



**ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE**  
**FEBRUARY 14 @ 7:00 PM**

*Joint Parish Council will have a  
meeting on  
Tuesday, February 20  
at 6:30pm at Elk Creek*

**Council Meeting is  
Tuesday, February 6  
at 7 p.m.**

Interested in "serving" an  
important role in Lenten  
Services?

We are offering a light supper before  
the 7:00 Lenten Services (typically 30-  
40 people). We are looking for  
individuals or families of all ages to  
help in this important service project.  
Sign up is in the Narthex.

Dates: February 21, 28 and March 6, 13,  
20



**Helpers are needed for the  
Lutefisk & Meatball Supper!**  
**Lots of fun jobs, helpers of all  
ages!**

**Check the sign-up in the  
Narthex ☺**



## Lutefisk & Meatball Supper!

Saturday, February 17<sup>th</sup>

Serving times: 12:30, 2:00, 3:30, and 5:00 pm.

\$20/ticket for lutefisk & meatball meal or \$15/ticket for meatball meal

call Becky Rongstad to reserve your tickets

715-694-2181

The fun begins Friday, Feb 16 at 9 am in the church kitchen. We have our resident lutefisk experts that will be prepping! Saturday, Feb 17 is THE day! Meatball prep begins at 7:00 am and the fun continues throughout the day. There are so many exciting opportunities to take part in from washing dishes to waiting tables! There are tasks appropriate for many ages – young AND old! Sign up is in the church Narthex. It is a great day! Proceeds from this event are used for mission projects local and worldwide.

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*Thank You!*

LaVerne wishes to extend her thanks for the choir singing the Christmas hymns for her during a December service. Also, she enjoyed the Christmas treats provided by the church. So very kind!

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## HAVE YOU BEEN LOOKING FOR A WAY TO CONTRIBUTE TO OUR MISSION PROJECTS?

February we will be collecting “Birthday Box” items:

- Cake mix & frosting
- Birthday candles
- Containers of sprinkles, candies, etc.
- Disposable cake pan
- Party plates/napkins
- Balloons/Streamers
- Small blanket or throw
- Small toy
  - Coloring book/crayons
  - Book
  - Puzzle
  - Game
  - Stuffed animal, etc.



## Elk Creek WELCA Meeting

January 22, 2024

Stephanie opening meeting at 9:10 am with the Creed and Theme Verse. Treasurer's report given: December Income: \$1500.65, Expenses \$7,945.18 (includes ladies portion of the quarterly church utilities) Ending Balance \$3,245.17, Savings balance \$1,457.28. Report was accepted and placed on file.

Secretaries report was read. Correction made to add the amount of \$250 given to Ruth House, Bolten, Sojourner, and Beacon Houses. Amendment to the Lutefisk serving times beginning at 12:30, 2:00, 3:30, and 5 pm. Amendment also to the 2024 Alter Committee Tricia Lyngen (2 yr) for Crystal Johnson. Motion to approve by Stephanie, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Tammy, passed.

### Old Business:

Lutefisk Dinner discussion on additional advertising, will not use Arrow Shopper as they will not match AdDelite pricing. Will also use Volume1, TCC, WTCO, streaming on bank marquees. Will be adding pricing for children (5 and under free, 6-10 \$10.00, 11 and up full price) will also encourage the 5 pm setting as a family setting. Motion by Roseann, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Tammy, passed. Currently ticket numbers: 44 @ 12:30, 30 @ 2:00, 9 @ 3:30, 5 @ 5:00pm.

### New Business:

February Lenten Services; Light meal (6 pm) before service at 7 pm. Ash Wednesday, no meal. Will put a sign-up sheet to serve in Narthex. Checking with Jan on flowers, and Crystal for Ashes needed for Ash Wednesday. Checking if Youth are planning a breakfast for Palm Sunday. Ladies will not be doing one if not done by Youth.

Linda proposed getting an I-Pad with a keyboard for Ladies to do the Treasurer bookkeeping/report on, would also us to house Minutes, and annual ladies booklet, various information such as Lutefisk Dinner, Bazaar, Church in the Barn information. After discussion motion by Tammy for Linda to work with Matt Weaver on this and given approved spending up to \$1000. Motion 2<sup>nd</sup> by Roseann and passed.

Motion by Linda to change the meeting to the first Sunday of the Month at 9am (until service time changes in June, then will have after the service). Lori seconded this, motion passed. The 2024 Ladies books were distributed to those in attendance by Lori. Will have 2 serving groups this year alternating the big events/meals.

