 24: “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.” He is telling them, and us, in no uncertain terms that there is a price to pay for being His disciple. Self-denial is certainly not an easy sacrifice to make.

Then verse 25: “For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.” This comes across as some sort of doublespeak — saving means losing and losing means finding??? Such are the higher thoughts of God. This makes no sense in human terms, but it immediately becomes clear with verse 26: “For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul?” Bingo! It is in following Christ that your soul, your spiritual life, is saved! It is not your work to save your life, but only in losing it for Christ’s sake, is it found. In Christ, you have not forfeited your soul. It is safe for eternity! For the Christian, ICYMI can mean In Christ, you made it. It is Christ’s work of redemption that paves the way to heaven for each of us believers. He is the Way, the Truth and the Life — the Gate — the Shepherd who leads us sheep to the safe haven of eternal life. www.lwml.org

Christ promises that His death and resurrection assure salvation for us redeemed sinners. We are saints only because He has paid the price and the Holy Spirit works faith in believers. Only in Christ have we made it!!

Prayer: Heavenly Father, we give you thanks and praise that in Christ, we make it to safety to Your promised eternal glory! Keep us ever mindful that You are our source of salvation, that we follow You and You alone from this earthly life to life eternal. Continually draw us to You through Your Word and Sacraments, that we remain faithful to the true Gospel. In Christ’s name, we pray. Amen.

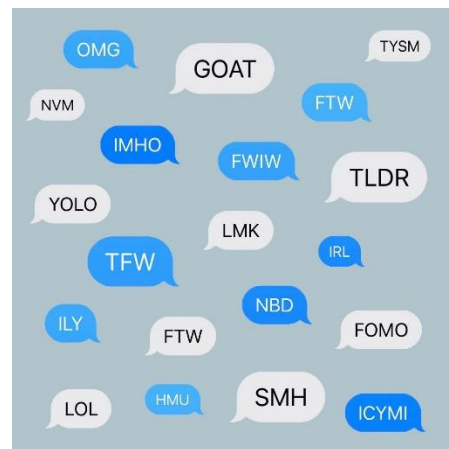
Text Abbreviations You Should Know (and How to Use Them)By [Meghan Jones](#)

Updated on Oct. 05, 2024

Knowing the meaning of these terms will keep anyone with a phone, social media or even just web access from being constantly confused in the digital world!

OMG! IMO, texting abbreviations are the GOAT! If you have absolutely no idea what that means, it might be time to brush up on your texting abbreviations. These collections of letters, short for a single word or group of words, are so common in texting that many have moved beyond text conversations, migrating into spoken conversations and becoming widespread in [social media captions](#) and comments too.

Understanding texting abbreviations like [IJBOL](#) is no longer just a **tech tip**—once you know them, you’ll be finding them in everyday life! If you’re pairing these texting abbreviations with a GIF, you should also find out [what GIF stands for](#).



Why do we use abbreviations when we text?

It seems impossible to imagine texting without abbreviations today, but how did abbreviations become such a massive part of texting lingo? Well, in the days before smartphones, and even before keyboard phones, texters were working with a limited number of characters—160, to be exact—and before “unlimited” plans became the law of the land, each text cost money to send.

Plus, typing with just thumbs isn’t quite the speedy process that typing on a traditional keyboard is. Not to mention, *before* keyboard phones, you had to press the number corresponding with the letter you wanted—enough times for that letter to appear. Needless to say, typing full words was cumbersome, and it became customary to shorten words and phrases. And, of course, abbreviating is just convenient in general, and it’s certainly not exclusive to texting—just look at all these common abbreviation and [acronym examples](#).

OMG The abbreviation OMG, for “oh my God” (or gosh, or goodness, or your expression of choice) vastly predates texting. In fact, the Oxford English Dictionary tracked its earliest recorded use to a letter written in 1917! Today, you’ll see it used in sentences like “OMG, can you believe how hot it is today?!” It’s a pretty all-around exclamation or reaction.

