

*Trusting in God's grace,
An accepting, joyful community,
Calling and growing followers of Jesus
Who live in the Spirit,
serving God and neighbor.*

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF ELK RIVER LUTHERAN CHURCH
JANUARY 2016

Pastor's Message

A Good Journey

Epiphany is a wonderful celebration for those of us who are committing ourselves more deeply to the process of spiritual transformation, for it contains themes of journeying from the known to the unknown with only a mysterious star to guide us.

Compelled by an inner desire for a deeper experience of God's presence and guided by the appearance of some light of spiritual possibility, we are brought to that choice point that is at the heart of all-spiritual journeying. We must leave the familiar—with all the trappings that keep us feeling confident, secure, in control—for places that are unknown and require humility, letting go, and moving bravely in a new direction.

Whereas the Advent themes have to do with receptivity and waiting, the themes of Epiphany highlight our response to the showing forth of God's presence in our lives, beckoning to us to move beyond all we think we know. It has to do with seeing something new on the horizon that stirs something new in us. In response to this glimpse of the More (which may, as yet, be undefined), we strike out in search of a deeper experience of spiritual reality. We don't just talk about it; we walk toward it with great intention, making concrete choices along the way.

The Letting Go

I wonder what priorities and personal ambitions the wise men had to leave behind in order to take such a strange journey. What kings and councils were clamoring for their services, claiming that they were indispensable in crafting plans and strategies? What kinds of complexity and problem solving were pressing in when the star they had been watching rose in the Eastern sky, indicating it was time to follow?

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Pastor's Message (continued)

But no matter...they set off anyway, responding to that which was deepest and truest within them. It was a physical journey, but it was also a spiritual journey that involved learning to follow guidance from strange sources, let go of familiar settings, recognize the presence of God in places smaller and more humble, more human and more intimate than the places the ego journey takes us. And there was a whole new set of questions to ponder.

O God, who am I now?

*Once, I was secure in familiar territory,
in my sense of belonging*

*Unquestioning of the norms of my culture,
the assumptions built into my language,
the values shared by my society.*

*But now you have called me out and away from home
and I do not know where you are leading.
I am empty, unsure, and uncomfortable.
I have only a beckoning star to follow.*

*Journeying God,
pitch your tent with mine,
so that I may not become deterred,
by hardship, strangeness, and doubt.
Show me the movement I must make
toward a wealth not dependent on possessions,
toward a wisdom not based on books,
toward a strength not bolstered by might,
toward a God not confined to heaven,
but scandalously earthed, poor, unrecognized...*

Help me find myself as I walk in others' shoes.

~ Ruth Barton Epiphany Reflection

May 2016 be a year of taking risk and discovering God presence in your life and in this faith community.

Pastor Michelene

Financial Update

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU! --- November was a good month

Our Benevolence to the Synod for November was \$3,871.70

Our total Benevolence to the Synod (Jan – Nov) was \$34,073.29

November 2015 Operating Income (General Giving)	\$43,354.02
November 2015 Operating Expense	- \$28,884.95
November Net Income	\$14,469.07

Total Year to date (January – November 2015) Operating (General Giving) Income	\$327,479.68
Total Operating Expenses (January – November 2015)	-\$393,448.56
Total Deficit (January – November 2015)	-\$65,968.88

**The Financial Statements are posted on the bulletin board next to the elevator on the upper level if anyone would like to see a breakdown.

We are so very grateful to all of you for your generous giving in November. We hope and pray for your continued support as we move into the New Year. Also ---- thanks to all of you for your Pledges and Commitments for 2016.

May God bless you in you year ahead.

Diane Harding

ERLC Council Treasurer

President's Message

"Come to me with a teachable spirit, eager to be changed. A close walk with Me is a life of continual newness. Do not cling to old ways as you step into a new year. Instead, seek My Face with an open mind, knowing that your journey with Me involves being transformed by the renewing of your mind." ~ From Jesus Calling.

As we begin our new year at Elk River Lutheran Church we are reminded that times continue to change and that CHANGE is hard and a scary. We need to remember that all things do not happen in our time but in God's time. During my tenure as president, God has repeatedly taught me that my timeline is not his timeline. I now understand the last part of the above reading that is - "I also know the plans I have for you: plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

Our relationship with the Spirit who guides us is as hard as our human relationships and takes work. And in some ways harder as we can argue with our spouse and get a response - when we argue with God we have to be patient and open our hearts and minds to hear the answer.

So we begin the New Year and our annual meeting is set for January 24 at 9:30 am. There will be informational handouts available on January 17 so that you have a week to review the information so to be better prepared for the annual meeting. The finance & stewardship committees are very hard at work to have all the information in for COMPLETE reports. And as we continue to learn from Pastor Michelene on how to be a good disciple of Jesus the committees' are doing line item budgets and reviewing our inventory and double checking vendors and our goal is presenting a balanced, non fluff, budget. Enjoy the sunshine, slow down and listen for the answer God is giving us.

