



Until further notice, church services will be livestreamed.

<http://www.immanuel-strum.com/livestream.html>



If you are not able to watch live, the services are recorded there to view at your convenience.



Dear members of Elk Creek Lutheran Church,

As President of our congregation I wanted to give you an update on a Paycheck Protection Program loan (which will act like a grant for paying pastor and utilities) that was applied for and granted for our joint parish with Immanuel in Strum. This would cover pastor's compensation and benefits for 8 weeks plus utilities. I was looking into it knowing we had to act fast because of limited funds for this program so this was not discussed in a normal meeting because of the Covid 19 restrictions. Emails to fellow council members about this were exchanged and after seeing the checklist of things to submit with the application it was determined it would be best to be submitted from the joint account that pays Pastor and the joint expenses. Emails to the bank were exchanged and I found out some other churches were applying as well. After emailing the President of the Joint Parish Board, Tom Wagner, it was determined that it would be beneficial to our congregations. Knowing this Covid 19 virus is the reason for us not to gather together and public worship shutting down, I figured we might as well apply. With assistance from Karin Backs - Haukeness Financial, I applied and the process went smoothly.

We are all trying to navigate this pandemic together but at a distance. We possibly feel alone or at a distance. Everyone is valuable to our congregation and the greater purpose of the church is to stay connected during this time, which has been hard. One of the most difficult parts of the Christian life is the fact that becoming a disciple of Christ does not make us immune to life's trials and tribulations. The way trials accomplish this is explained in 1 Peter 1:6-7: "In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which perishes, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ." The true believer's faith will be made sure by the trials we experience so that we can rest in the knowledge that it is real and will last forever.

Trials develop godly character and that enables us to "rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us" (Romans 5:3-5).

I hope all of you are staying healthy and as my late grandma Kindschy would say during rough times "this too shall pass". So I'll say, "this too shall pass", and hope we will be able to gather together soon. Feel free to contact any members of council as we want to help during this time of need.

Keith Nelson

What's the New Normal?!

We are now into the second month of “staying at home” due to Covid-19. It's hard to imagine that this could go on this long without some indication that life can get back to normal. As more and more people head toward the unemployment lines, I become more fearful of what this will lead to down the road. What changes are coming that will change how we work, play, worship, and celebrate together? Will we have to wear masks all the time no matter what? Will social distancing become the new normal so that embracing (like a hug) will be done only with our eyes while our arms are wrapped around ourselves? Will those who are most vulnerable (like the elderly) or disabled physically or emotionally be the ones who are expendable? Will families be able to be with their loved ones when they are dying or when they are burying them? Will some segments of our population be ostracized because they are Chinese in origin? Some believe China is responsible for this pandemic. Will those who are excessively wealthy be asked to let go of their wealth so that everyone will have what they need to survive every day receiving food, clothing, shelter, and adequate healthcare? AND, this doesn't even begin to get at the enormous stress this puts on healthcare workers and others who daily have to be treating and caring for Covid-19 patients. **What is the New Normal** coming for all of us?

For three years the disciples of Jesus were taught by Him about the way to live life in the kingdom of God. They were taught to feed the hungry, care for the sick, provide shelter to the homeless, treat those different from them as people loved by God, unconditionally. The disciples were taught to love one another just as Jesus loved them so that by their love for one another, they would bear witness to the love Jesus had for them. The disciples felt hopeful and excited that soon the world would be turned upside down, so oppressive regimes like the Romans would be toppled.

Then, Jesus was crucified and laid in a tomb. Life with Jesus as it was, came to a crashing halt. What would be the New Normal for them? Some of the women saw where they laid Jesus and returned after the Sabbath to finish the burial. The body of Jesus was gone. He had been raised up by the power of God. Soon reports came in that some had seen Jesus. The disciples themselves were together in the upper room when Jesus appeared before them asking for some fish to eat. Two had been walking on the road to Emmaus when a stranger came along and was listening and talking to them about Moses and the prophets. Their eyes were opened when Jesus broke bread with them. As their hearts burned within them, what would become “normal” for them?

Not long after these appearances, the disciples go to Galilee where they see Jesus for the last time before he ascends into heaven. Some of the disciples worshipped Jesus; some still doubted him. While there was uncertainty, doubts and fears of what was coming next, Jesus gives them their **New Normal**: Baptize all nations in God's name (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) and teach them to obey everything He commanded them.

“Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have

commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (Mt. 28:16-20)

Now, I don't know what the "New Normal" will be for us as we move forward in this world-wide pandemic. There will be changes that we will all have to adjust to. Yet, this I do know, the **New Normal** will include the command to **Go! Make disciples! Baptize and teach everything Jesus has commanded.**

Pastor Ahles



"CURDS FOR KIDS"

CONNECTING THE DOTS FOR FARMERS AND FAMILIES

Most of you have probably heard the heartbreaking news that dairy farmers are being forced to dump milk as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. This is such a travesty in the Dairy State, especially considering that there are hungry children in our communities. Well, the Holy Spirit is moving in our congregation (and beyond!) to do something about it.

"Curds for Kids" is a new outreach ministry of Peace Lutheran of Pigeon Falls that "connects the dots" between these two problems. This program uses donations to purchase cheese curds from area creameries and donates them to schools to be distributed through weekly school nutrition programs.

Fellow congregations in the area, thank you for helping spread the word, donating funds, or praying. Our Facebook page is Curds for Kids, and a click on SHOP NOW will take you to our donations page. Our donations page is www.curdsforkids.org (choose Trempealeau County in the drop down.) **Our communities are supporting this project with overwhelming generosity. Thank you for what you are doing to support dairy farmers and kids.**

We currently support five schools in our greater community: Whitehall, Arcadia, Independence, Blair-Taylor and Osseo. We hope GET will join soon, and Eleva-Strum is currently being supported directly by Eleva Lutheran church. We have 2 sponsors (\$3,500 plus), Peace Lutheran and Oakwood Bank, and hope to recruit more. Our goal is to continue through summer nutrition programs and to include more food pantries. In order to continue, we need to broaden our financial support in other communities within Trempealeau county. In addition, we are open to helping other counties replicate the idea and, in that way, help more farmers and more kids. Please spread the word!

Please do not hesitate to reach out to us if you would like any more information:

Jackie Goplin 715-533-2363 Beth Stay 608-386-7274

Peace Lutheran of Pigeon Falls

THANK YOU!

Many thanks to Dan Gray and Brian Christopherson for replacing the garage door opener at the parsonage. 😊



Mark your calendar!

Church service time will change in June.

Starting on Sunday, June 7 (or whenever church resumes), service will start at 8:30 am

As we won't be meeting together for an unknown time, here are the people we have been lifting up to God's care from the weekly bulletin. Please include them in your prayers.

Mike Szydel
 Harry Baker
 Ruth Fischer
 Bella
 Shane Giacomino
 Jean L.
 Younge
 Sharon Ovre

Audrey Harnisch
 Gary Karlstad
 Beverly Peterson
 Kathy & Amelia
 Hunter Miner
 Patty Tornow,
 Jim & Anita Goplin
 Mike Nelson

Ken Tubbs
 John Nichols
 Paul Hable
 Art Zwiefelhofer
 Finley McCune
 Jeannine



We would like to remind you as Thrivent members that you have the option to direct your

Choice Dollars to Elk Creek Lutheran Church.
 Recent deposits made to Elk Creek Lutheran Church.
April deposits: \$306.00.

Don't forget about our upcoming
WEDDING SHOW.

June 27 at 1+

Tea and light refreshments. We are having wedding dresses to show. Submit your dresses to Tammy Danenberg to submit a dress.

POSTPONED!

Motherhood takes...
 the strength of Samson,
 the wisdom of Solomon,
 the patience of Job,
 the faith of Abraham,
 the insight of Daniel
 and the courage of David!

© MothersQuotes.com



Lines from LaVerne... The Lord's Prayer...(continued from last month)

Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Matthew 6:14-15 records Jesus explaining this petition by saying ***“For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”*** Jesus gave his life for everyone, everywhere, for all time. God intends his grace to journey through us peacefully. When we reject forgiveness for others, we reject our own forgiveness in Christ.



The doctrine of the forgiveness of sins is the most important of all; both for us personally and for our relationships with others. Christ continually bears with us in his kingdom and forgives us all sorts of faults. Likewise, we should forgive one another in every situation and in every way. The apostle Paul put it this way, ***“Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.” (Colossians 3:13)*** Put aside resentment and anger. The river of love is forgiveness. It is set free by dislodging guilt and it flushes out rumors, miss-understanding, gossip and grouchiness.

Now, what happens when grace flows through you and me into those around us? Isn't there joy or something like it? Not until we are made whole by God will we know peace and freedom. Put away the remembrance of the heartache and in its place put reconciliation. Remember the lesson learned, but no longer live the agony. You have given it (*the heartache*) away to God in Christ who gives you peace. We should be more careful for our souls than for our bodies; more open for grace than for daily bread; and more desirous to have our souls saved than for our bodies fed. Live in forgiveness and let grace flow by letting go of resentment. The grace of God will drench you with such refreshing joy that you will know again the powerful wonder of forgiveness.

Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil



The intent of the Lord's Prayer is to make disciples ready for difficulty, persecution, and turmoil. It is a journey through life that surely isn't always smooth but can be bumpy, pothole filled and dangerous. By patience and true humbleness, we become stronger and happier than our enemies. When tempted, it is not God tempting us for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone. If we are tempted, it is because of our own evil desires.

The Greek word Jesus uses for temptation means something other than being lured into sin. In the New Testament it means to test our strength, our loyalty and our ability for service. Jesus taught his disciples to pray this prayer because he knew the way ahead would be rough. He reminds us to deny ourselves, take up our cross daily and follow Him. (*Luke 9:23*) Jesus said, “No one comes to the Father except through me” (*John 14:6*)

We must not think that we can overcome these trials by ourselves. The devil may tempt us spiritually and physically, but he is not able to pluck us out of the hand of the Son of God. God is faithful and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength. We ask God to deliver us from evil—the devil, for the evil in the world has a source. We pray that we may be delivered from Satan’s most heinous evil, from hell itself, as well as selfishness here.

Cast all your anxiety on Jesus, because he cares for you. Be self-controlled and alert! The devil prowls around like a roaring Lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him by standing firm in your faith in Jesus Christ. Be strong in the Lord and his mighty power. Those who meet life’s storms with God’s Gospel ringing in their ears and hearts, will not falter. They hang on to God’s promises. Our journey is with Christ leading us through the narrow places easier than the broad ways that lead to destruction. Yield to no one but Him.

Thine is the Kingdom and the Power and the Glory forever and ever, Amen.

We speak of the kingdom and we joyfully give thanks to the Father who has qualified us to share in his inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light. He has rescued us from the darkness and brought us into the kingdom of his Son. The “*Kingdom*” is God’s rule in heaven and on earth as well as in the hearts of his believers. The “*Power*” of God refers to making known his will in heaven and on earth. The “*Glory*” is in who God is through his beloved Son Jesus who suffered, died and was raised from the dead. The final word, “*Amen*” means it shall be so. We are “Amen People” affirming Christ and his Gospel together with the Father and the Holy Spirit whose grace redeems us.

As you pray the Lord’s Prayer today, look to Jesus whose death on the cross atones for our sins and enables us to be with him forever and ever. God’s love for us not only sent Jesus to the cross, God’s love for us raised Jesus from the tomb in triumphant glory. Let us sing praises to Our Father in heaven as long as we live. Praise the Lord, O my soul! Praise the Lord. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever.

Your Lay Minister,

LaVerne

P.S. Stand firm in your faith. Show love and kindness to all. Life is short.



Lutheran
World
Relief

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

May we will be collecting Birthday Box items:

- Cake mix
- Frosting
- Candles
- Disposable cake pan
- Party plates/napkins
- Small toy
 - Book
 - Puzzle
 - Stuffed animal, etc.

Dear Members of Elk Creek Lutheran,

As you may remember back at the beginning of Lent, I challenged all the family units of the congregation to set aside \$2 a day for the 40 days of Lent, as a Hunger Offering to be given to a local food bank and the ELCA Hunger program that alleviates hunger at home and abroad. We were supposed to bring our offerings and turn them in on Easter Sunday. Then, Covid-19 interrupted everything and I forgot about this hunger offering. (I'm sorry for forgetting.) Tom Wagner and Pam Johnson brought it to my attention.

So, here is how we will proceed.

- 1) Write a check out to "Elk Creek Lutheran Church" for the amount of your \$2/day Lenten offering(40days x 2).
- 2) Place in an envelope marked "Lenten Hunger Offering" and then drop off at church, or mail to the church.
- 3) The church council will decide how to disburse the funds to local food banks, Feed My People, ELCA Hunger Program, or other helping organizations that care for people suffering because of loss of employment.

Thank you for your willingness to reach out and help as you are able. God bless you today and protect you from coronavirus.

In Jesus Christ Our Savior and Risen Lord,

Pr. Ahles



A HUGE "thank you" to Pam (and her driver, Steve!) for printing and distributing Sunday School materials for the kids.
We are blessed to have such caring people in our congregation. Many thanks to you!

Council Members' Contact Information

| | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| Rev. Valerian Ahles | 715-533-0939 |
| | 715-694-2427 |
| Keith Nelson | 715-797-6475 |
| Cedric Anderson | 715-597-2239 |
| Lori Nelson | 715-200-2223 |
| Anson McCune | 715-533-1982 |
| Becky Rongstad | 715-694-2181 |
| Stephanie Rumstick | 715-694-2425 |
| Jan Berg | 715-694-2275 |
| Rhonda Koval | 715-530-1327 |
| Lindsey Nelson | 715-533-0008 |
| Tom Johnson | 715-597-3407 |
| Tim Radatz | 608-443-6587 |
| Church | 715-694-2187 |

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