



Mark your calendar!
Worship time will change in June!
Starting on Sunday, June 6, church will start
at 10:30 am.

The Easter Season into the Pentecost Season

"For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven" Ecclesiastes 3:1

We are in the middle of the Easter Season. You see Easter is not just one day out of the year, just like Christmas is not just one day out of the year. Declaring the Good News of Jesus Christ is for every day of the year, more than just a couple of days. A full fifty days mark our celebration of the Resurrection of Christ our Savior, ending in the Church it itself being raised up by the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

The Easter Season starts out with the resurrection appearances of Jesus, and then moves back into the Gospels where Jesus says farewell, while at the same time, looking forward in the readings from the book of Acts as the Good News of Jesus spreads outward from Jerusalem. Each week during the Easter Season we are called not only to look for Christ's presence among our own lives, but also to think about where the Spirit of the risen Christ is pushing us deeper out into the world. As members of the risen body of Christ, the Church, we have work to do in proclaiming the good news that Christ is alive and present among us for the sake of the world!

The time after Pentecost will offer us plenty of opportunity to return to the story of Jesus and his earthly ministry, but in the Easter season, the work of Jesus, becomes our work as the Church of Christ on earth. We are the hands and feet and mouths that proclaim the resurrection of Christ. Our bodies are baptized, fed at the Lord's Table, and sent out to embrace a world that is always changing day by day, that needs to experience resurrection and life.

On the fourth Sunday of May we will celebrate the Festival of the Holy Spirit, the completion of our celebrations of Christ's birth, death, and resurrection. As we give praise and thanksgiving for God's great acts of love for the world, let us proclaim the Spirit of Christ who gives life to those in tombs and enables us to proclaim what God is still doing among us today, as the Church of Christ on earth. Let every day be a season of God's love for the world!

Pastor Ahles



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.

SUNday SCHOOL:

We look forward to wrapping up our Sunday School season with a Recognition Sunday on Sunday, June 6 at 10:30 am worship service.



Pastor will be on vacation May 20-25

**Council Meeting is
Tuesday, May 4 at 7 p.m.**



Youth Group (*students grades 5-12*)

Mark your calendar for **May 13** 6-8 pm for the first Youth Gathering at the Berg Farm (N42515 County Road E, Osseo). Feel free to invite your friends also to participate. Treats are welcome!

Contact Jessica Berg with questions 651-925-7854.

With our Sunday coffee hour resuming, we would love for homemade cookies or treats. Please feel free to bring some yummys.



Elk Creek Lutheran Church Council Meeting -- April 6, 2021

The meeting was called to order by President Keith Nelson at 7:06 PM. Members present were: Pastor Valerian Ahles, Brian Christopherson, Ryan Johnson, Rhonda Koval, Anson McCune, Keith Nelson, Lori Nelson, Becky Rongstad, and Stephanie Rumstick.

Devotions and Prayer -- Pastor began by reading Psalm 67. He shared that planting asparagus can help us to understand the works of God. The new birth of spring shoots through the composting leaves actually mirror the redemption story. For us, though Easter life bursts forth again while we continue in the rhythm of our lives.

Secretary's Report -- Brian made a motion to approve the Secretary's Report as presented; Rhonda seconded; motion passed.

Treasurer's Report -- was presented by Becky with information provided by Haukeness Financial Service. She indicated that she is working to have the word "parish" removed from Elk Creek's accounts because "parish" actually refers to the joint Elk Creek Lutheran and Immanuel Lutheran accounts. Keith noted that this month's income includes Thrivent Grants from various members totaling \$2,035.00 in donations. Rhonda made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented; Anson seconded; motion passed.

Elk Creek Lutheran Church Accounts

- General Checking Account - \$ 28,111.11
- General Savings Account - \$ 48,878.86
- Building Fund Checking - \$ 10,012.29
- Memorial Fund - \$ 4,587.56

