

A Lenten Challenge

Up until February, the season of winter looked like it was going to be a breeze to move through. While at times winter became extremely cold, it didn't last too long and I could still move around pretty well, up and down the hills and around the curves. Then, came the snow, and more snow, over 45 inches of snow that piled up so high that I get to edge slowly around corners slip-sliding on Wisconsin's version of the "luge."

February has been the snowiest month on record. Except for this last Sunday, the snow didn't affect the Sunday worship schedule. For school, both public and private, the snowiest month on record means that snow days are used up and school time will have to be made up by adding more time to each school day, or using scheduled off days to have class or push it all to the end of the school year and add more days into June and summer vacation.

But alas, here comes March; windy, wintery, blustery, melty, springy March that can bring a variety of weather challenges for all of us. AND, this year March begins with the church season we call Lent. It's a good four-letter word that means "SPRING". As the days get longer with more sunshine and southern breezes, the snow will melt away, and the Robins will return, and the earth will begin to thaw and warm to ready itself for seed and new growth and green grass. So too, during Lent, our hearts can turn to God for the warmth of grace the forgiveness of our sins, and the bursting forth with new growth and vitality.

Lent begins with **Parish Ash Wednesday services on March 6th; 1:00p.m., @ Elk Creek & 6:30p.m @ Immanuel.** Choose the one that works for you and your family. Then, for the Midweek Lenten services we will have a church version of "Dinner Theater". For 5 weeks we will gather around tables and experiment with "**Lenten Supper Worship**". This means we will eat and worship at the same time. Songs, prayers, eating and drinking will happen as we hear God's Word opening our hearts to the grace of Christ. The Mid-week Lenten schedule is **5:15p.m. @ Immanuel and 6:30p.m. @ Elk Creek.**

There are four disciplines or spiritual practices that will guide our time during Lent:

- 1) Repentance** – Turn to God's grace through Jesus Christ.
- 2) Prayer and Fasting** – Deny ourselves for the sake of others.
- 3) Sacrificial Giving** – Support our neighbors in need.
- 4) Works of Love** – Take hold of God's promise in joy & gratitude. Each week we will focus on stories/projects of the ELCA World Hunger P including questions for conversation or reflection around the supper table.

Finally, my **Lenten Challenge** for your family is to set aside \$2/day for 40 days as a gift to help those locally and globally who face hunger and poverty every day. Put it in a quart jar & bring to worship on Palm Sunday. **Rev. Ahles**

Sunday, March 24 we are designating as
“Baby Care Kit” Sunday! Start collecting items for these
kits and bring them to church on the 24th:

- 1 jacket, sweater, or sweatshirt with hood or cap
- 2 cotton t-shirts or onesies
- 2 receiving blankets
- 2 pair socks
- 2 bath-size bars of soap
- 2 gowns without feet
- 4 cloth diapers
- 1 hand towel (dark)
- 2 diaper pins or large safety pins