To God be the Glory.
Kim Hauger
ERLC Council President

Annual Meeting

**ELECT NEW LEADERS
OVERVIEW OF BUDGET
MINISTRY TEAM REPORTS**

On January 17 at 9:30 a.m. there will be information handouts available for you to review prior to the annual meeting.

The Annual Meeting will be January 24 at 9:30 a.m. in the Community Room.

Children, Youth & Family

Greetings from CYF!!

I was so excited to see all of the amazing kids on December 13 as they shared the good news of Jesus' birth! We had a record number of children participating in the program, and we are looking for an addition Sunday school teacher. We are a growing community of Christ. If you are interested in helping us with Sunday school please contact Laura Babneau at 763-232-4274 or laura.babneau@gmail.com.

I am bursting with excitement to report and want to thank all of you, that with the help of the congregation, an anonymous donor and the youth we were able to provide Christmas for 10 homeless youth in Elk River. What a blessing this ministry is having on the youth locally, and on January 3 the directors of Open Doors were here and shared their stories.

Stay tuned for Camp Sunday coming up in January! We will have speakers from camps, information available and opportunities to ask questions about this summer upcoming camping opportunities.

Happy New Year!

Laura Babneau

Director of Children, Youth & Family



A Message from the Quilters

At the end of December the quilters were blessed with a large donation of fabric. Because of this donation we have new prints and colors that will peak our imaginations for the production of quilts for Lutheran World Relief.

This is an exciting process for us! At the end of December we finished another 38 quilts. These are ready to be delivered to the LWR warehouse. If anyone has a vehicle that can transport these quilts please let Phyllis Scroggins know and arrangements can be made to fit your schedule. The shipping costs for these quilts have been donated anonymously. A hearty thank-you to everyone who donates time, labor, fabric and finances to this very worthwhile project. Quilts bring warmth and comfort to very chilly people.

Anyone who wants to tie a knot or two on Tuesday morning - please join the Quilters. All knot tiers of any age and sex are welcome. We do not discriminate!

Caring Faith Team

Special Quilters Event

Twenty-one outstanding works of art made by Marilyn Bujalski using counted cross-stitch patterns will be on display. The patterns are followed precisely resulting in large quilts that look like they are made from mosaic pieces 1/2 inch square. Her largest quilt is a farm scene measuring 19 feet by 12 feet. Please come and enjoy. See Phyllis Scroggins with questions.

February 5, 7:00-9:00 p.m.
Reception for Marilyn Bujalski's Quilt Show
at Carousel Work's in Big Lake, MN

February 6 & 7, 10:00 to 4:00
Quilt Show Hours

Proudly sponsored by the
Sherburne County History Center.

Hospitality

The Hospitality Ministry Team enjoyed a dinner at Rockwoods for our December meeting.

January, February and March will see some of the Ministry team enjoying the warmth of the south! Charee Wagenfiel-Cain has agreed to be in charge of Hospitality during these times. Any questions or concerns should be directed to her.

February 14 will be donut Sunday. We still need workers and would encourage people assigned to those Sundays to also bring treats that can be frozen to build up our reserves.



We are looking for volunteers to help deliver meals for Meals on Wheels in February. If you would like to help, please contact Garnet Novotny at 763-370-7710



**RIC ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATION
Sunday, January 24**

It has been over two years since we officially became a "Reconciling in Christ" congregation - being fully open and welcoming to our Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender sisters and brothers. Although the list of RIC congregations in the state is growing we are still the only ELCA congregation in Sherburne County that is RIC.