Stephanie brought forward needs of a local Veteran. Will check further into bills he may need assistance with. Motion by Tammy to give up to \$200.00 to assist with bills. Prefer to pay on the bill rather than give money. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Lori, motion passed.

Stephanie share the many Thank You's received for donations. All will be posted on bulletin board in basement.

Motion to adjourn by Lori, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Tammy. Meeting adjourned. Closed with Lord's Prayer at 10:15 am.

Barb Fischer, Sec



\$103 has been directed to Elk Creek Lutheran Church from our members. **Thank you** for your contributions.



# Council Notes

Elk Creek Lutheran Church Council Meeting -- January 2, 2024

The meeting was called to order by President Ryan Johnson at 7:00 PM. Members present were: Jan Berg, Mark Blabac, Brian Christopherson, Ryan Johnson, Anson McCune, Lori Nelson, and Stephanie Rumstick.

**Prayer** -- Ryan began by opening with a prayer asking for guidance for the Council and the congregation.

**Secretary's Report** -- It was noted that the Secretary's Report for December of 2023 had been sent to each of the Council members electronically, corrections made, and it had been approved prior to it being printed in the January Newsletter.

**Financial Report** -- was presented by Anson with information provided by Haukeness Financial Service. It was noted that we will be receiving a check from the Joint Parish account for the final balance amount and that we will need to submit one as per the Parish Agreement. Brian made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented; Mark seconded; motion passed.

## Elk Creek Lutheran Church Account

- General Checking Account - \$ 27,112.05
- General [2050 Fund] Savings Account \$ 3,909.71
- Building Fund Checking - \$ 10,588.48
- Memorial Fund - \$ 8,091.77

## Joint Parish Financial Accounts

Assets	Elk Creek	Immanuel	Total
Beginning Balance -	\$ 8,136.64	\$ 7,097.19	\$ 15,233.83
Deposits & Interest -	\$ 0.48	\$ 0.73	\$ 1.21
Payments -	\$ 75.59	\$ 0.00	\$ 75.59
Liabilities & Equity -	\$ 8,061.53	\$ 7,097.19	\$ 15,159.45
Ending Balance -	\$ 8,061.53	\$ 7,097.19	\$ 15,159.45

**WELCA Report** -- Jan and Stephanie noted that planning has begun for the February 17 Lutefisk Supper and that the Women's Group has recently given away money earned from the Bazaar and other events to many causes and charities.

**Choir, Memorial Committee, Youth Group, Sunday School, Custodian, Office Staff, and Joint Parish Council – No Reports**

## Old Business –

- **Parsonage** – Ryan indicated that the water heater at the Parsonage had broken and was leaking. He contacted Semingson Aberle Plumbing LLC which installed a new water heater. It was noted that Matt Weaver and Jim Odness are planning to remove the Stair Lift. Jan made a motion to list the old water and the Stair Lift on Google Marketplace; Stephanie seconded; and the motion passed. Lori noted that before we can rent out the parsonage, we need to have a railing installed on the stairs in the breezeway. This would reduce our liability in the event of any future accident. Ryan will look into getting this constructed.
- **Thank you** – Ryan expressed a Thank you from the Council to Lori Nelson and Tammy Danenberg for organizing the morning service on Christmas Eve.
- **Computer** – Ryan indicated that a computer had been ordered to replace the church's broken one. For various reasons, the computer had been ordered using Ryan's credit card. Brian made a motion to reimburse Ryan for the cost of the computer; Lori seconded; and the motion passed.
- **Pastor Paul Tobiason's Schedule** – It was noted that Pastor Tobiason had requested to take one Sunday off per month. Since Immanuel will be having Communion on the first and third Sunday of each month, Pastor Tobiason's Sunday off will be on the second or fourth Sunday of each month. Matt Weaver has agreed to lead services on the Sundays when Pastor Tobiason is unavailable.

- **Basement Carpet** – Ryan indicated that a suggestion had been made about having the carpeting in the basement professionally cleaned. Following discussion, it was recommended that it not be professionally cleaned until after the Lutfisk Dinner. The issue was tabled until the March meeting.
- **Painting of the Narthex** – It was noted that the Council had earlier approved having Allen Rongstad paint the narthex when he had time available. Since he now had the time, he was asking about the selection of the new paint color for the Narthex. Council members felt that Allen should be in charge of determining this.
- **2024 Budget** – Anson presented the proposed 2024 Budget. Following discussion, Mark made a motion to approve the proposed 2024 Budget and to present it at the Annual Meeting; Brian seconded; and the motion passed.

