

ERLC CURRENT

LENT 2023

Lent 2023

Journey of Stones



MAGAZINE OF
ELK RIVER LUTHERAN CHURCH

ERLC Current

The magazine of Elk River Lutheran Church

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Mission

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

Pastor Nathan's Message

Dear Members and Friends of Elk River Lutheran,

I want to invite you to join us this Lenten season as we go on a **Journey of Stones**. The storytellers of the Bible, including Jesus, often use images of stone and rock in their storytelling. For the next several weeks we will explore many of these stories and how their messages impact our own stories.

Lent begins with **Ash Wednesday**, February 22, and we'll gather in the Community Room for a soup supper at 5:30PM and then worship in the Sanctuary at 6:30PM. As we reflect on how God's love and forgiveness is written in stone, you'll be invited to receive a cross of ash on your forehead accompanied by the words, "Remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return."



Dinner Church services will take place on the Wednesdays that follow (March 1 - March 29) in the Community Room from 6:00-7:00PM. We gather around tables as these services begin with some singing, scripture, and an introduction of the evening's theme, then we enjoy a meal together, before closing with prayer and song.



The Journey of Stones theme will be our focus at Dinner Church as well as **Sunday Morning Worship** where we continue our regular worship schedule of **8:30AM Traditional Worship** and **10:30AM Contemporary Worship**.



Lent leads us to Holy Week and these special services:

- **Palm Sunday w/ Kids' Program**
- April 2, 8:30AM & 10:30AM
- **Maundy Thursday**
- April 6, 6:30PM
- **Good Friday Stations of the Cross**
- April 7, 6:30PM
- **Easter Sunday Worship**
- April 9 8:30AM & 10:30AM

I hope you'll join us for these special services and this journey of faith throughout Lent.

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Nathan Mugaas



Pastor Anne's Message

Greetings ERLC! What a whirlwind the last few months have been. As your new pastor, I have been focused on getting to know the people of this community, and I have found you all to be warm, approachable and engaging. Thank you for taking the time to share yourselves with me and my family.



Looking ahead, I am quite excited for my first experience of **Dinner Church**. This has always been my vision of a true faith community - one who eats together, sings together, and shares in faith conversations together. This is much like the early church, and I'm very much looking forward to being part of this.



We are excited to welcome a few **new people to our Communion Table** on Wednesday, March 29th. If you come to any Dinner Church, come to this one to witness some of our young people share in the Eucharist for the first time!



I am personally excited for the *upcoming care ministry* where we will work to pair people up with others in our community who could use a listening ear or a helping hand. This **neighbor - to - neighbor ministry** will focus on caring for each other and expressing the love of Jesus. It fits well with our mission statement of *"Trusting in God's grace, an accepting, joyful community, serving God and neighbor."*



Please reach out to Pastor Anne if you want to be on the giving or the receiving end of this ministry.

ERLC is a joyful community with a dynamic, talented and engaging staff. I truly feel thankful that God called me here. May God continue to lead us and guide us into a deeper understanding of what it means to be a disciple of Christ here in Downtown Elk River!

Grace and peace,
Pastor Anne Schaefer



Lent and Easter

Elk River Lutheran Church

PRESENTS

Lent 2023

Journey of Stones



This Lenten season we are going on a journey, a Journey of Stones. The storytellers of the Bible, including Jesus, often use images of stone and rock in their storytelling. In this series we will explore many of these stories and how their messages impact our own stories. Sunday morning themes will be revisited on Wednesday evenings at Dinner Church services, our 6:00pm Wednesday simple worship services that take place in the Community Room around tables with a meal.

ASH WEDNESDAY

FEBRUARY 22 @ 6:30PM

Written in Stone

FEBRUARY 26

Stones to Bread

MARCH 5

Rejected Stones

MARCH 12

Sticks and Stones

MARCH 19

Hearts of Stone

MARCH 26

Upon this Rock

PALM/PASSION SUNDAY

APRIL 2

Stones Cry Out

MAUNDY THURSDAY

APRIL 6 @ 6:30PM

Stones or Bread

GOOD FRIDAY

APRIL 10 @ 6:30PM

Stones of the Cross

EASTER SUNDAY

APRIL 9

The Stone is Rolled Away

HOLY HUMOR SUNDAY

APRIL 16

SUNDAY THEMES

HOLY WEEK



Dinner Church During Lent

Wednesdays in Lent are a time when we gather together for worship and fellowship. The Lenten season begins with **Ash Wednesday on February 22nd**. We will have a **soup supper at 5:30 PM** in the Community Room and **worship with the imposition of ashes in the Sanctuary at 6:30 PM**.