Last year we had our first annual celebration and this year we will again have a celebration at both the 8:15 and 10:30 services on Sunday, January 24. The service is still in the planning stages but we are hoping to have a guest speaker and special music. We will be recognizing people who have been witnesses of God's love and grace but have been marginalized in our community and congregations. We will also be remembering those in our congregation who have passed away in the past year. So please join us in our celebration of honor and remembrance.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
27	28	29	30	31	1	2
<p>Officer Retreat @ Timber Bay</p> <p>8:15am - Traditional Worship</p> <p>10:30am - Contemporary</p> <p>6:30pm - Reclat</p>	<p>Office Closed</p> <p>5:30pm - Hospitality Meeting</p> <p>6:30pm - Facilities Meeting @</p> <p>7pm - Men's Bible Study @</p>	<p>7:30am - BNI @ Fellowship</p> <p>9:30am - Bible Study @ Room</p> <p>9:30am - Quilting Group @ Room</p> <p>1:30pm - Staff Meeting</p> <p>6pm - Prep Choir @ Community</p> <p>6:30pm - Concert Choir @</p> <p>6:30pm - New Members Team</p>	<p>7:30am - Opportunity Plus @</p> <p>6:30pm - Confirmation</p> <p>6:30pm - ERLC Choir Rehearsal</p> <p>7:30pm - High School Program</p>	<p>7pm - Men's Chorus @</p> <p>7pm - The Way Out (AA) @</p>	<p>Happy birthday!</p> <p>New Year's Day</p> <p>Office Closed</p> <p>5pm - Officer Retreat @ Timber Bay Camp & Retreat Center, 18955</p>	<p>8am - Men's Bible Study</p>
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
<p>Hegglies Pizza Fundraiser #2</p> <p>8:15am - Traditional Worship</p> <p>9:30am - Sunday School</p> <p>10:30am - Contemporary</p> <p>7pm - Fellowship Meeting @</p>	<p>Hegglies Pizza Fundraiser #2</p> <p>7pm - Men's Bible Study @</p>	<p>Hegglies Pizza Fundraiser #2</p> <p>7:30am - BNI @ Fellowship</p> <p>9:30am - Bible Study @ Room</p> <p>9:30am - Quilting Group @ Room</p> <p>1:30pm - Staff Meeting</p> <p>6pm - Prep Choir @ Community</p> <p>6:30pm - Concert Choir @</p> <p>6:30pm - CSO Meeting @</p>	<p>Hegglies Pizza Fundraiser #2</p> <p>7:30am - Opportunity Plus @</p> <p>6:30pm - Confirmation</p> <p>6:30pm - ERLC Choir Rehearsal</p> <p>7:30pm - High School Program</p>	<p>Hegglies Pizza Fundraiser #2</p> <p>10am - Small Group: Grace</p> <p>7pm - Men's Chorus @</p> <p>7pm - The Way Out (AA) @</p>	<p>Hegglies Pizza Fundraiser #2</p>	<p>Hegglies Pizza Fundraiser #2</p> <p>8am - Men's Bible Study</p> <p>9am - Concert Choir @</p> <p>9am - Training Choir @</p> <p>12:30pm - LOLCB Staff Meeting</p>
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
<p>Hegglies Pizza Fundraiser #2</p> <p>8:15am - Traditional Worship</p> <p>9:30am - Annual Meeting</p> <p>9:30am - Sunday School</p> <p>10:30am - Contemporary</p>	<p>Hegglies Pizza Fundraiser #2</p> <p>12:30pm - Parkinsons Group @</p> <p>7pm - Men's Bible Study @</p>	<p>Hegglies Pizza Fundraiser #2</p> <p>7:30am - BNI @ Fellowship</p> <p>9:30am - Bible Study @ Room</p> <p>9:30am - Quilting Group @ Room</p> <p>1:30pm - Staff Meeting</p> <p>6pm - Executive Council @ Board</p> <p>6pm - Prep Choir @ Community</p> <p>6:30pm - Concert Choir @</p>	<p>7:30am - Opportunity Plus @</p> <p>6:30pm - Confirmation</p> <p>6:30pm - ERLC Choir Rehearsal</p> <p>7:30pm - High School Program</p>	<p>7pm - Men's Chorus @</p> <p>7pm - The Way Out (AA) @</p>		<p>8am - Men's Bible Study</p> <p>9am - Concert Choir @</p> <p>9am - Training Choir @</p>
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
<p>RIC Sunday</p> <p>8:15am - Traditional Worship</p> <p>9:30am - Annual Meeting</p> <p>9:30am - Sunday School</p> <p>10:30am - Contemporary</p>	<p>7pm - Men's Bible Study @</p>	<p>7:30am - BNI @ Fellowship</p> <p>9:30am - Bible Study @ Room</p> <p>9:30am - Quilting Group @ Room</p> <p>1:30pm - Staff Meeting</p> <p>6pm - Prep Choir @ Community</p> <p>6:30pm - Concert Choir @</p> <p>6:30pm - Training Choir @</p>	<p>7:30am - Opportunity Plus @</p> <p>6:30pm - Confirmation</p> <p>6:30pm - ERLC Choir Rehearsal</p> <p>7:30pm - High School Program</p>	<p>10am - Small Group: Grace</p> <p>7pm - Men's Chorus @</p> <p>7pm - The Way Out (AA) @</p>		<p>8am - Men's Bible Study</p> <p>9am - Concert Choir @</p> <p>9am - Training Choir @</p>
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
<p>CYF Camp Sunday</p> <p>8:15am - Traditional Worship</p> <p>9:30am - Sunday School</p> <p>10:30am - Contemporary</p> <p>11:30am - New Members Class</p>						

Prayer Concerns for Health...

