

S U M M E R 2 0 2 1

# ERLC CURRENT



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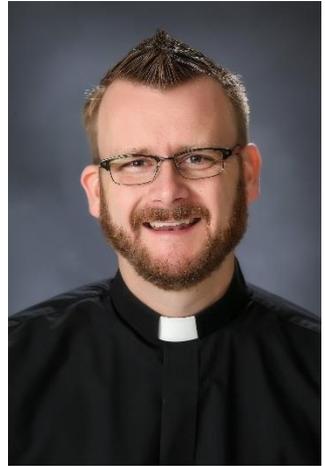
# Pastor's Message

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Dear Members and Friends of Elk River Lutheran Church,

**Beginning on Sunday, July 4th Elk River Lutheran Church will reopen for limited indoor Sunday Worship, offering a Traditional Worship Service at 8:30AM in the sanctuary and an outdoor Contemporary Drive-In Church Service at 10:30AM.**

The 10:30AM service will be livestreamed online, with hopes of also livestreaming the 8:30AM service as we build up our audio/visual volunteer base.



I am so grateful that decreasing case numbers and increasing vaccination rates have allowed us to return to more “normal” congregational life. Over a year ago I sent out a different letter with this update:

*“Out of an abundance of caution and love for our neighbors, Elk River Lutheran Church is suspending in-person Sunday worship, all programming, and meetings, including the outside groups who use our facility, through the end of March.”*

Pastor Nathan Mugaas,  
March 14th, 2020 update letter to the congregation

We all know that “two weeks to flatten the curve” turned into a years-long global disruption and for the past fifteen months our church has continued to practice an abundance of caution and love for our neighbors. I’m grateful for our Church Council’s

commitment to loving our neighbors by prioritizing the health and safety not only of our members, but our community. Thank you for your patience and support during this time.

In the past fifteen months we have all missed being together, worried about ourselves, friends, and loved ones getting sick, and even grieved the death of loved ones, often from a distance. There has been so much hardship. We have felt this as individuals and as a congregation, and healing will take time. As people of faith we know that God walks with us through challenging times and works to bring about good and new life, even out of extreme hardship. My family literally welcomed a new life into the world when our baby Ben was born May 18, 2020. Our church has experienced its own surprise blessings in the past year, including:

**Online Worship** -- We have discovered the blessings of gathering for worship online, which has allowed people from all over the country to be a part of the Elk River Lutheran Church community. Online worship will continue to be a primary way we stay connected as a church and share the good news of God's love with others.

**Connections** -- When we were no longer able to gather regularly in-person, church members naturally stepped up to check in with each other, and many volunteered to be part of the Community Care Team that called through our membership list.

**Generosity** -- Your generosity has helped us maintain, adapt, and expand Elk River Lutheran's ministries this year. At Easter, through our first generosity project, ERLC members distributed 250 thank you cards to a wide variety of people who went the extra mile this year. In 2020 when we could no longer send volunteers to work at CAER (our local food shelf) we donated more money to support their work than in any previous year. In 2021 we have topped that annual record, by already giving

\$16,569 to CAER. Well done generous people! \*See page 12 for a more detailed financial update

I know some of you have been frustrated with me and/or the Church Council during this year. This has been a tough year and I'm sorry for the ways I/we have failed you. Please know that we have worked diligently to do our best and if you find yourself still holding onto anger or frustrations from this past year, give me a call (Pastor Nathan cell# 763-242-8347) and let's work it out.

Our future together is bright and exciting! In the pages that follow you'll see some of the awesome things we have planned for this summer; opportunities to be together online and in-person (indoors and outdoors). Our upcoming worship theme is **Love is on the Move** (see pages 6 and 15 for more) and this summer we will be on the move, celebrating the joy of life together, and living this mission out:

***Trusting in God's grace, an accepting, joyful community, serving God and neighbor.***

Grace and Peace, Pastor Nathan

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## JUNE WORSHIP SCHEDULE



**Sunday Worship at 9:30AM**

*Drive-In Style In-Person Worship and Online*

### **June 6 -- Powered by LOVE Sunday**

*Special Sunday Morning Event!* Wear your Powered by Love gear and/or bright colors as we celebrate what it means to be the church Powered by Love! We'll be handing out special sunglasses to everyone who attend and have a station where you can get your hair colored wild colors (temporarily).