During the rest of the Lenten season you are invited to join us for **Dinner Church** (March 1, 8, 15, 22 & 29), an experience that combines a meal, fellowship, and worship into one shared experience. Dinner Church begins at **6:00 PM in the Community Room**. You'll probably want to arrive ten to fifteen minutes early and find some people to sit with.

Each week volunteers help get things set up, bring portions of the meal, and clean up afterward. We work together to make these gatherings happen and experience great fellowship together. I hope you'll join us!

“Dinner church is as it sounds - dinner and church rolled into one! It is a casual and more personal setting to share a meal, sing, hear scripture, pray, and conversation together with a group of 5-6 people. It is like having a family meal.” - Adam and Kelli Horner





JOIN US THIS LENTEN SEASON FOR:

DINNER CHURCH

ELK RIVER LUTHERAN CHURCH

Wednesdays @ 6pm
March 1 - March 29



Volunteer at bit.ly/2023DinnerChurch

FOOD. FELLOWSHIP. SCRIPTURE

Children, Youth & Family Ministries

3rd Grade Bibles

A tradition at Elk River Lutheran Church is to gift our 3rd grade students with a Bible and show them a little bit of how to use it.

These 3rd graders are invited to come to church on **Sunday, March 5th** to receive their new Bible. We will spend the Fellowship Hour, 9:30-10:30, teaching the students and their parents a few Bible basics, and we will formally give the students a Bible during one of the worship services. This will be happening at both services.



3rd Grade Families, please RSVP to Pastor Anne by March 1st so we have enough Bibles ready to go.

Reach out to Pastor Anne with any questions!

First Communion Preparation

All are welcome at the Communion Table here at Elk River Lutheran. If parents feel like their children are prepared to participate in the elements, then students are welcome to do so. All other children are invited to come for a blessing.

The first time students participate in the elements is a special time, and we'd like to help them be prepared to experience the Eucharist (as well as know what that word means!). We will be offering two classes to teach Communion Basics. Students only



need to come to one class, and parents are encouraged to come to the class as well.

While all children are welcome, we recommend students participate in First Communion Preparation in mid-to-late elementary school and hopefully by the time they get to Confirmation (7th grade). Parents, you know your children best, so we leave that decision up to you.

First Communion Prep: Sun, March 26th at 9:30am OR Wed, March 29th at 5pm

*A Special celebration of our 1st Communicants will be during our Lenten Dinner Church on **Wednesday, March 29th beginning at 6pm.***

Families, please register for this by **emailing Pastor Anne by Wednesday, March 22nd.**

VBS

Save the date for VBS 2023! August 6-9th! Our theme this year is Hero Hotline where everyone's gifts are valued and every hero has a role to play!

VBS program time will be Sunday morning, August 6th, and in the evening of the 7th-9th.

Many volunteers make for light work! Please email Pastor Anne if you're able to help in any way - creation, planning, set-up before the program week or during the week leading a station or group, or after our last day to help tear down and clean up! We appreciate all strengths and commitments!



Summer Camps

There is nothing like a sleep away camp to forge friendships, challenge ourselves and solidify faith in the God who made us! Check out these opportunities for students entering grades 2-12! Costs are steep! We have scholarship funds available to help offset these costs. (If you have a heart for camp ministry and want to donate to help our campers, let Pastor Anne know!)

Luther Crest

- Luther Crest Seekers: Grades 2-4: July 18-21 OR July 25-28, \$449*/\$529
- Luther Crest Leapers: Grades 3-5: Jun 25-30, Jul 16-21, Jul 23-28, Jul 30-Aug 4, \$734*/\$834

***Register at LutherCrest.org by 2/14 for early bird pricing**



Summer Festival Camp

- Summer Festival Camp: Grades 6-8: July 16-19, \$290
- Summer Festival Camp: Grades 9-12+: July 9-12, \$290

***Registration information for SFC will come in April.**



CYF Night for April

Our last CYF Night of the program year is **Wednesday, April 26th!**

Pizza Dinner at 6pm

Large Group Activities and Message 6:30-7pm

Small Group Discussions 7-7:45pm

Come build relationships and grow in community with others! People of all ages are welcome!