LOL This is perhaps the most ubiquitous texting acronym. Short for “laughing out loud,” LOL is now used to express even the mildest amusement. You can respond “LOL!!” (perhaps paired with one of these [popular emojis](#)) when your friend tells you a hilarious story, but you can also just say something like “I forgot to have breakfast today, LOL.” It’s something of a catch-all reaction. Another note: LOL does *not* stand for “lots of love.” In the early days, when texting abbreviations were becoming mainstream, plenty of people made this LOL-worthy mistake.

BC In texting terms, the second and third letters of the alphabet don’t refer to the time “before Christ.” BC is, instead, short for “because.” Often, texting abbreviations like these won’t even be capitalized. You might see something like “Wanted to see how you were doing bc I haven’t heard from you in a while.”

NP/YW The logical response to “ty,” YW or “yw” means “you’re welcome.” In a similar vein, NP or “np” means “no problem.” NP, though, can respond to an apology just as well as a thank you: “Sorry, but I’m going to be a few minutes late tonight!” “NP.”

NBD You’ve definitely seen this one all over the Internet and via text, but what does it mean? Well, wonder no more: It’s short for “no big deal.” It’s one of

the most commonly used text abbreviations and fits just about everywhere. You can use it earnestly, as in “Don’t worry about being a few minutes late, it’s NBD!”... or not so earnestly. Next time someone says they can’t make it to your party, you can text back “NBD”—even if you’re silently fuming.

HMU “Hit me up” is an expression that might even need further explanation once you know what the letters stand for. Rather than referring to physical violence, “hit me up” simply means “contact me” or “call me.” It dates back to the days of pagers in the 1990s, when people would send phone numbers to each other via one-way message. The pager would light up and/or make noise to indicate that you’d been “hit up.” The phrase was all over the ’90s hip-hop sphere, and it stuck around when texting abbreviations began to dominate, with the shortened “HMU” becoming the prevailing way to say it in the late 2000s. While pagers are extinct, the abbreviation certainly is not.

OMW If you were supposed to be at dinner 10 minutes ago but you’re still blow-drying your hair, try texting your significant other something like “OMW, see you soon.” OMW means “on my way” and is often used when you’re not even really on your way ... but will be soon.

GOAT This texting acronym doesn’t have anything to do with four-legged horned mammals. GOAT, almost always preceded by “the,” means “greatest of all time.” An acronym that’s been all over social media, GOAT can be used to praise a friend (“Did you see Michelle’s fitness routine? She’s the GOAT!”) or a superstar in a particular field (“Saw the GOAT himself, John Williams, conduct an orchestra last night!”).

TBH This is the twin sister of FWIW, yet another way to politely (or not so politely!) preface a strong or possibly offensive opinion. It means “to be honest.” Try using it when your aunt texts the family [group chat](#) asking who wants to eat tuna casserole at her house tonight. “TBH, tuna casserole is not my fave.” Still, we can’t guarantee that text abbreviations will soften the blow.

IMO/IMHO Another one that can cause the recipient to brace themselves, IMO means “in my opinion.” The strength/controversy of that opinion can vary vastly, though. You can certainly use this one innocuously in pop-culture debates: “IMO, Thanos’s plan was better in *Infinity War* than in *Endgame*.” IMHO is a variation meaning “in my humble opinion.” With the addition of almost-always-sarcastic humility, IMHO is usually a little edgier, as it were. Now that you know these text abbreviations, make sure to brush up on [proper texting etiquette](#) too.

Posted on April 16, 2026 by kate [loop] hannon
Short Story: A Blessing on Every Wave



Hannah sat thoughtfully on the shoreline, just close enough to the ocean for the waves to reach her feet, keeping her cool on the hot summer day. As one wave splashed around her, she noticed a beautiful shell left behind. Instinctively, she grabbed the shell and turned it over in her hands. It was beautiful—an amazing tiny gift that had she not noticed might have slipped back out to sea or been trampled underfoot by one of the many people running in and out of the water.

On the next wave, Hannah noticed another shell—a different kind, but equally amazing. Soon, she had to take her hat off to hold all the shells she'd found. These tiny treasures arrived on every ocean wave, yet Hannah realized she'd never noticed or appreciated them before. Looking around her, it seemed no one else was noticing them either. Could these beautiful gifts have become so taken for granted no one even saw them anymore but rather trampled or ignored them?