### **June 13- From Your Head to Your Heart**

### **June 20- From Your Sunday to Your Monday**

### **June 27- From Knowing of Jesus to Seeing Like Jesus**

*Special Sunday Morning Event!* Music by Rachel Kurtz! (page 8)

## STARTING SUNDAY, JULY 4TH:

### *Sunday Worship Time Change*

### *...and Return to Limited Indoor Worship*

#### *8:30AM - Traditional Worship - In the sanctuary.*

These worship services will follow the liturgical worship settings from the Evangelical Lutheran Worship (the cranberry hymnal), including traditional hymns, a sermon and Holy Communion.



#### *10:30AM - Contemporary Worship – Outdoors & online.*

Bring a lawn chair or stay in the comfort of your car parked in the upper or lower lot. The stage will be set up in front of the Powered by Love mural. You can expect modern music, an engaging message, Holy Communion, and the joy of being outdoors together.



# Rachel Kurtz Concert

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JUNE 27 | 9:30AM WORSHIP | 6:30PM CONCERT  
ELK RIVER LUTHERAN CHURCH

Meet Rachel Kurtz at worship on Sunday morning, June 27th where she will lead music and share stories about life and faith, and then come back Sunday evening at 6:30 pm as she is joined by her full band for an amazing concert.

Kurtz has been touring and singing for almost 20 years. She speaks frankly about love, God, parenting, heartbreak and her infectious laugh is peppered throughout her concerts. Her songs are rife with emotion and can make you get up and dance. Whether she is singing in a bar or church, her voice can cut through the noise and gives the listener a place to rest.

She has sung at the last 6 national youth gatherings and her song "Make a Difference" is sung nationwide on any given Sunday. Come on out to hear her sing, you will be surprised and delighted.

# Beer & Hymns

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**Save the Date for additional *Beer & Hymns* Events**

Monday, July 12  
Monday, August 9

🎵 Beer & Hymns 🎵



# Children, Youth & Family Ministries

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**SUMMER  
FESTIVAL**

## Summer Festival Camp

Gustavus Adolphus College

High School Camp – July 11-14

Middle School Camp – July 18-21

At Summer Festival Camp you will be immersed in relevant and engaging worship, small group time, incredible games, friends, food and SO MUCH FUN! Registration is filling up fast! Contact Lisa today to get a spot! Check out more information at [www.summerfestivalcamp.com](http://www.summerfestivalcamp.com)

## Family Vacation Bible School

Aug. 1-4

5:30-7:30

Adventure Island invites families to "arise and shine" with the light of God's love at VBS this summer! We'll explore bible stories with special lanterns and follow maps to learn how connection with God brings the invitation to shine God's light in a world that needs it now more than ever.

Each night of VBS, we'll enjoy a light dinner, learn some great new songs, then explore stories from the Old and New Testament in fun, creative ways!

*Arise! Shine! Your light has come: the Lord's glory has shown upon you.*  
(Isaiah 60:1)



## How Great Thou Art Camp

July 27-29 10:00 am – 11:30 am

Grades 4-6

Cost: \$25



Explore God's great, wonderful creation through art media including paint, clay, drawing, and more! Each participant will receive an art kit to take home along with completed projects. We will be safely distanced with masks required and we'll have lots of fun!



### CLUB 456

(Completed 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grade)

Celebrate Summer!

June 25<sup>th</sup> and Aug. 20<sup>th</sup>

6:30 – 8:00 pm

Join your friends for tons of outdoor fun! There will be games, a devotional activity, and treats!

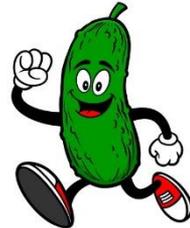
## Pickle Night

Middle & High School Youth

(completed 6<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>)

June 23<sup>rd</sup>

6:30 – 8:00 pm



Come see what this is all about! (and NO, you don't have to eat any!!!)  
Dress to get a bit messy!



## Zombie Escape!

Middle & High School Youth (completed 6<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>)

Aug. 18<sup>th</sup>

6:30 – 8:00 pm

Zombies are everywhere! Solve puzzles and complete tasks to keep the Zombies from getting you and the pizza. Once the pizza is saved, we'll eat it and have a devo and discussion!

