



Annual Church Bazaar

It will look a little different this year

Sunday, October 4 12pm-3pm

11:45 am : Country Store opens



Various auction items will be available, although at the time of this publication, there will be no LIVE auction.

Raffle: 1st place - Queen size quilt (Log Cabin Star)

2nd place - \$75

3rd place - \$50

**If you have anything you would like to donate please notify the ladies.*



SUNDAY SCHOOL:

A survey link is available in the Elk Creek Facebook group for parents of Sunday School students.

The Sunday School “show” will go on, but the Sunday School committee is figuring out how to get the “show” to go on safely!

Watch Facebook for updates!

Join us for
outdoor worship services

in September at 8:30 am



Behaving Ourselves as an Act of Love and Grace

It goes without saying that the world is in a hard and difficult place in trying to stop the Coronavirus from infecting and killing more and more people. Especially in the United States, we have struggled between staying at home and getting the economy going again and watching the virus continue with hotspots spreading not only in large cities but into rural areas as well. The path forward seems illusive and fleeting from day to day. Indeed, our lives have been deeply impacted since March and it looks to continue through the Fall, Winter and into next year.

By the rivers of Babylon— there we sat down and there we wept when we remembered Zion. On the willows there we hung up our harps. For there our captors asked us for songs, and our tormentors asked for mirth, saying, “Sing us one of the songs of Zion!” (Ps. 137:1-3)

This psalm was written about the time when people from Jerusalem were being held captive in Babylon for 70 years. The Babylonian Exile took place around 587b.c., before the birth of Christ. For 70 years, the Jewish people in captivity could not gather in their temple, or celebrate their Seder meals, or worship and remember the Passover. Because of Covid-19 we have been asked to maintain physical distance from one another for only a few months, since the middle of March. Perhaps this virus has given us a small glimpse into the pain and longing of the Jewish captives during the Babylonian exile.

Covid-19 is the exile of our day. We are held in bondage by this deadly infectious virus. We are told to wash our hands, use hand sanitizer, stay at home as much as possible, avoid large gatherings in enclosed places, practice physical distancing of six feet, wear masks, and refrain from singing. From mid-March through June, Sunday worship was conducted virtually. Since then, we have gathered for outdoor worship and will continue until the weather forces us inside or the church council decides to begin in-person worship inside with physical distancing and wearing masks. This will continue into the Fall and early winter and beyond (*hopefully, not for 70 years*), depending upon when a vaccine is effective and widely administered.

When I was in grade school, my mother would oftentimes tell me and my brothers and sisters to “behave ourselves” in school and church. She didn’t say this in anger or with threats of what will happen if we didn’t behave. Rather, she encouraged good behavior and respect for teachers and our classmates as well. This was helpful for a shy, self-conscious boy.

As we continue under the siege of Covid-19, I encourage all of us to “**Behave Ourselves as an Act of Love and Grace**”, so that we will work and live well together; adjusting to the restrictions in place to protect others, as well as ourselves. Good behavior will go a long way to keep all of us safe. Pr. Ahles

Council Meeting is Tuesday, Sept 1 at 7 p.m.



Council Notes

Elk Creek Lutheran Church Council Meeting -- August 4, 2024

The meeting was called to order by President Keith Nelson at 7:10. Members present were: Pastor Valerian Ahles, Jan Berg, Tom Johnson, Rhonda Koval, Anson McCune, Keith Nelson, Lindsey Nelson, Lori Nelson, Tim Radatz, and Stephanie Rumstick.

Devotions and Prayer --

Pastor began with John 15:1-4 which says "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ... Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself ...Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me." He shared the Hebrew fable of a leaf which yearned to be free and eventually became free. It enjoyed the flying around until it landed, dried up, and died. It learned that freedom does not mean separation and complete independence. Just as the events and crises in our lives will teach us in ways that we never would have done or faced, we must stay connected to and through Jesus.

Secretary's Report -- Pastor made corrections to the July Meeting Minutes -- "pushed back until at least August 2 [not 1]" and "Pastor [not He] indicated that the ladies ..." Tim made a motion to approve the Minutes with the corrections; Stephanie seconded; motion passed.

Treasurer's Report -- was presented by Keith with information provided by Haukeness Financial Service. It was noted that the disposable Communion cups with wafers were purchased. Jan indicated she had used last month's donation of money to purchase 32 twin sheet sets for the Sleep in Heavenly Peace charity. Lindsey made a motion to approve; Jan seconded; motion passed.