**Council
Meeting is
Tuesday, March 5
at 7 p.m.**



Sunday School News

March 3 – Sunday School @ 9:45 am
March 10 – Kids sing @ 8:30 am service
~~~~Sunday School @ 9:45 am
March 17 – Sunday School @ 9:45 am
March 24 – Sunday School @ 9:45 am
March 31 – Sunday School @ 9:45 am

FOOD PANTRY
THE FOOD PANTRY COLLECTION
IS THE 2ND SUNDAY OF THE
MONTH.

~~Lenten Service Schedule~~

Wednesday, March 6 – Ash Wednesday @ 1 pm *(if this time does not work for you, you are invited to attend the service at Immanuel at 6:30 pm)*

Wednesday, March 13 – Lenten Service with light supper @ 6:30 pm

Wednesday, March 20 – Lenten Service with light supper @ 6:30 pm

Wednesday, March 27 – Lenten Service with light supper @ 6:30 pm

Wednesday, April 3 - Lenten Service with light supper @ 6:30 pm

Wednesday, April 10 - Lenten Service with light supper @ 6:30 pm

Lines from LaVerne... Have you ever even thought of a perfect life and a perfect world? Anyone who has ever tried that has failed. It is a big waste of time and will make you feel worse about yourself. We live in a world where people want to have so-called perfect lives, and perfect bodies and clothes and homes and cars, love lives and children. This is always an illusion because who can compete with perfection especially when it doesn't exist. Human beings are not perfect. That's what it means to be human so do not deplete your energy and self-worth by chasing perfection. It's like a pot of gold at the end of a rainbow. It doesn't exist. What we need is a meaningful life. This requires forgiveness of our self for our imperfections. Also, forgiveness for others. A meaningful life is full of victories and mistakes, up and downs, right and wrong, dark and light. Life isn't a straight path to the winner's circle. There are so many twists and turns and we go round and round. If you go the wrong way you may have to start over. Then if you go the wrong direction, you may have to start over again. That's what they call experience and learning. We should not keep on making the same mistakes over and over again. We confess our mistakes and learn from them. We can make choices. Work hard for the good things in life and don't do anything stupid. Realize perhaps you are ok just the way you are. Do not compare yourself to others. God created you and He will guide you. You are actually helping to spread the Kingdom of God to all. Just imagine what heaven is going to be like. You will be reunited with all those you love and they will love you more than before. The happiest moment of your life cannot even come close to the beauty and happiness of heaven. You will be united with Jesus Christ in glory and you will see God. Paul tells us (I Corinthians 2:9) that, "Eye has not seen, ear has not heard nor has it entered into the heart of man, what God has prepared for those who love him." Jesus asks us to help him bring our brothers and sister to heaven. By seeing kindness, sharing, patience and cheerfulness, they will be drawn to Christ. As Christians, if we can do this, others will want to be Christians too. Matthew 24:42 says: Watch therefore, for you do not know what day your Lord is coming. Are you ready? If you want to get to know Jesus Christ more and more you have to trust him. Not just for salvation but for every day lives. Many Christians find that their lives are boring because they do not trust Jesus. Jesus said, "Launch out into the deep, love your enemies, give and it shall be given unto you, go ye into all the world. First be reconciled to your brother. All these things cannot be done in our own strength. To know Christ is to trust Christ and to trust Christ is to know Christ. Paul said, "I'm going to go on spending time with my Lord by talking to him and trusting him, knowing full well, that as I do I will get to know Him more and more as the days go by. There are no shortcuts in knowing Christ. It will take time. It will take talking to him and it will take trusting him. There is no easy road. How well do you know Christ? We need to spend more time in prayer.

Your Lay Minister, LaVerne

The Women of Elk Creek Lutheran Church designated February, 24th as "Fabric Care Kit" Sunday. Our members donated 168 pairs of socks: 46 men's, 31 women's and 91 youth! WOW! Thank you to everyone that made our first Mission Kit Sunday successful.



The Elk Creek Cemetery Association gratefully acknowledges the gifts from the following people:

\$5,000 from Kathy and David Quarne in memory of Marvin and Helen Thompson

\$5,000 from Joanne Shoemaker

\$2,000 from Bob and Mary Gunderson

