



Mark your calendar!
Worship time will change in June!
Starting on Sunday, June 12, church will start at 8:30 am.

Sunday, June 5, we are having church and a picnic as a Joint Parish at Stoddard Park in Osseo at 10:30.

Council will provide meat & fixings, our church members are asked to bring salads & vegetable dishes (Immanuel will bring drinks & desserts)

May we will be collecting items for
Fabric Care kits:

- ~3 yards cotton or cotton blend fabrics (no knits or 100% polyester)
- ~2 spools of matching thread or neutral colored (250 to 300 yards each)



SUNDAY SCHOOL:
We look forward to wrapping up our Sunday School season with a Recognition Sunday on Sunday, May 22 at 10:30 am worship service.

The church received an anonymous \$250 donation for one of our youth members to attend Luther Park Bible Camp.

Thank you for contributing to our youth programs!



Share the Father's Love

What does it mean when Jesus says, ***“Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father.” (John 14:12)*** What does that mean? Does that mean you and I can do greater works than Jesus?

Do we have power to change water into wine? Do we have the power to walk on water? (Only if it is frozen a foot deep.) Do we have power to make a little bit of bread and fish feed so many? Do we have power to heal the sick? Or raise someone from the dead? No, we don't. But, it's not about power.

Jesus does the works of the Father not because he has certain powers to convince people to believe, but because he has the love of the Father to share and give to the world. Out of Father's love for the world, Jesus came to share and give that love to the world. He gave the Father's love with his life, death and resurrection. AND, he gave the father's love by the commandment ***“love one another”***, so his disciples could do the same.



When we love one another as Jesus loved us from the Father, then indeed we will do the works that Jesus does. In fact, we will do greater works. Jesus was one human being with the Father's love for the world. Through Jesus' presence in us, we are many human beings with the Father's love for the world.

We don't need special powers to try and convince people around us that God loves them. We simply are to share the Father's love, which is given to us through Jesus Christ, with people of our community.

This is the Good News of Jesus Christ. It's about love. We can't duplicate the power of Jesus. I mean, we can't walk on water. We don't have the ability to raise up people from the dead. But this is what we do have—the opportunity to express the love of Jesus/the love of the Father, in our daily actions with others. We can do greater things because of what Jesus did for us. He gave the Father's love to us and commanded us to do so with others. AND, we won't be left alone to accomplish this by ourselves. ***“But the advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I said to you.” (John 14:26)*** Happy May Day! Share God's love every day in every way.

Pastor Ahles

thrivent[®]

\$55 has been directed to Elk Creek Lutheran Church from our members. **Thank you** for your contributions.

VBS dates for your calendar: July 31, August 3, 7 and 10



Elk Creek Lutheran Church Council Meeting -- April 5, 2022

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

Devotions and Prayer -- Pastor began by reading the Parable of the Persistent Widow [Luke 18 : 1- 8]. He shared that while there is so much injustice in the world today, we are fortunate to be relatively untouched by much of it. He noted that this simply means we must pray for those who are in need and/or suffering and that we must be persistent in our praying for them – not just while they are in the news. He closed with a prayer.

Secretary's Report -- It was noted that the Secretary's Report for March of 2022 had been sent to each of the Council members electronically, corrections made, and it had

been approved prior to it being printed in the April Newsletter.

Treasurer's Report -- was presented by Becky Rongstad with information provided by Haukeness Financial Service. Becky was directed to make the automatic payments specified in the budget (Sunday School, Choir, etc.) during the month of April. Lindsey made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented; Bruce seconded; motion passed.

Elk Creek Lutheran Church Account

- General Checking Account - \$42,500.16
- General [2050 Fund] Savings Account - \$38,890.81
- Building Fund Checking - \$4,157.48
- Memorial Fund - \$8,239.69

Joint Parish Financial Accounts

Assets	Elk Creek	Immanuel	Total
Beginning Balance -	\$3,596.62	\$5,395.06	\$8,991.68
Deposits & Interest -	\$3,462.88	\$5,194.31	\$8,657.19
Payments -	\$3,349.84	\$5,024.68	\$8,374.52
Liabilities & Equity -	\$3,709.66	\$5,564.69	\$9,274.35
Ending Balance -	\$3,709.66	\$5,564.69	\$9,274.35