Elk Creek Lutheran Church Accounts

- General Checking Account - \$ 22,069.79
- General Savings Account - \$ 38,517.71
- CD 4145 - \$ 10,269.85
- Building Fund Checking - \$ 12,135.07
- Memorial Fund - \$ 3,541.70
- Total Assets - \$ 88,534.12

Joint Parish Financial Accounts

Assets Elk Creek Immanuel Total

Beginning Balance - \$ 8,263.35 \$ 11,795.13 \$ 20,058.48

Payments - \$ 2,982.90 \$ 4,474.34 \$ 7,457.24

Ending Balance - \$ 5,280.45 \$ 7,320.79 \$ 12,601.24

Pastor's Report --

Pastor conducted 3 outdoor and 1 indoor (due to rain) worship services and 4 live stream services. He attended 3 Wednesday Coffee Fellowships and provided Holy Communion to 9 during visits to shut-ins. He wrote the Pastoral Letter for the Newsletter and delivered 17 Daily Devotions on Facebook. He completed phone visits with 36 family units and left messages with 16 others. He met with the Confirmation class 2 times and will provide a packet of materials for Noah Filla to complete so that he will be able to catch up before Confirmation classes resume in September. Pastor attended 4 Text Study and 1 Northwest Synod of Wisconsin meeting on Zoom. He went to the Jeneen Giacomino Benefit and conducted a graveside service for Ardyce Clemens and a service at Schiefelbein Funeral Home for Ernest Myhers. He indicated that on Sept. 12 and/or Sept. 15 he plans to meet with the First Communion students and any parents who would like to attend. He thanked Keith & Nicole Nelson, Becky & Allen Rongstad, Jan Berg, and Stephanie Rumstick for their help with setting up each outdoor worship service. Pastor will be on vacation from August 7 - 20. Pastor Paul Tobiason will be the emergency contact during that time.

WELCA Report -- Jan indicated that the Women's Group has not met recently, but may have to soon to discuss all aspects of the annual Bazaar. She said carpet samples are on display at the front of the church and she would appreciate others to look at them and let her or Stephanie know what people think.

Youth Group -- Keith indicated that Jessica & Kevin Berg hope to attend the September Council Meeting to introduce themselves and talk about their plans for the Youth Group.

Choir -- No report

Memorial Committee -- No report

Sunday School -- No report

Janitor -- No report

**WE WELCOME EVERYONE
 TO COFFEE HOUR
 WEDNESDAYS AT 10 AM
 IN THE CHURCH
 BASEMENT. JOIN US FOR
 COFFEE AND CHATS!**

Our church was able to donate 33 age-appropriate twin sheet sets to the local "Sleep in Heavenly Peace, Inc." which supplies beds and bedding to children in Trempealeau & Jackson counties.

Office Staff -- No report

Old Business --

- **Carpet Update --** Stephanie indicated that unless there is a positive response to the current carpet samples, they may have to check in Eau Claire, but that matching is difficult. She and Jan admitted that we may need to recarpet the altar area as well as the aisle and entryway to the church.
- **Church Services --**
Everyone agreed that the outdoor worship services were working nicely with the idea that the service on a rainy day could be held inside -- socially distanced and possibly using the basement if numbers warrant it. It was noted that to be safe, people should not be sitting in the balcony during any church service. Rhonda made a motion to continue with outdoor services through the month of September; Stephanie seconded; motion passed.
- **Sunday School --**
The Sunday School Board will be meeting with Superintendent Pam Johnson before the September meeting to decide what form Sunday School will take this year. Pastor knows of several on-line software programs which parents and kids could do at home. Members expressed concerns regarding teachers, space, etc. Most liked the plan to provide different options. Keith noted that the Youth Group would probably be meeting at the same time as Sunday School -- possibly in the balcony.
- **Room Dividers / Curtains --** Tabled.
- **Copier / Printer --** Jan indicated that Crystal has been having many issues with the printer. Anson suggested printing directly to the printer. Keith will see if the laptop can be wired directly to the 12-year-old printer.
- **Council Room Lighting --** Lindsey had spoken to Jim Odness who will purchase the equipment and tackle the project with help from Linda.
- **Louvers / Tuckpointing --** Since not enough people attended the July 26th service to form a quorum (25 needed) for a Congregational Meeting, a new meeting has been scheduled for August 9. It was noted that any purchase / project costing more than \$ 5,000 must be brought before a Congregational Meeting.
- **Riverland Energy Loss Audit --** Lindsey indicated that an Energy Loss Audit was conducted in July. She presented a black-and-white paper copy of the report. Significant heat leakage was noted in the closet at the back corner of the sanctuary, the door to the outside stairway in the Pastor's robing room, and the attic areas of the church. Some photos were confusing so Lindsey will email color copies of the report to all Council members. Lindsey made a motion to get 3 estimates for the insulation; Lori seconded; motion passed. Lindsey will get the estimates. Keith will look into pest control options and speak with Jim Odness about patterns for and/or making bat houses.
- **LP Contract for church gas --** Keith presented contracts from Chippewa Valley Energy for purchase of LP Gas at \$ 1.09 per gallon for 1800 gallons for the church and \$ 1.09 per gallon for 820 gallons for the parsonage. It was noted that last year the church used 18,006 gallons and the parsonage used 830 gallons. Anson made a motion to approve the contracts as presented; Tommy seconded; motion passed.
- **Flat Roof --** Cedric had the flat roof over the Sunday School rooms inspected. He was told it is in good condition. The seal around it did need to be re-caulked and this was done at no charge. The caulking should be redone every 5 years.
- **Outlets on the East Wall of the Basement --** Not sure what the problem is. They are on the same breaker as other outlets which were working. Keith threw the breaker and now all outlets work.