Many, many thanks to all the individuals that played a role in our annual Lutefisk Supper. From the monetary and food donations to the 439 tickets that were sold to the vast number of helpers that peeled, rolled, cooked, mashed, washed, served, ate and cleaned up - - - well, our thanks is unending. Simply awe-inspiring to see so many of our members, young and old alike, working together to host an event that folks from near and far come to enjoy.

“Unofficial” 2019 Lutefisk Supper details:

Income:

Ticket sales	\$6,585
Monetary donations	\$1,060
Cookbooks	\$160
Leftover food sales	<u>\$210.10</u>
Total Income	\$8,015.10

Expenses:

Indianhead	\$138.16
Supplies	\$84.24
Walmart Supplies	\$66.91
*Meatballs	\$430
*Lutefisk	\$1,235
Lefse	<u>\$459.20</u>
Total Expenses	\$2,413.51

2019 Profit \$ **5,601.59**

*Denotes Thrivent Grant of \$250 for each of these items.

Additionally-- MANY donations of items for the meal from members--ice, milk, butter, chutney, desserts, coffee, potatoes, rutabagas, cabbage & cole slaw ingredients, coolers, roasters, Advertising, etc.

2018 Figures

Total Income: **\$7,501.75**

Total Expenses: **\$2,312.58**

Profit: **\$5,189.07**

1/27/19 Elk Creek Annual Congregational Meeting for the year of 2018 (Unapproved)

The meeting was called to order by President Steve Ebert at 10:30 p.m. There were 37 members in attendance. Pastor led us in devotions & prayer with readings from Jeremiah 29:11. He encourages to remember that wherever we find ourselves in our journey of life God has our back no matter what is to come. *For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. (Jer. 29:11.)* He will restore the fortune of our lives - - the Lord goes with us wherever we go.

Pastor's Report

- Baptisms - 4; Funerals – 3 for members, 5 for nonmembers New Members – 3
- Pastor shared that despite the loss of his son's it is in our support and love that his family as well as others in the congregation are able to go on. It is also GOD who gives us **A Future With HOPE**.
- He commended all for all the accomplishments in 2018 which included special worships services, fund raisers such as the Lutefisk dinner and the bazaar. All of these along with others not mentioned are evidence of our trust in God who gives us **A Future With Hope**
- He encourages us to look forward to 2019 with attention to worshiping together with GOD through the beloved son, Jesus Christ.

Secretary's Report was not read aloud, instead proposed by Linda Odness forgo reading the minutes aloud instead enter and approve them as printed in the annual report. Motion to accept by Lynn Nelson; 2nd by Jan Berg, Motion approved.

Treasurer's Report (General Fund / Building Fund) was presented and reviewed by Brandi Berg.

Total Income for 2017 - \$80,290.05	Total Expenses for 2017 - \$76,117.07	Ending Balance for 2017 - \$21,137.19
Building Fund Checking - \$5,246.99	Memorial Fund - \$3,313.10	Building Fund CD 2 - CLOSED
Church Savings- \$14,362.40	2020 Fund - \$35,397.42	

Brandi shared a categorized report of the Parish Shared Expenses including Pastoral compensation, operating (home related bills), benefits and ministry aid and Pastoral contracts (supply pastors).

Motion to approve General Fund and Building Fund Reports was made by Bruce Thompson, 2nd by Harlan Vold motion carried.

Auditing Committee: Becky Rongstad shared the audit went well and commended Brandi on her thorough and complete job as treasurer. Auditing committee recommended that going forward any loose offerings should be reordered and entered into the books prior to being dispersed.

President's Report given by Steve Ebert

- Steve thanked all those who will be leaving the council for their service.
- He also shared that the blacktop project went well and is completed, extending a **HUGE** thank you to Nate Rongstad for his donation of material and man power to redo the concrete at the parsonage.

Following reports were presented as informational as part of the printed annual meeting:

WELCA: presented by Lynn Nelson.

Total Income - \$ 20, 812.24	Total Expenses - \$28,216.06	Ending Balance - \$880.31
Max Rate Savings \$4,445.44	Seminary Fund - \$10,238.63	

WELCA Mission Report was submitted by Jan Berg:

- Sent to Lutheran World Relief: 48 quilts, 21 school kits, 11 baby kits, 8 health kits and 8 sewing kits.
- Home Mission: 13 journey backpacks, hygiene kits to Western Dairyland and 27 quilts to various individuals and programs.
- 8 cases of diapers to Our Saviors Lutheran Church-Whitehall

Following Reports were printed in the annual report as informational with no votes taken:

CIA Youth Group – presented by Kellen Nelson. Total Income - \$1,046.59; Total Expenses - \$0 Ending balance - \$4986.26

Choir: presented by Lynn Nelson; Income-\$370.89, Expenses - \$403.84; Ending balance \$860.96

Memorial Fund: presented by Becky Rongstad. Memorials were given to various church organizations in memory of the following individuals: Janet Kindschy, Nancy Pinch, Aaron Ahles-Iverson, Roger Rumstick, David Berg, Ann Garthus, Edward Schaefer, Clarence Maug, and Irma Pederson