# Financial Update

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Thank you for your generous financial support of Elk River Lutheran Church, especially throughout this last 15 months. During this time when some have been challenged financially, others have stepped up to support the mission and ministries of Elk River Lutheran, allowing us to serve our members and our community. Below you'll find a report of budgeted and actual giving and expenses through April of 2021, which shows we're entering the summer in a strong financial position.

Your generous financial support has allowed us to continue to adapt worship and other ministries by purchasing items like portable staging and online broadcast equipment. We've also been able to support our local and global community through giving to the Minneapolis Area Synod (which supports ELCA missionaries and programs domestically and abroad) and local organizations like CAER (Community Aid Elk River). Through countless donations and matching gifts to CAER, in 2021 we have already provided CAER with \$16,569 to help people right here at home.

Thank you for your love and support of this church and our shared mission together!

	<b>2021 Budget Year to Date (through April)</b>	<b>2021 Actual Year to Date (through April)</b>
Income (General Giving)	\$159,682.40	\$184,082.11
Expenses	\$159,649.92	\$164,836.51
Net Ordinary Income	\$32.48	\$19,245.60

# Building Committee Update

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To date \$434,560 has been given to the Building Fund. Thank you for supporting this vision for our church's future. We have now received over half of the pledges made during our Powered by Love capital campaign. The church has been committed to not borrowing money for these proposed building projects, but giving has now reached the point where we can start moving forward with building plans by establishing a Building Committee. Over the next weeks and months this group will meet to plan out our next steps. Watch for continued updates!



## Building Team Members

- Adam Horner, Chair
- Sarah Carlson
- Martha Hippe
- Pastor Nathan Mugaas
- John Natwick
- Greg Pouliot
- Krista Schrock
- Ron Stricker



## Coming Fall 2021...



A brand-new Wednesday mid-week ministry for kids, youth, and adults to come together to learn about God and experience activities that grow relationships with God and others! Each week will include a meal, bible study, worship arts, and games!

We are excited to be moving our children's learning time from Sunday mornings to this mid-week time. We are doing this to accommodate family schedules, create more time for relationships to be built, and provide an arena where Christian faith can be practiced. Sunday mornings will be dedicated to worship and fellowship. In worship, there will be opportunities for all ages to participate and lead in worship!

Look for more information about this exciting ministry mid-summer!

# Love is on the Move Bible Study

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We can all agree that this year has posed its fair share of challenges. The ups and downs, the rollercoaster of uncertainty, and the feelings of being stuck. Stuck behind masks, stuck indoors, unable to travel, stuck at home with kids and spouses. Stuck longing for life to return to some semblance of normal. That's just the reality of the pandemic! Life is full of places where we get stuck, relationships, jobs, financial stress, just to name a few.

For some, this year has also led to our faith feeling stuck. We might understand God's love and the story of Jesus, but it gets stuck in our heads and never makes its way to our heart. We might worship every Sunday, but that love struggles to find its way to work with us on Monday morning. We believe in God's unconditional love for us and others, but in real life, if we are honest we struggle to love our neighbor.

When we say that we are a church Powered by Love we are making a rather bold statement. One that firmly declares that we are a church that isn't passive about its expression of love but active. Love moves from our heads to our hearts, from our Sunday mornings to the rest of our week, and from a belief system to a living, breathing example in our everyday lives. We invite you to journey along with us as we bear witness that **Love is on the Move**.

## June 6th: **Powered by Love Sunday**

Read: 1 Corinthians 13:1-13

Reflect: Substitute your name with the word love. How do you see yourself living out those examples? How is God inviting you to grow this year?

## June 13th: **From Your Head to Your Heart**

Read: Matthew 12:1-21

Reflect: It is one thing to know of God, it is another to let God work in our lives daily. How is God inviting you deeper into faith this week?

## June 20th: **From Your Sunday to Your Monday**

Read: John 4:1-42

Reflect: Where is God meeting you this week and inviting you to live out this faith?

## June 27th: **From Knowing of Jesus to Seeing Like Jesus**

Read: Matthew 25:31-45

Reflect: How does God see the world? How does God invite you to see others in God's creation?



Trusting in God's grace, an accepting,  
joyful community, serving God & neighbor.

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