New Business --

Monthly Bills -- Lindsey made a motion to pay Aiona's Heating & Air for the air conditioner parts and repairs and to the IRS for Social Security for the custodian and Crystal plus fees for the late payment; Tim seconded; motion passed.

On-line Giving -- Tim indicated he had examined several programs and all are basically the same. Keith noted that Tithe.ly may have a better rate. Tim said CCF Bank had offered direct deposit / recurring payments from member's bank accounts. Unsure how Stephanie would get the information for members' annual offering statements. Questions as to how this would work with the church's website and who (how) would pay the processing fees. Keith will speak to Michelle at Strum to ask how they do this and Rhonda will check with Chimney Rock. Tim will refresh his information.

Donations to Others in Need -- After discussion, Lori made a motion to make the budgeted payments to the Sunday School and the Choir; Stephanie seconded; motion passed. The Council chose not to make a donation to the synd Resource Center at this time.

AED Machine -- Lindsey noted the pads and possibly other parts of the AED machine may need to be replaced. She will speak to Linda Odness about this. Lindsey made a motion to authorize the purchase of any necessary equipment for the AED Machine; Rhonda seconded; motion passed.

Parsonage -- Pastor noted that the squirrels appear to have moved out of the walls and Allen will caulk the holes to hopefully prevent their return. He added that the weeds / brush over the sewer mound needs to be cut. Lindsey will ask Kellen to take care of this.

Next Meeting -- The next Council meeting will be on September 1 at 7 pm.

Adjournment -- Tommy made a motion to adjourn; Jan seconded; motion passed. The meeting was closed at 8:50 with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted by Lori Nelson, Recording Secretary

UPDATE:

Sunday, Aug 23 a Special Congregational Meeting was held. By a quorum's vote, it was approved to move forward with the Jurowski bid to tuck point the brick on the south side of the church and bell tower. It was determined we should do this now before it gets worse and is more expensive to fix.

Sunday, August 23rd our two graduating seniors, Trevor Hammer and Cole Stensen, were recognized during the service. Congratulations and God's blessings to you as you start the next chapter of your lives.



Food Collection

*Our local food pantries are still collecting food.
If you would like to contribute, there is a collection
box in the Narthex of the church.
Thank you for continuing to support these local
ministries.*

Lines from LaVerne... The Bible is the most important book that has ever been written. It is God's communication to man. This book, above all others, should be read by people of all ages and in all conditions of human life; we should allow the Bible to guide us. It has a word of peace in the time of peril; a word of comfort in the time of calamity; a word of light for the hour of darkness. The Bible was the "best seller" for many years, but it is not today. Very revealing of the world we now live in. There is so much good within the pages of the Bible: read it to be wise, believe it to be safe, practice it to be holy. It contains light to direct you, food to support you, and comfort to cheer you. Please read it slowly, frequently, and prayerfully. Begin reading the Bible with prayer and ask the Holy Spirit to be your teacher. Read the Word of God. Read it until you get the message. Read and understand until you get the facts of the Word of God. Meditate on the Bible. God taught His people to meditate as scripture says in Deuteronomy and then read. To meditate is to bring scripture to mind and consider what it says over and over.

Your Lay Minister, LaVerne

P.S. Always keep your faith.