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. Lamentations 3:22-23 (ESV)

JULY LFOI NEWSLETTER



Dear parents and guardians,

We hope you had an amazing 4th of July with friends and family!

July 30th is International Friendship month!

Totville News: Greetings from the Infant room!

Happy 1st birthday to Eddie on the 29th!

The children have heard a variety of Bible stories this month. They also enjoy the Bible and other songs. Even though they don't yet sing along, they are learning the actions that go with the songs.

We are working with the children on asking for help when needed, and saying please, thank you, and excused when they are finished eating.

Hopefully, the smoke and extreme temperatures are over so we can get outside again on a daily basis.

Please check your child's cubby. Some of them are overflowing, and things tend to fall on the floor. Only leave what is necessary for your child. Thanks!

"May you be blessed by the Lord, the Maker of Heaven and Earth." -Psalm 115:15

-Denise and Nikki

Toddler Titbits:

The toddler room kids have been doing wonderful with their assigned daily jobs! On our circle time board, we have a list of jobs that they get very excited about doing. These

jobs include line leader, librarian, light helper, fish feeder, teacher helper, meal helper, weather person and media helper. Every day, a child has a different helping job. We have also been working on knowing the current month and days of the week.

Other things we are practicing include shapes, colors, and name identification. We had a birthday this month! Happy Birthday to Lucy! We have had to stay inside multiple days this month. However, we have kept busy with music and movement as well as science/sensory projects! It is amazing watching and helping your children learn and grow!

-Michelle and Lael and Tina

Learner Lane:

Our themes this month included 4th of July, dinosaurs, the beach and the ocean!

Some of our favorite Bible stories this month were David and Goliath, Daniel in the Lion's Den and Jonah and the Big Fish!

We have welcomed Jason to our room this month! We are so happy to have him!

We have recently gotten into the Junie B. Jones series down here and the kids have been loving it!

-Hanna and Kate

UPDATES: Our fundraiser was a complete success! We raised more than our goal! Thank you to everyone who donated, volunteered and stopped by to support us!

We are looking for a cook and/or cleaner positions. If you know of anyone that is looking for 18-22 hours per week and likes to cook and/or clean, please have them reach out!

God Bless,

Tressa Groom, Director

LFOJ WISH LIST/NEEDS

Monthly:

Regular paper towel and/or Tri Fold paper towel
Toilet Paper
Fragrance Free Baby Wipes
Kleenex (facial tissue)
Hand soap (unscented, antibacterial)
Great value brand canned fruits in juice (not syrup)
Natural peanut butter
Parent's choice gentle baby formula (must be iron-fortified)
Beech nut baby food
Ragu spaghetti sauce
Prego alfredo sauce
All natural ketchup (no high fructose corn syrup)
Tomato soup
Graham crackers
Vanilla wafers
Elbow noodles
Foam Tumbling mats
Quart Double Ziplock bags
Gallon Double Ziplock bags
Thin Pretzel sticks
Robot Vacuum (self-emptying)
Plexiglass picture board (kid friendly)
Cordless Vacuum
not syrup)
Natural peanut butter
Parent's choice gentle baby formula (must be iron-fortified)
Beech nut baby food
Ragu spaghetti sauce
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All natural ketchup (no high fructose corn syrup)
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Thin Pretzel sticks
Robot Vacuum (self-emptying)
Plexiglass picture board (kid friendly)
Cordless Vacuum

COOK'S CORNER

Tater Tot Casserole

Ingredients:

1 lb boneless, skinless chicken breasts
cubed
1 tbsp olive oil
garlic salt to taste
1 c sour cream
 $\frac{1}{2}$ c milk
1 $\frac{1}{2}$ -2 lbs frozen tater tots
1 c shredded cheddar cheese divided

Instructions:

In a small bowl, mix sour cream and milk together. Set aside.
Saute chicken in 1 tbsp olive oil. Season with garlic salt. As soon as the chicken is cooked through, remove from heat.
Pour sour cream mixture and $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of cheese over chicken. Mix well.
Pour into an 8x8 baking dish.
Add a single layer of frozen tater tots over the creamy chicken mixture. Top with remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ cup cheese.
Bake at 400 degrees for 20 minutes, until the tots are golden brown and chicken mixture is bubbling.