Sara Anderson
Carolyn Conners, cousin of Jean Cook
Sue Baysinger, daughter-in-law of Pat Baysinger
Phyllis Lehrke
Arlene Wells
Margaret Severson
Linda Hageseth
Barb, daughter of Shirley Brothers
Steve Vevea
Judy Formico, sister of Jim Acers
Jim Wheeler, brother-in-law of Anita & Ray Deveney
Ralph Heidom, brother-in-law of Anita & Ray Deveney
Alexander Otey Wold, grandson of Cyndi & Steve Ganzkow-Wold
Sandy Weicht
Rod & Becca Werk
Kaldyn Eichberg, nephew of Shavon & Kristina Erickson
Jessica Henry, friend of Donn & Vicki Granros
Joe DeMars
Jim & Mary Weidner, brother and sister-in-law of Herm Weidner
Polly F., family friend of Herm & Bev Weidner
Natalie, friend of John & Conni Natwick
Aassen Norwood
Donn Granros
Elaine Sprute & family, friend of Pauline Kuhn
Bev, friend of Donna & Doug Mathison
Leona Scheiller, friend of Jean Aubol
Tom Woodfill
Sarah, niece of Diane & Brian Harding
Keith Reich, friend of Dale Ziner
Denise Dayon, friend of Julie Haugen
Karl Schlitter, uncle of Ryan Wolcenski
Tracy Swenson
Joshua Blomgren
Ralph Gifford, uncle of Joe Livingston
Elisa Tamarro, niece of Pat Hanson
Diane Sather
coworker of Jayne's cousin
Christi Anderson, niece of Jeri & Don Wille
MaryJane & Lee, friends of Jim & Karen Acers
Joel, nephew of Bette & Duane Jerde's sister
Gary Ristau
Kelsey, granddaughter of Pat Baysinger
son of Jenny Malakowski, friend of Barb Burandt
Elle Jackson, friend of Phyllis Lehrke

Edward & Timothy, sons of Shirley Hary
Linda Brynjulfson, sister of Mary & Rick Hansen
Jennie Zamjahn
Stephanie Mueller, niece of Larry & Bonnie Swedal
Charles Primon, father of Carol Abell
Jeanette Parker, sister-in-law of Martha Hippe
Paul Peterson
Dennis & Jane, brother & sister-in-law of Shirley Schmidt
Kris, daughter of Bob & Sue Hagen
Kathi Leach, sister of Karen Acers
Dianna Skoglund, cousin of Anne Follmer
Ozzie Markfort, step-father of Linda Cheney
Al Knudsen, friend of Mike & Linda Quam
Ellen, Darren, Lindsey & Katie, friends of Jim & Karen Acers
Charity Zrust, sister of Jeremy Dahlheimer
Heather Ebner, cousin of Stacy Ebner
Deloris Holt, sister-in-law of Daryl & Jean Holt
Ray & Anita Deveney, parents of Tracy Swenson
Dawn
Alex Jagodzinski
Jocie Schwartz
Sheryl Sandeen
Alice Sahr, aunt of Jane Cazett
Nathan Berg & kids, brother of Sarah Chur
Gene Berg
George Laurance, husband of Vicki Granros's friend, Barb
Dorothy Saunders - Aunt of Brian Follmer
Sheena Reid, friend of Jackie Anderson
Danyce Roppe, mother of Erin Roppe
Jesse DeMars, friend of Jeremy & Jodie Dahlheimer
Jeanne Kolberg, daughter of Dick & Arlene Erickson
Carol Sindelir, sister of Val Nelson
Dan, father of Deb Goggins
Arlene, Audrey & Frank, sisters & brother of Jarl & Glenice Knutson
Richard Enstad, friend of Darrell Gildemeister
Clarine Wingard, mother of Tom Wingard
Amanda Grimm, friend of ShaVon Erickson & family
Ben Hales, son of Sue Hales
Timmon Lund, friend of Mark Wingard
Mark Thompson, friend of Barb Burandt
Pastor Dick Hofstad
Richard Krambeer, brother-in-law of Mike & Carol Roden
Arbie Keown, friend of Tom Mortensen

For support of the following armed forces members & their families...

- Zachary Fossum, son-in-law of Tom & LuAnn Wingard, U.S. Marine Corps – back stateside
- Chuck Brower, serving with the Military Sea Life Command
- Cory Chouinard, grandson of Paul Chouinard, U.S. Army
- Blake Ondracek, brother of Jenny Litstrom, U.S. Army National Guard
- Adam Mathias, U.S. Air Force
- Joshua Carlson, son of Doug & Doreen Carlson, U.S. Army
- Devon Grube, nephew of Russ & Barb Overbye, U.S. Navy Seal

For Support...

- Katherine Hedlund
- Alex Robertson
- Diane (Susie) Stanley
- Cathy Vassar & her family
- Dawn Kultala
- Tim Ott, nephew of Karen Rogers, in Rwanda with the Peace Corps

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Elk River

LUTHERAN

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