Sunday school – Report provided by Trisha Lyngen; Current checking balance \$2391.73. Savings account at Pigeon Falls Bank CLOSED

Operating Budget and Building Fund Budget for 2019 were presented by Brandi Berg. Leonard Robinson made a motion to approve the general fund and building fund budgets as presented; 2nd by Mike Nelson. Motion approved.

Election of Officers – the following officers were presented for election for 2019.

Council Positions:

Jim Odness (1 yr.)	Cedric Anderson (3 yr.)	Brandi Berg (3 yr.)
Tim Radatz (2 yr.)	Stephanie Rumstick (3 yr.)	Tom Johnson (2 yr.)
Linda Odness (1 yr.)	Bruce Thompson (1 yr.)	Keith Nelson (1 yr.)

WELCA Rep. Becky Rongstad/Barb Fischer

WORSHIP APPOINTED POSITIONS

Memorial Secretary

Becky Rongstad

Board of Education

Amber Radatz
LaYona Manka
Nicole Johnson
Nicole Swett

Auditing Committee_____

Leonard Robinson (1 yr.)
Rhonda Koval (2 yr.)
Pam Johnson (3 yr.)

Head Greeter/Usher

Church Secretary

Stewardship Committee

Steve Johnson
Jan Berg
Mary Dubiel

Music Committee

Bonnie Johnson
Tammy Danenberg
Becky Rongstad

Joint Parish Board

Becky Rongstad (1 yr.)
Pam Johnson (2 yr.)
Steve Ebert (3 yr.)

Memorial Committee

Deb Ebert
Mary Dubiel

Nominating Committee

Brian Christopherson (1 yr.)
Kellen Nelson (2 yr.)
Bill Danenberg (3 yr.)
Jim Odness

Worship Ministry

Henry Filla (1 yr.)
David Lyngen (1 yr.)
Jan Berg (2 yr.)
Rhonda Koval (2 yr.)

Stephanie Rumstick made a motion to cast a unanimous vote for all members on the ballot. Second by Brandi Berg, motion approved with a unanimous vote.

Old Business

- Parking Lot was completed and paid for and looks great.

New Business

- Discussion was held regarding what type of materials to use for replacing the roof on the church. After much discussion it was decided that the council would gather bids for asphalt and steel roof products and then present proposal to the congregation with action tabled at this time. Plan is to take action once bids can be presented.
- If anyone is interested in organizing a fund raiser for the parking lot simply present it to the council and we can get it moving forward.
- A motion was made by Linda Odness to rename the 2020 Fund to the 2050 Fund, 2nd by Pam Johnson, motion carried
- Brandi made a motion to open a Memorial Fund Checking Account, 2nd by Jan Berg, motion carried.
- Motion to recess was made by Mike Nelson, 2nd by Rosanne Thompson: Motion approved. We recessed at 12:00 p.m. and we closed with the Lord's Prayer. Respectfully submitted by Linda Odness, Recording Secretary.

One Reason to Give

There are several reasons to give from my financial resources for the ministry of the Church. My giving helps pay for the electric, gas, insurance, and other supplies (paper, cleaners, hand soap, etc.) for the Church. My giving helps pay the salaries and benefits of the church staff as they work to keep the ministries of the Church running smoothly and efficiently. My giving helps provide financial resources for the Sunday School and youth activities, choir, and the work of the ELCA as a churchwide ministry that begins with the local congregations of the Northwestern Wisconsin Synod.

Yet, there is only **One Reason to Give**. I give to the church because my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ sacrificed his life for me and all people of the world, so that our relationship with God is restored and renewed forever. Because Jesus gave his life for all, therefore I give to the mission and ministry of the whole Church on earth. My giving starts with Jesus Christ and continues through Immanuel and Elk Creek Lutheran Churches, Northwestern Wisconsin Synod, and the churchwide expression of the ELCA.

Currently, I am behind in my giving for 2019. Because Jesus sacrificed his life for me and all the people of the world, therefore, during Lent and Holy Week, I will discipline myself to catch up.

I invite all of you to give to the Church for one reason only: Because Jesus Christ sacrificed his life for all of us, so that our relationship with God is restored. ***“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. “Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. (John 3:16-17)***

Rev. Ahles

EASTER PLANTS

In MEMORY or HONOR of _____

From: _____

	How Many?		How Many?
Lily	\$12.00 _____	Tulips	\$12.00 _____
Daffodils	\$12.00 _____	Spring Garden	\$28.00 _____
Hyacinth	\$12.00 _____		

Plant orders are due by Sunday, April 3, 2019. You may put the order form along with payment (checks payable to Elk Creek Lutheran Church)

In the offering plate OR mail to:

Linda Odness (597-6056)
W15851 Hwy 10
Fairchild, WI 54741

PLEASE REMEMBER TO TAKE YOUR PLANTS AFTER THE EASTER SERVICE