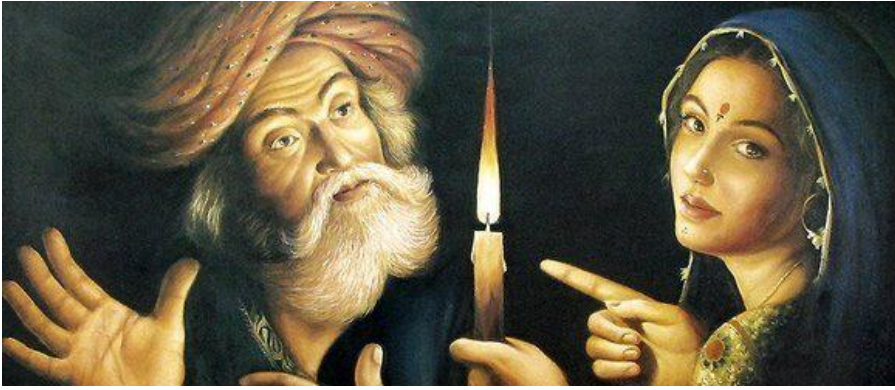
"The elevator to success is out of order. You'll have to use the stairs, one step at a time." – Joe Girard

"You know you're getting old when you stoop to tie your shoelaces and wonder what else you could do while you're down there." – George Burns

"As you get older, three things happen. The first is your memory goes, and I can't remember the other two." – Sir Norman Wisdom

"If I had known I was going to live this long, I'd have taken better care of myself." – Mickey Mantle

Thinking Out of the Box (Creative Thinking)



In a small Italian town, hundreds of years ago, a small business owner owed a large sum of money to a loan-shark. The loan-shark was a very old, unattractive looking guy that just so happened to fancy the business owner's daughter.

He decided to offer the businessman a deal that would completely wipe out the debt he owed him. However, the catch

was that we would only wipe out the debt if he could marry the businessman's daughter.

Needless to say, this proposal was met with a look of disgust.

The loan-shark said that he would place two pebbles into a bag, one white and one black.

The daughter would then have to reach into the bag and pick out a pebble. If it was black, the debt would be wiped, but the loan-shark would then marry her. If it was white, the debt would also be wiped, but the daughter wouldn't have to marry the loan-shark.

Standing on a pebble-strewn path in the businessman's garden, the loan-shark bent over and picked up two pebbles.

Whilst he was picking them up, the daughter noticed that he'd **picked up two black pebbles** and placed them both into the bag.

He then asked the daughter to reach into the bag and pick one.

The daughter naturally had three choices as to what she could have done:

1. Refuse to pick a pebble from the bag.
2. Take both pebbles out of the bag and expose the loan-shark for cheating.
3. Pick a pebble from the bag fully well knowing it was black and sacrifice herself for her father's freedom.

She drew out a pebble from the bag, and before looking at it 'accidentally' dropped it into the midst of the other pebbles. She said to the loan-shark;

"Oh, how clumsy of me. Never mind, if you look into the bag for the one that is left, you will be able to tell which pebble I picked."

The pebble left in the bag is obviously black, and seeing as the loan-shark didn't want to be exposed, he had to play along as if the pebble the daughter dropped was white, and clear her father's debt.

"The elevator to success is out of order. You'll have to use the stairs, one step at a time." – Joe Girard

"You know you're getting old when you stoop to tie your shoelaces and wonder what else you could do while you're down there." – George Burns

"As you get older, three things happen. The first is your memory goes, and I can't remember the other two." – Sir Norman Wisdom

"If I had known I was going to live this long, I'd have taken better care of myself." – Mickey Mantle

Inside every older person is a younger person wondering what happened." – Jennifer Yane

Kyle Sapper received his Masters degree from Viterbo University on May 7, 2026 in Community Medical Dietetics and is now a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist. He is currently living and working in Wayzata, Minnesota



2026

Maggie Reardon

Graduated from UC Boulder with a

PhD in Mathematics May 1, 2026

She has secured an associate math professor position at UW Platteville for Fall 2026.