Confirmation and High School go Head-to-Head in a *Compassion Competition*

Our 7th-8th grade Confirmation Students will square off with our 9th-12th grade high school students to compete to see who can collect more items for the **CAER Food Shelf**!

- Our **7th - 8th grade students are collecting baby items** (diapers, formula, wipes, food, etc),
- while our **9th-12th grade students are collecting personal care items** (floss, deodorant, soap, toothbrushes, etc).



Help support their compassion competition by bringing items for the large green box in the Fellowship Hall. Students will be collecting items through Palm Sunday!

Worship Volunteers

Thank you to everyone who's helped at our services and those who've recently signed up to help. You are all so gracious and generous.

Invites for our Sunday services during Lent have already been sent out. Please RSVP in the positive *and* negative in a timely manner.

Sign-ups for Maundy Thursday and Good Friday will be sent the closer we get to Holy Week. Be on the lookout.

In the meantime, add block-out dates to your profile when you know you'll be gone.

Thank you so much.

Taylor

Volunteer Coordinator



Music and Worship Ministry

Hello everyone. Let me tell you briefly about what's happening in the music ministry and then I'd like to share something with you.



During Lent and into Easter, you'll hear the Choir, Riverside Ringers, Worship Band, and special musicians. Each group will be featured at least once in March at our Sunday services, and then will participate in our festival services. The Choir will sing at for Good Friday and Easter, the Ringers will play on Palm Sunday and Easter, and the Worship Band will play on Palm Sunday and Easter as well. Special musicians like an instrumental ensemble and soloists will be included in these festival services as well. *If you'd like to participate in the music ministry in any way, let me know and we can work together to get you included. I'm happy to meet new musicians.* 😊

So, here's what I wanted to share with you.

Last spring, a friend came into my office to catch up a bit. He asked me what I was up to so I happily told him about my sabbatical. I went on to say how much I looked forward to coming back as a better music director: technically, emotionally, and spiritually. I told him I was excited to come back with renewed energy to build my ministry. My friend, who works in ecopsychology, took the opportunity to inform my thinking. He said, "instead of *building* a ministry, think of *growing* it." It didn't make sense to me at the moment but I let it soak in.

It's been five months now since returning from my sabbatical and the concept of *growing* a ministry makes more sense to me. I imagine cultivating a fertile ground of consistency where those who are planted in it have space to grow. I imagine constantly tending to the soil,

fertilizing it with love, and making sure that those who are planted in it can grow in a healthy way. I imagine *nurturing* instead of *making*.



As we move through Lent towards Easter, our sermon series is “Journey of Stones”. It makes me think about what stones have to do with growing a ministry. If you grew up on a farm, you would be very familiar with, and perhaps traumatized by, the chore of picking rocks. On our family farm, my cousins, siblings, and I would go out to the fields in the middle of the hottest days of summer, walk through those dusty fields, and pick up any rocks that popped after planting. We had to remove any that were large enough to damage the machinery or hinder the growth of crops. It wasn’t fun by any means.

While picking rocks on the farm was never a chore any of us chose to do, we knew it was necessary in order to create good growing ground for crops and a safe surface for the diggers. I think it’s the same as growing anything: a family, a career, a relationship. As we tend to the soil of whatever we’re growing, we *will* encounter rocks. Those rocks get in the way. We can’t ignore them but we can acknowledge them, pick them up, and deal with them, which then leaves the soil ready for better growth. New rocks will resurface again but we can be ready to repeat the same process of removal with more wisdom, grace, and joy.

I have found the concept of *growing* the music ministry beneficial so I wanted to share the concept with you. *Grow* instead of *build*. What does that mean to you? I hope you are able to identify the thing you want to grow, be ok with picking the rocks that surface, and reap the benefit of tending the soil. It’s hard work but I believe it’s worth it.

May you feel the peace, grace, and love
that is always with you.

Taylor Quinn



Neighbor to Neighbor

We have a *new ministry opportunity* here at ERLC that partners people together to build a community that cares for each other! We have many people within our ERLC community that could use a listening ear, a caring heart, or someone to reach the lightbulb, bring a meal or shovel a sidewalk. We will partner people together to share God's grace to each other.

TALK TEAM

We will be looking for people gifted at listening and showing empathy for our Talk Team.



TASK TEAM

We will also be looking for people who want to help out with small household duties for our Task Team.



TRAINING

Training will be provided over a light lunch on Sunday, April 16th. All other engagements happen on your own schedule!