Pastor's Report --

Pastor conducted 5 worship services [4 Sundays and Ash Wednesday] and 5 Round-robin Lenten services. He attended 3 Coffee Fellowships while selecting Hymns and practiced with the Choir 3 times. He provided Holy Communion to 8 parishioners during visits to shut-ins. The students in the Confirmation class have been assisting with the suppers served prior to each of the Lenten services. On March 12, he led a First Communion Workshop for Emma Johnson, Charlie Johnson, Jocelyn Franson and their parents and the three students received their First Communion on March 13. He also attended a Prayer Vigil for Ukraine on that day and participated in the Youth Group's Recharge Event at Luther Park on March 25-26. Pastor attended 4 Dairyland Conference Pastor's Text Studies on Zoom and 1 Synod All Conference Zoom Meeting on March 10. On March 27, he and Becky led services at the Dove Assisted Living and Dove Nursing Home and he led services at the Gundersen Tri-County Care Center on March 31. He also attended the April 3 Ordination Service for Hannah Olson. 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.

**Council Meeting
is Tuesday, May 3
at 7 p.m.**

Saturday, May 7, we are participating in "God's Work, Our Hands" service projects in the community. Meet at church at 9 am. Gloves recommended.

WELCA Report -- There will be an Egg Bake Breakfast held before church on Palm Sunday from 8:45 - 10:10 AM with a Free Will Offering. Lynn Nelson is organizing a Thrift Sale which will be held in the church basement on April 30. This will also be a free will offering and everyone can bring items after the Memorial Service for Robert Blank on April 23. The items which are not sold will be taken to Saver's who have agreed to pay by the pound for most of the donated items. The money from Saver's will be donated to the Alzheimer's Association. On June 11, a Bridal Show and Reception will be held in the church. Wedding dresses from throughout the years will be modeled and/or on display and some accessories will also be shown. A "wedding reception-style" lunch will be served in the basement following the show. Tammy Danenberg is organizing the dresses and models. Invitations are being sent to the congregations of area churches inviting interested people to plan to attend. A free will offering will be taken. It was noted that the WELCA had made a \$400 donation to relief efforts in Ukraine.

Choir, Memorial Committee, Office Staff, Joint Parish Council – No reports

Youth Group -- Lindsey reported that 14 students had a great time during the Recharge Event at Luther Park and the kids definitely came back energized from it. She said that many kids are now interested in attending some of the planned Luther Park Summer Camp activities. She noted that these these can be expensive and asked about the possibility of the Church Council sponsoring them. Following discussion, Becky made a motion to invest in our youth by providing 50% of the cost for any child of the congregation who wants to attend Luther Park Bible Camp (up to \$250 per child) with the understanding that the child will be expected to report back to the congregation about the experience and participate in one or more of the church's service activities [God's Work, Our Hands; serving at a potluck; helping with Vacation Bible School, Bazaar, etc.] in exchange for this investment. Anson second, and the motion passed unanimously. It was noted that in the past, the WELCA has also helped financially to send children to Bible Camp at Luther Park.

Sunday School -- No report Lori reported that the last date for Sunday School this year will be May 22 and this will also be when Awards are passed out. It will be followed by a potluck dinner. It was suggested that the dedication of the Picnic Tables and Playground equipment could possibly also be held on that date. Lori noted that Bibles and embroidered Bible covers have been ordered for 3 of the Sunday School students. They will hopefully receive them early in May. She indicated that planning has begun for the 2022 Vacation Bible School. The dates selected are Sunday, July 31; Wednesday, August 3; Sunday, August 7; and Wednesday, August 10. The students from Vacation Bible School will then be able to sing during Church in the Barn on Sunday, August 14.

Janitor – Lindsey Nelson has chosen to take on the Janitor's job. She will be paid by the hour. The Council thanked Lindsey for taking the job.