#### **New Business –**

- **Offering Envelopes / Folders** – Ryan noted that Crystal Johnson had found some offering envelopes and folders and would be putting them out for church members to take. Lori made a motion to authorize Crystal or order additional generic weekly and month Offering Envelopes; Stephanie seconded; and the motion passed. It was noted that the placing of an envelope or two in with the hymnals in each pew might encourage donations as well as make it easier for the Financial Secretary to keep track of all donations made by members – since currently cash donations are not attributed to any individuals.
- **Bills** – Custodian Lindsey Nelson had submitted a bill for replacement parts for a vacuum. Matt Weaver needed to be paid for leading services on December 31. A bill should be arriving very soon from Semingson Aberle Plumbing LLC for the replacement water heater at the parsonage. Stephanie made a motion to pay each of these bills; Brian seconded; and the motion passed.
- **Thank you** – A Thank You from Crystal was read for her Christmas present and for the raise in her annual salary.
- **Heating / Cooling System** – The current heating and cooling system of the church was discussed. Currently the Sanctuary and the dining room in the basement have programmable thermostats, but the narthex, offices, classrooms, and basement hallway do not. This means that each Sunday morning when there is Sunday School, Allen or Becky Rongstad go to the church around 5:30 AM to set the other thermostats so that everyone is comfortable in those rooms by the time they are needed. The installation of alternative thermostats was discussed. Anson was directed to check with an electrician about automating the heating / cooling system and any other systems.

**Next Meeting** – The next Council meeting will be on February 6 at 7 PM.

**Adjournment** – Lori made a motion to adjourn; Anson seconded; motion passed. The meeting was closed at 8:50 PM with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted by Lori Nelson, Recording Secretary



**Lines from LaVerne...** Let's go way back to the beginning. You learn how God spoke creation into existence. He took time to create an idyllic place before he created humans to live there with each other and their creator. God could have created the whole world in one day and everything at once. He created just so much each day, and then he rested. He doesn't need rest, but he chooses to rest. Before there was some, there was nothing, but there was someone, God. He has always existed, and he always will. From out of the depths of love, he created our world. He created human last. Perhaps, because he figured we would try to tell him what to do and how to do it. One thing is very clear, he didn't need our help. But humans are unique and special among God's other creatures. They bear the image of God and we're valued above all of the other creatures. The greatest call of the Christian life is to know God, thank God for his many blessings and help others to know him too.

God decided Adam, whom he had made of dust should have a companion, so he created Eve. These two humans were to live in a beautiful garden. They lived and had the work of managing the garden. There was just one rule. Don't eat the fruit of this one tree. How hard is that? Being sinful like us, old Satan got to them, and they did eat fruit from that tree. The first disobedience toward God, which created a curse as result. Because God was to rule over them. They had this rule, as a reminder that God was in charge. They had lived in unbroken intimacy with God, with each other, and with the world around them. It was an idyllic existence. But

they couldn't seem to stand it. Who does that remind us of? Genesis is written to remind us of what has happened, what God has done and how he has interacted with his presence of human history.

Just think how wonderful this world is. We have four seasons, every year, and the world keeps running. If the creation is this amazing, think how amazing the creator must be. The creator always has the right to determine what becomes the creation. The creation story reveals some of the things that he values. Creativity balanced with order and design. God does not create things willy-nilly. There's a structure to his creation process. He takes his time with no need to hurry. He doesn't waste time, but he is not a slave to the clock. It seems God prefers a rhythm of work and rest to a demanding work schedule. He created just enough each day, and then he rested. He isn't tired, but he chose to rest. He values rest as much as he values work. Humans were special, and they bore the image of God.

Above everything, God values, he seems to prize community. He steps back declares everything is good, but he noticed that Adam should not be alone. So he created Eve and brings a new creation to the garden, the creation of community. In our work, we should rest as well, even if we don't think we need rest. We need to fight for the rights of the unborn and the elderly. Aid to the needy, water for the thirsty, companionship to the lonely and loving our neighbors. God values humans. God rested, and you should too. Have friends over for dinner, enjoy their company. Let them know you value their friendship. Do something for a stranger. Do something out of your comfort zone, volunteer in a soup, kitchen, council, and mother. Show others how much you agree with God that human life and human dignity are worth working for to preserve. Whatever you were doing remember this, it's all worship. The reason you were able to think, speak, walk, draw, plan, rest, breathing, work is because there is a God, who created you for purpose. Oh, Lord, my God, you were exalted above all things we can conceive, or imagine.