Joint Parish Financial Accounts

Assets Elk Creek Immanuel Total

Beginning Balance - \$ 7,351.60 \$ 11,027.35 \$ 18,378.95

Payments - \$ 3,206.12 \$ 4,809.20 \$ 8,015.32

Ending Balance - \$ 4,145.48 \$ 6,218.15 \$ 10,363.63

Pastor's Report --

Pastor conducted 5 Sunday, 4 midweek Lenten, and the Good Friday worship services and 5 live stream services. He attended 3 Coffee Fellowships, participated in the Maundy Thursday prayer vigil at Elk Creek, and provided Holy Communion during 7 visits to shut-ins. He wrote the Pastoral Letter which was in the April newsletter. Pastor delivered 21 Daily Devotions on Facebook and had phone visits with 10 family units. He met with the Confirmation class 5 times. Pastor attended 5 Dairyland Conference Pastor's Text Studies on Zoom. He met with and welcomed new members Lori and Mark Blabec into the Elk Creek congregation. He will be leading worship services at the Dove Assisted Living and the Dove Nursing Home at 1:00 pm and 2:00 pm on April 11th -- unfortunately without music. Pastor Ahles' Office Hours at Elk Creek are generally from 8:30 - 12:30 on Wednesday mornings. Pastor Ahles can be reached at [cell] 533-0939 or [parsonage] 694-2427.

WELCA Report -- The ladies have not met, but plan to do so soon -- especially to discuss carpet.

No reports from Choir, Memorial Committee, Youth Group, Sunday School, Janitor, Office Staff, and Joint Parish Council

Old Business --

- Carpet -- Becky indicated that a specific carpet has been selected and Howard's has provided an estimate. They will provide an invoice for materials when the Council approves the project and will place it on the schedule. Discussion regarding the possibility of saving money by removing the current carpet followed and Anson volunteered to act as the negotiator for this project. Nothing can happen until the Women's Group meets, so this was tabled until the May Council meeting.
- Church Service -- Discussion of outdoor services was tabled until May.
Communion -- Following discussion about problems with "the body and blood (wafer-and-wine) units" currently being used, it was decided that disposable Communion cups will be purchased for use during services and/or when Pastor gives Communion to shut-ins. During services, each cup will be placed strategically in the appropriate serving tray and a wafer will be placed on top of each cup. Individuals will be able to pick up a cup and wafer and participate in Communion. Garbage cans will be available for the disposal of the cups. Pastor will bring a wafer within a sealed baggy to shut-ins when he is giving each Communion.
Balcony Seating -- The limited usage of the balcony due to COVID-19 was discussed. Anson made a motion to allow masked people to once again sit in the balcony; Becky seconded; motion passed.
- Room Dividers / Curtains -- Keith has information from 4 companies and will present it at the May meeting.
- Lights in Council Room -- Nothing has been done yet. Keith will contact Jim Odness. If lights haven't been purchased, Becky will talk to Allen or possibly Danny Gray.
- Insulation -- Allen Rongstad, Keith, and Ryan installed the insulation above the balcony ceiling and in the closet at the back of the sanctuary. The project is almost complete -- Allen still needs to take care of repairing a panel in

the stairway wall. A bill of \$208.14 for supplies was submitted. Brian made a motion to approve paying this bill from the Building Fund; Anson seconded; motion passed.

New Business --

- Monthly Bills -- These include a payment for annual testing by the county of the church's water quality, as well as payments into the Choir and Sunday School accounts. Lori made a motion to pay these bills; Anson seconded; motion passed.
- Possible Thrivent Investment -- At the invitation of the Council, Jessica Berg spoke about investment opportunities available through Thrivent. In March the Council had voted to not renew the matured CD at CCF Bank because it was only earning 0.025 interest. We would like to earn more than we had been earning on the CD and that we also wanted to be able to access and/or add to our investments without a hassle or a penalty. She explained the differences between conservative (bonds) and aggressive (stocks) investing and that shifts can be made because there is liquidity. She added that investment meetings are held annually or more often. It was noted the Church previously had investments with individual companies before moving the funds into a CD at a bank. Lori will check prior Council Meeting Minutes for additional information.

Jessica asked the Council to identify both short and long-term issues (carpet, room divider curtains, future tuck pointing on the other sides of the church) which may affect the amount to be invested. She asked us what is the dollar amount we would be comfortable not having in the bank? Also, what portion of that amount would need to be stable for a 2-3 period and what is the remainder? The Council thanked Jessica for her information. Council members were asked to think and pray about this, and to talk to other members of the congregation about it. The issue was tabled until a future Council meeting.