Gloria Darling will be attending Luther College, Decorah, Iowa

Major in saxophone performance and environmental studies

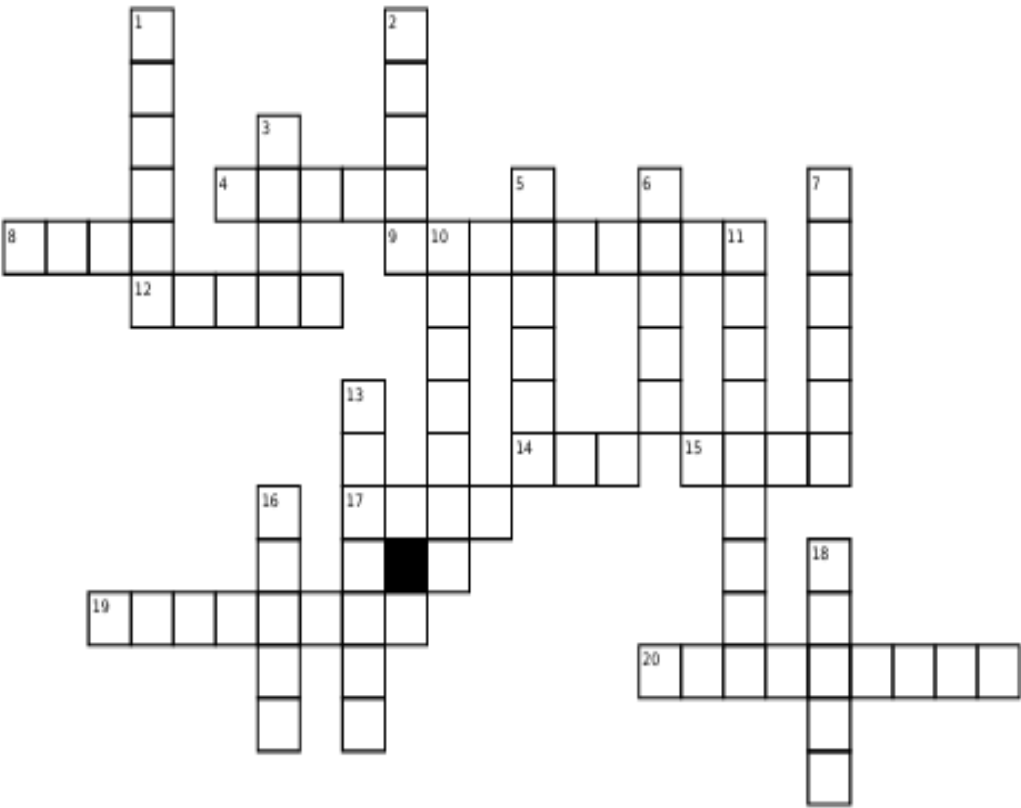
Playing soccer and track & field

Matthew 14:22-33

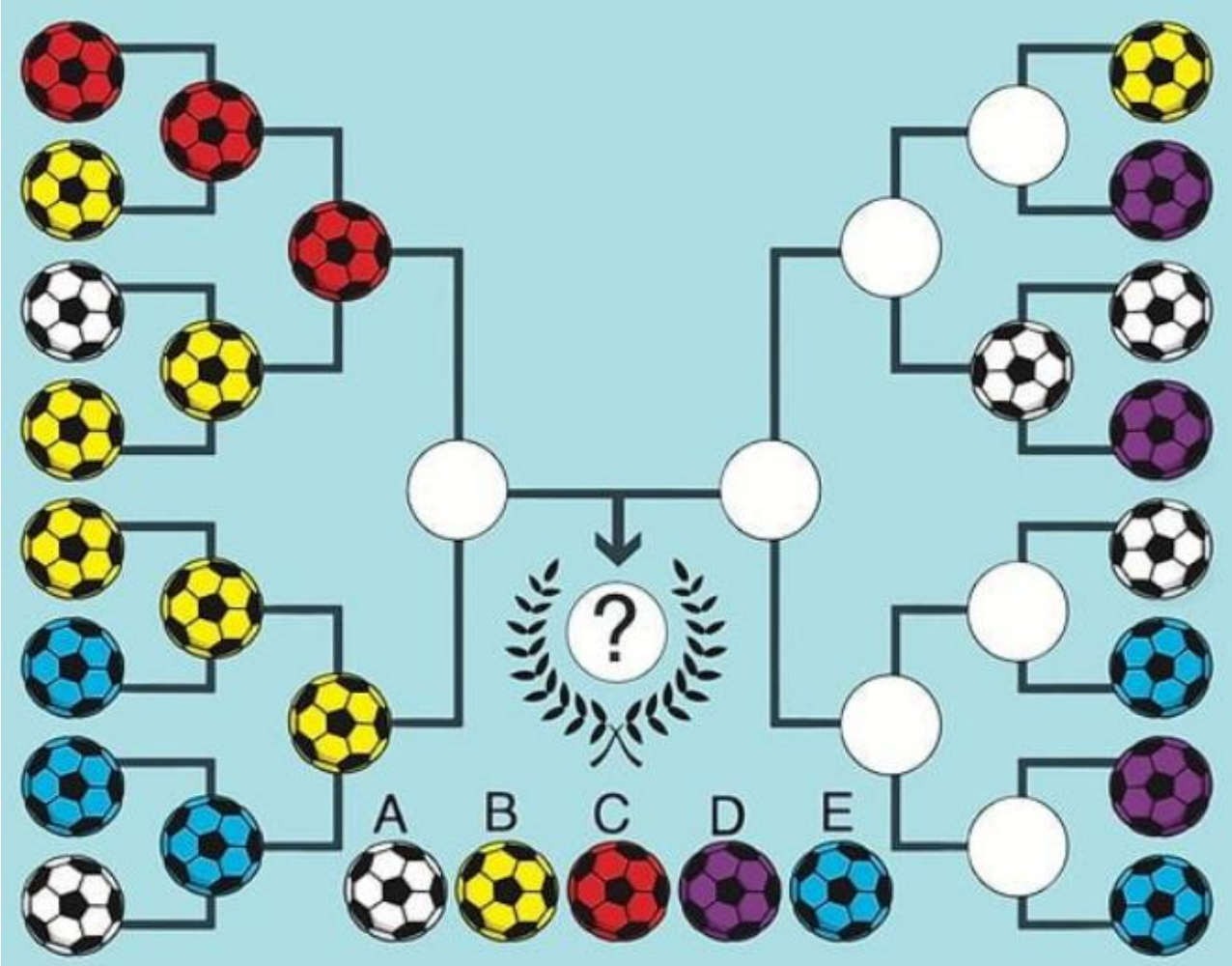
Jesus Walks on Water

- AFRAID
- BOAT
- CRIED
- CROWDS
- DISCIPLES
- DISMISSED
- EVENING
- FEAR
- FOURTH
- GHOST
- HEART
- JESUS
- LAND
- MOUNTAIN
- NIGHT
- SEA
- TERRIFIED
- WALKING
- WATCH
- WIND

?



Which team (A-E) will win the competition if the logic of this diagram is continued?



August



SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
ALTAR GUILD - AUGUST Kim Westman 715-683-6571 Katie Colgrove 715-292-2512 Lynn Ladd 715-292-0592						1
2 10:00am Church Picnic – Prentice Park	3	4 Chocolate Chip Cookie Day	5	6 Root Beer Float Day	7	8 Global Sleep Under the Stars Night
9 9:00am Worship Service 10:15am Bible Study	10	11 Son's and Daughter's Day	12	13 Relaxation Day	14	15
16 9:00am Worship Service 10:15am Bible Study	17 Thrift Shop Day	18	1:00pm Hospice Group Gathering 6:00pm Worship Service	20 9:00am Winkel	21	22 Senior Citizens Day
23 9:00am Worship Service 10:15am Bible Study	24	25 Banana Split Day	26	27 1:30pm Northern Lights	28	29 Thoughtful Day
30 9:00am Worship Service 10:15am Bible Study	31 Eat Outside Day	Elders: JULY [26 Scott] [29 Andy] AUGUST [2 JohnS] [5 Doug] [9 Andy] [12 Randy] [16 Scott] [19 Darryl] [23 JohnP] [26 JohnS] [30 Doud] SEPTEMBER [1 Randy] [6 Andy]				

Team C. The order of the weakest to the strongest team is: D, A, E, B, C. The final match is played between C and B.