*P.S. Have a great New Year. Remember to read your Bible and pray and pray again.*

Your Lay Minister,  
LaVerne

## **Ruby's Pantry**

2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month

4:00-5:30 pm

Osseo Fire Dept (behind Stockmans)

\$25 cash donation

You will receive an abundance of grocery items.

No income or residency requirements.

**VOLUNTEER  
OPPORTUNITY  
at RUBY'S  
PANTRY:**

**Arrive at  
2:30 to  
help  
unload  
and prep**



Details about Easter flowers will be e-mailed separately, shared at worship services, and mentioned on Facebook as details become available.

Recently, some of our church's youth volunteered at The Community Table in Eau Claire. Our youth challenged our congregation to contribute to this local charity - whether donating items on their wishlist or by spending time preparing and serving during their daily meal. Here is their current wishlist (including a great Amazon wishlist that allows you to purchase and ship the items directly to their location).

## **The Community Table's Wishlist:**

Coffee creamer

Paper Towels

Napkins

Sleeping bags

Underwear (men & women)

Travel size:

Body lotion

Deodorant

Shampoo

Conditioner

Amazon Wishlist -

<https://rb.gy/v9oljm>

*Location: 320 Putnam St, PO Box  
1903, Eau Claire, WI 54703*

*715.835.4977*

The Community Table serves hot meals 365 days each year to those in Eau Claire needing food and hospitality. We rely completely on volunteer teams from the community to prepare and serve the hungry.



**Also, as you start your winter purging or spring cleaning, we want to make sure you are aware of another local donation option for some of your household goods. This service offers free home furnishings for veterans in need.**

### **Sofas for Service Donation Requests**

Please call us at [715-309-9663](tel:715-309-9663) in advance to arrange for donation drop-off.

WAREHOUSE. 1630 Spooner Ave. Altoona

Open: Wednesday and Saturday mornings (from 9:30 - 11:30 am)

Email: [SofasForService@outlook.com](mailto:SofasForService@outlook.com).

#### **What To Donate – NEW or Gently Used:**

\*\* Items MUST be free from smoke, pet odors and pet hair (to avoid allergic reactions)

##### **BEDROOM**

Queen, Full or Twin Bed  
Queen, Full or Twin Bedding (New in Package)  
Dresser (Not Over Large or Heavy)  
Night Stand  
Lamps

##### **LIVING ROOM**

Sofa – 84” or less (No: Recliner, Sleeper, Floral, Stained or Pets)  
Love Seat (Not Recliner, Sleeper, Floral, Stained or Pets)  
Recliner (Not Floral, Stained or Pets)  
Glider Rocker – With or Without Ottoman (Not Floral, Stained or Pets)  
Bookshelf – 36” Wide or Less  
Wooden TV Tray (Not Metal)  
End Table (Not Glass)  
Flat Screen TV with Remote  
TV Stand

##### **KITCHEN**

Kitchen Table – Seats 2-4 Without Leaves in Place (No Double Pedestal Tables)  
Wooden Kitchen Chairs (Not Metal or With Wheels)  
Microwave

Small Appliances - Crock Pot, Coffee Maker, Toaster, Blender, George Foreman Grill, Electric Mixer (Please Not Crepe Maker, Air Fryer, Juicer, Rotisserie Oven, Waffle Iron)

Kitchen Utensils – Flipper, Rubber Spatula, Tongs, Potato Masher, Whisk, Serving Spoon, etc.  
Manual Can Opener  
Measuring Cups  
Measuring Spoons  
Steak Knives  
Silverware  
Kitchen Drinking Glasses  
Mixing Bowl  
Colander / Strainer  
Cutting Board  
Casserole Dish  
Cake Pan / Baking Dish – 9x13 or 8x8  
Cookie Sheet / Baking Pan  
Muffin Tin  
Pie Tin/Plate  
Loaf Pan  
Oven Mitts  
Kitchen Towels

##### **MISCELLANEOUS**

Vacuum Cleaner  
Air Conditioner (New in Box)  
Fan  
Ironing Board  
Iron  
Laundry Basket  
Bath Towels  
Waste Basket  
Snow Shovel