Old Business –

- **Picnic Tables** – Ryan reported that he and Allen Rongstad mounted the Memorial Plaques to the cement tables and that grass seed has been spread around that area.
- **Playground Equipment** – Lori indicated that the new playground equipment should be arriving within the next week. Help will be needed to unload the pieces of the equipment and later to put the equipment together.
- **Kitchen Stove** – Anson indicated that Benedict's Sale and Service of Eau Claire had provided prices for an electric [\$6,000] and a gas [1,900] commercial kitchen stove. It was determined that there is sufficient space for a 6-burner stove. Following discussion, Stephanie made a motion to purchase a 6-burner commercial gas kitchen stove; Lindsey seconded; and the motion passed. Anson will place the order with Benedict's Sale and Service. He indicated that they have also agreed to take the old stove and to make a thorough service call on the gas stove which is currently in the kitchen.
- **Curtition for (upstairs) Council Room** – Anson provided information about the cost of replacing the Curtition in the Council from Netwell Noise Control which provided the new Curtition in the basement. Since it is larger, the cost would be \$4,100. Shipping of the crate would cost an additional \$800. Bruce indicated that he would be willing to transport the crate to the church. We would be responsible for removing the current curtition and installing the new one. It was noted that Brian Christopherson and Danny Gray had removed the old basement curtition and installed the new one in the basement. The basement curtition was purchased from the Memorial Fund. Lindsey made a motion to purchase a curtition for the upstairs Council Room; Lori seconded, and the motion passed. The Memorial Committee will be contacted for approval.



May

- **COVID Policy** – The Council discussed the recent cancellation of church services due to members having a positive COVID test. Since the Center for Disease Control recently changed the guidelines for people with or exposed to COVID-19, the Council discussed its policy requiring the cancellation of all church services and activities for one week when someone who has attended church services tests positive for COVID. The CDC has also shortened the recommended time for isolation for the public. People with COVID-19 should isolate for 5 days and if they are asymptomatic or they have been without a fever for 24 hours, they should follow that by 5 days of wearing of a well-fitting mask when around others to minimize the risk of infecting people they encounter. This will minimize the risk of spreading the virus to others. The CDC also updated the recommended quarantine period for anyone who is exposed to COVID-19. For people who are unvaccinated or it has been more than 6 months

**During the May
8th worship
service, our 3rd
graders will
receive their
Bibles.**

from their initial vaccination and are not yet boosted, the CDC recommends quarantine for 5 days followed by strict use of a well-fitting mask for an additional 5 days. Individuals who have received their booster shot do not need to quarantine following an exposure, but should wear a mask for 10 days after the exposure. Following discussion, Anson made a motion to follow the updated CDC guidelines; Lindsey seconded; and the motion passed. This means that we would ask that if a member, who been in church, tests positive, please notify Crystal so that the incident can be listed on the church's Facebook page and members can be informed. (Names do not have to be announced.) That person should isolate and/or quarantine for the recommended period of time listed above and follow that by 5 days of wearing a mask. Individuals who have been exposed are also asked to follow the guidelines listed above. Anyone who has been infected or exposed should NOT come to church during the specified isolation / quarantine period. In this way, we hope to keep all of our members safe and feeling comfortable to attend services.

- **Seminary Fund** – Lori presented a brief history of what she learned about the Seminary Fund while reading years of past Council Minutes. The money is currently in one of the Thrivent Accounts. Past practice and possible future uses were presented for Council members to consider at a future meeting.

New Business –

- **Annual Spring Clean-Up** – The Cemetery Clean Up is scheduled for April 9 – weather permitting. Becky suggested that we plan for a Spring Clean-Up / “God’s Work, Our Hands” Day on Saturday, May 9. Some of the projects to be worked on could include: sending a group to help Genell Johnson deal with brush and other issues in her yard, putting together the new playground equipment; taking down the fence and brush from the area on the other side of the playground equipment, painting the back entry to the church basement white so that the area will be lighter and brighter, etc. If anyone has a suggestion for a project, please contact a Council member. Ryan will contact 811 before work begins on the installation of the Playground equipment.
- **Furnace** – During a service call after the furnace failed to work in the main body of the church, it was discovered that the igniter was out, plus several of the burners had burned out. These were fixed. It was noted that there has been a problem when the air conditioner freezes up because when it thaws out, then the water drips down onto the burners. The repairman advised that less dense filters be used during the summer because this would reduce the chance of freeze-ups. Ryan will look into getting the less dense filters.
- **Wall-Mounted Oven** – While discussing the kitchen stove which is being replaced, it was noted that the wall-mounted oven has also been malfunctioning. Following discussion, Lindsey made a motion to look into replacing the wall-mounted oven. Anson will look into this and bring information back to the next meeting.

Next Meeting – The next Council meeting will be on May 3 at 7 PM.

Adjournment – Anson made a motion to adjourn; Bruce seconded; motion passed. The meeting was closed at 9:00 PM with the Lord’s Prayer.