If you would like more information on joining one of these teams, please let Pastor Anne know.

If you or someone you know would benefit from having someone come over to visit or help out with a household job, we'd love to include you in this ministry. Tell Pastor Anne you're interested!

Coming in May

Downtown Block Party

Sunday, May 21 11:00am-1:00pm

Elk River Lutheran Church - 729 Main Street - Elk River



Free Food
Carnival Games
Live Music
Bounce House
Entertainment



**Joint Outdoor Worship Service at 9:30am
to start the Celebration**



New Members

Sunday, April 30, 9:30 AM

New Member Orientation

Sunday, May 7

**New Member Sunday
with Fellowship**


Would you like to make Elk River Lutheran Church your faith community? We invite you to join us to learn more about the vision, history and ministries of Elk River Lutheran Church, and ways that you can find your place here. Join us this December for our new member orientation. To sign up, let us know on the connection form with your bulletin or send an email to linda@elkriverlutheran.org



MARCH		
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
26	27	28
5 3rd Grade Bibles 	6 10am Hospitality	7 9am Quilting
12 Daylight Savings Time Begins 	13	14 9am Quilting 6pm Riverside Ringers
19	20 6:30pm Women's Monthly Bible Study	21 9am Quilting 6pm Riverside Ringers 6:30pm Council
26 9:30am First Communion Class 11:45am Neighbor to Neighbor Training	27	28 9am Quilting 6pm Riverside Ringers




Sunday Schedule:

8:30 – Traditional

2023			
Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 6pm Dinner Church	2 10am Genealogy Group 6pm Choir	3 9am Men's Breakfast (Coborns-ER) /Women's Coffee (Panera)	4 8am Men's Bible Study (Zoom)
8 3pm Worship /Music Team 6pm Dinner Church	9 6pm Choir	10 9am Men's Breakfast (Coborns-ER) /Women's Coffee (Panera)	11 8am Men's Bible Study (Zoom)
15 6pm Dinner Church	16 10am Worship at Guardian Angelis Riverview Landing 6pm Choir	17 9am Men's Breakfast (Coborns-ER) /Women's Coffee (Panera)	18 8am Men's Bible Study (Zoom)
22 6pm Dinner Church	23 6pm Choir	24 9am Men's Breakfast (Coborns-ER) /Women's Coffee (Panera)	28 8am Men's Bible Study (Zoom)
29 5pm First Comm union Class 6pm Dinner Church with First Communion 	30 6pm Choir	31 9am Men's Breakfast (Coborns-ER) /Women's Coffee (Panera)	1

9:30 – Fellowship Hour

10:30 – Contemporary

April		
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
26	27	28
2 Palm Sunday /Passion Sunday 	3 10am Hospitality	4 9am Quilting 6pm Riverside Ringers
9 Easter Sunday 	10 Easter Monday Church Office Closed	11 9am Quilting
16 Holy Humor Sunday 	17 6:30pm Women's Monthly Bible Study	18 9am Quilting 6pm Riverside Ringers 6:30pm Council
23 30 9:30am New Member Orientation	24 1	25 9am Quilting 6pm Riverside Ringers 2

Sunday Schedule:

8:30 – Traditional

			2023
Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29	30	31	1 8am Men's Bible Study (Zoom)
5	6 Maundy Thursday 10am Genealogy 6:30pm Maundy Thursday Service	7 Good Friday 9am Men's Breakfast (Coborns-ER) /Women's Coffee (Panera) 6:30pm Good Friday Service	8 8am Men's Bible Study (Zoom)
12 3pm Worship / Music Team 630pm Confirmation & High School Youth	13	14 9am Men's Breakfast (Coborns-ER) /Women's Coffee (Panera)	15 8am Men's Bible Study (Zoom)
19 630pm Confirmation & High School Youth	20 10am Worship at GA Riverview Landing 6pm Choir	21 9am Men's Breakfast (Coborns-ER) /Women's Coffee (Panera)	22 8am Men's Bible Study (Zoom)
26 6pm CYF Night	27 6pm Choir	28 9am Men's Breakfast (Coborns-ER) /Women's Coffee (Panera)	29 8am Men's Bible Study (Zoom)
3	4	Mpls Area Synod Assembly	
		5	6

9:30 – Fellowship Hour

10:30 – Contemporary

STAFF

If you have specific questions or needs,
please feel free to contact any of the church staff

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