- Donations and Others in Need -- Becky indicated that Tim Schaul is in need due to problems over the past year. Currently he does not have a vehicle that is running and his horses need care. Pastor will visit with him to get details and will contact the members of the Council. If we can help in some way, a motion can be made and passed via email so that assistance can be provided.
- Glass Repair -- A storm window on the southside balcony window above the Sunday School rooms has a crack in it. This a 2' x 4 ½' pane. The storms were installed as replacements in 2014. Keith will contact the company who originally installed the windows.
- Clean-Up Day -- Brian and Allen Rongstad have begun the clean up of the cemetery. They would like to invite everyone available to help with the cemetery and church area clean up and possible landscaping during the week of April 6-10. This includes the youth as well as the adults -- just bring rakes, shovels, gloves, etc. On Saturday, the work will begin at 9:00 am.
- Groundskeeper -- Last year Brad served as groundskeeper for the Church. Ryan will ask him if he would consider doing that again this year.
- Apple Pregnancy Baby Shower & Sunday School Wrap Up and Recognition -- Pam Johnson and Crystal Johnson have asked to hold a Baby Shower for the Apple Pregnancy Center as a Charitable Event during May or June. Pam will speak about this at a future church service. Crystal will organize lists for those who would like to go in on group gifts. Gifts from individuals would also be welcome. It was noted that since both the shower and the Sunday School Recognition involve children, perhaps the two could be combined in a worship service which would include a blessing of the children and the gifts as well as the recognition of the Sunday School students. Any loose offering from the service would be donated to the Apple Pregnancy Center. A lunch of barbeques, chips, beans, pickles, milk, and coffee or a brunch could be served afterwards and the Shower could be held either before or afterwards. The recommended dates would be June 6 (when Elk Creek would be having services at 10:30 am) or on May 17 (when Elk Creek would be having services at 8:30 am). Lori will contact Crystal Johnson and Pam Johnson.
- Vacation -- Pastor will be on vacation from May 20 - May 25 (to attend his granddaughter's first dance recital).

Next Meeting -- The next Council meeting will be on May 4 at 7 pm.

Adjournment -- Lori made a motion to adjourn; Anson seconded; motion passed. The meeting was closed at 9:42 pm with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted by Lori Nelson, Recording Secretary

Bible Study Monday, June 21st at 5 p.m is hosted by Allen & Becky Rongstad at "The Pond". Women AND men are invited. Please RSVP as hot dogs and brats are provided. Please bring a dish to pass. If you can't be there right at 5, join us when you can!

The Special Congregational Meeting was called to order by President Keith Nelson at 9:16 AM. There were 43 people in attendance. Keith Nelson indicated that the Council and the Women's Group has been looking into replacing the Carpet in the Sanctuary, the Narthex, the Counting Room, the Sacristy, and the Stairways to the balcony and basement. A selection from Howard's Flooring has been made which includes carpet tiles on the aisle and the narthex, plus broadloom in the altar area and all of the stairways. Becky Rongstad indicated that Howard's had indicated that the carpet would be installed during the weekdays between our traditional Sunday services and would be done during late spring or early summer. The total bid is \$11,184.00. The Women's Group will be paying \$4,000.00 towards the carpeting. Tammy Danenberg made a motion to take \$7,184.00 to pay for installation of the new carpet; Deb Ebert seconded; and the motion passed. It was noted that additional fabric will be selected for the kneeling rail and the pastor's kneeler by the Women's Group.

Motion to recess was made by Tammy Danenberg; seconded by Jan Berg; motion passed. We recessed at 9:30 AM followed by "The Lord's Prayer."

Respectfully submitted by Lori Nelson, Recording Secretary

Congregational Meeting



We are having a "Baby Shower" for the APPLE Crisis Pregnancy Center in Eau Claire. It will be Sunday, **June 6th** following our 10:30 worship service. Donations can be new or gently used. A gift registry is available, but any items that families need to raise a child – from diapers & clothes to cribs & car seats - are appreciated. If you have not heard of APPLE, check out their ministry at <https://applepcc.org/>

This registry is not all-inclusive, but to give you an idea of items APPLE could use. Please feel free to enjoy shopping for items you think they could benefit most from. <https://bit.ly/3nyYhIK>

Caring. Confidential. Supportive.
We want to be there for you.

APPLE was formed by a group of concerned men and women in 1981 to meet the needs of women, men and families in an unplanned pregnancy. Since that first day, we've assisted thousands of women with caring counseling and information. Our goal is to provide those in unplanned pregnancies with the facts that will help them make choices they can live with.

We Listen. We Understand. We Can Help.
Learn The Facts.

When you come to APPLE, our sole purpose is to help you, as we've helped thousands of other women. We'll listen, and we can offer you care, facts, and options.

You can call us at 715-834-7734 or stop by. Walk-in pregnancy tests are welcome.