Respectfully submitted by Lori Nelson, Recording Secretary



Elk Creek Ladies Meeting April 2022

4/3/22

President Jan called the meeting to order at 9:04 4/3/22. Creed was recited. Secretary’s report was read motion to accept by Rhonda, 2nd by Lori, passed. Treasurer’s report; March Income \$425.00, Expenses \$945.00 (including \$400.00 to ELCA towards Ukraine relief) Checking Balance \$6781.62, Savings \$41454.35 with 0.11 added in interest. Report was placed on file.

Old Business: Janitor Position- Lindsey Nelson will try the janitor position, replacing Julie.

Update on the Credit Card for the Ladies group, Becky has been unable to make contact with the person to change names on the card. Becky will reach out to Melissa Smith again and give this one more month. If no progress is made will look at moving the account to another bank.

Bridal Show: Tammy is looking for 3 more pedestal cake plates to be used for the event. If anyone has a manikin/dress form that could be used to display some of the more fragile dresses, please let Tammy Know. Save the date invites will be going out to neighboring churches in April, and Invitations will go out in May. Plan to do this fund raiser as a free will donation. Event is scheduled for June 11th.

Palm Sunday: Egg Bakes will be served prior to the Sunday morning service. Stephanie will be contacting group 2 for help with Prep and Serving.

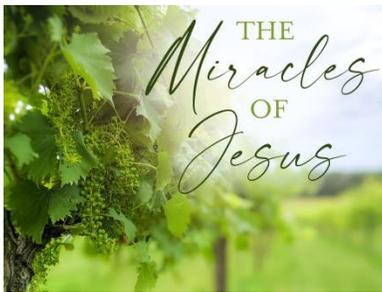
Carpet Cleaning is scheduled for Thursday April 14th. Plan to do the Sunday School rooms also. Help will be needed to move tables and chairs into the Kitchen and Bathrooms for this.

New Business: Thrift Sale on April 30th to raise money for Alzheimer's. Items not sold will be taken to Savers, as they will pay by the pound (\$0.20 for soft goods, and 0.02 for Knick knacks. No furniture for the sale (difficult to move), or things in need of repair. All Items should be in good usable shape. Items cannot be taken to savers before May 18th, Brandi has a trailer that can be used to store items until then.

Thank You's were read from Heifer International, World Bread for Life. Information from Lutheran World Relief was read - Matching funds are available, if we wish to contribute more. They are also looking for more quilts. No action taken at this time. We are collecting items for Personal Care Kits (Dark towels, soap, nail clippers, and coombs) this month.

Motion to adjourn by Tammy, 2nd by Lori. Meeting closed with Lord's Prayer and collection of offering.

Barb Fischer, Sec.



Lines from LaVerne... Do you believe in miracles? I surely do. For example, my nephew had a miracle just recently. He was out to his sister's farm visiting his furry friends. One day while he was visiting his sister's farm, he was in the cow pen, and the bull came along and lifted him up off his feet and sent him over the fence. He ended up at the veterans hospital for a time. While he was there, they noticed the problem he was having with Parkinson's disease and they asked him if he would be interested in trying for a cure. He certainly was! He was having trouble getting food in his mouth because of severe shaking. They

gave him many, many tests to see if it was safe for this operation. He had to have two operations on his brain. The operations were successful and my nephew was the happiest he had been for years, and we are so very happy for him. Another miracle, if the bull had not put him over the fence, he would not have known about the operations that could help his Parkinson's disease. God works in the most mysterious ways and my nephew is so appreciative of the good Lord's help. Because he was a Navy veteran he didn't have to pay for it.

Do you think you have never had a miracle? Well, take a good look back, and perhaps you didn't recognize it at the time. Oh yes, you have all had miracles, these and more than likely many more as the Holy Spirit is always caring and protecting you from harm.

I need to write more about miracles because of what has happened after I had written the first part of the newsletter. My sister Joyce was able to see how wonderful her son's operation had turned out for a few months before she passed on April 8. Before she left us, she had two good weeks. She was in bed but loved to visit and knew what was going on. Her children were with her around the clock. They were all there nearly every day, laughing and talking together. A mother loves nothing better. We love it when they all get along so well. I got to see her five times in those good weeks. More miracles. God's blessings for all of us. My sister was truly one of God's servants. She was 93 years old. She said, "I have no regrets, and I am ready to go and meet my Maker."

Are we ready? *Ps... expect a miracle. They are out there. Keep your faith and be thankful. Happy spring*

Your Lay Minister, LaVerne