



# ANNUAL REPORT

2019







## A message from ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton

Dear friends in Christ,

Stepping out in faith can be difficult. Martin Luther did it in 1517. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America did it at the 2019 Churchwide Assembly. This church can be bold and daring because of our scriptural and Lutheran confessional understandings. Is it easy?

No. Do we always get it right? Probably not. Where we are in error, may God correct us.

The cross is our center. Faith, grace and Scripture alone are our guides. We are church. We are compelled by the gospel and our understanding that in Christ we have been set free to love and serve the neighbor. This loving and serving of our neighbor alongside courageous and faithful leaders is what offers hope to congregations.

Over the past 18 months we have made significant strides in our work on congregational vitality. This church has multiplied its efforts and leveraged its resources to enhance vitality in congregations. Our vision continues to evolve around strengthening our relationships with God, each other and the neighbors we serve. In this way we are addressing both local and global issues by being present in our own community and proactive with issues in the broader church.

This presence is made possible in significant ways through your giving of time, talents and financial resources to our work together. The success of our recent campaign, *Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA*, reflects the increasing

support for existing and new ministries that serve our communities here at home and others around the globe. Through regular, special and legacy gifts, \$250 million was given to support God's work. Through the spiritual practice of giving, we both acknowledge receiving God's gifts and share in God's generosity by passing on a portion to others. Together we are doing God's work in ways that we could not do otherwise.

As your congregation plans work for the coming year, I hope you will be both bold and daring, remembering God provides and desires abundant life for all. May you continue supporting God's work together with a spirit of solidarity, collaboration and generosity. We are all partners in the gospel, believing in Jesus Christ crucified and risen for the life of the world.

Stepping out in faith together,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth A. Eaton". The script is fluid and cursive.

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton  
Presiding Bishop  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

*"So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!" —2 Corinthians 5:17*

# Litany

- L. Gathering together as God's people in this place, may we always be aware of your presence in our midst.
- C. Lord, may we always be aware of your presence.
- L. Knowing that the Word is our light, may we continue to grow in our scriptural and confessional understandings.
- C. Lord, may our minds continue to grow in your word.
- L. Recognizing that stepping out in faith is not easy, we ask that you give us strength, O Lord, to listen and be bold and daring.
- C. Lord, give us the patience to listen and the strength to be bold and daring.
- L. While we strive to know ourselves and your will for us, may we build our relationships with our brothers and sisters in Christ.
- C. Lord, help us to build faith-filled and healthy relationships with others.
- L. Recognizing that we are often the ones asking, "And who is my neighbor?" may we open our eyes, ears and hearts to all those in the community in which we live.
- C. Lord, may we always be open to those in the community in which we live.
- L. Recognizing the importance of Moses, the prophets and disciples, may we work together to accompany and raise up leaders for your church.
- C. Lord, may we have the insight, encouragement and skills to raise up courageous leaders.
- L. Recognizing the many gifts you have entrusted to us, may we use these gifts to do your work in the world today.
- C. Lord, may we use the gifts entrusted to us to do your work.

## God of Tempest, God of Whirlwind

1 God of tem - pest, God of whirl - wind, as on Pen - te -  
 2 God of blaz - ing, God of burn - ing, all that blocks your  
 3 God of earth - quake, God of thun - der, shake us loose from  
 4 God of pas - sion, God un - sleep - ing, stir in us love's

cost de - scend! Drive us out from shel - tered com - fort;  
 pur - pose, purge! Through your church, Christ's liv - ing Bod - y,  
 leth - ar - gy! Break the chains of sin a - sun - der,  
 rest - less - ness! Where the peo - ple cry in an - guish,

past these walls your peo - ple send! Sweep us in - to cost - ly ser - vice,  
 let your flam - ing Spir - it surge! Where de - ceit con - ceals in - jus - tice,  
 for earth's heal - ing set us free! Crum - ble walls that still di - vide us;  
 may we share your heart's dis - tress, Rouse us from con - tent with e - vil;

there with Christ to bear the cross, there with Christ to bear the cross!  
 kin - dle us to speak your truth, kin - dle us to speak your truth!  
 make us one in Christ our Lord, make us one in Christ our Lord!  
 claim us for your king - dom's work, claim us for your king - dom's work!

Text: Herman G. Stuempfle

Music: John Hughes

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- L. Let us pray. As we strive to be your church of the present and the future, may we nurture a spirit of collaboration and solidarity. May we all be partners in sharing the gospel and believing in Jesus Christ crucified and risen for the life of the world.
- C. Amen.

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## ELK RIVER LUTHERAN PERSONNEL DIRECTORY

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### **CHURCH STAFF**

*Pastor:* Nathan Mugaas

*Minister of Congregational Care and Discipleship:*

Jeremy Hallquist

*Director of Children, Youth and Family:*

Lisa Sampson

*Director of Music Ministry:* Taylor Quinn

*Office Manager:* Linda Nielsen

*Custodian:* Brian Harding

*Pianist:* Bea Bastyr

*Bookkeeper:* Lori Sundman

*Nursery Attendants:*

Gabby Klinkenborg, Gabe

Livingston, David McFarlane and

Charlotte Oudekerk

### **CHURCH COUNCIL OFFICERS**

*President:* John Natwick

*Vice President:* Mark Schwarze

*Secretary:* Kari Christianson

*Treasurer:* Jennifer Stanley

### **CONGREGATION COUNCIL**

John Auel

Sarah Chur

Jodie Dahlheimer

Ryan Herbert

Brian McFarlane

Michele Smith

## ELK RIVER LUTHERAN ANNUAL MEETING

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### ERLC Annual Congregational Meeting Agenda January 26, 2020

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

- 1) Call to order and quorum establishment
- 2) Devotion and Prayer
- 3) Elections, from ERLC voting members of council officers, council members, nominating committee and mission endowment fund committee
- 4) Old business:
  - a. Review and action on 2019 ERLC Congregational Meeting Minutes
  - b. Review of finances from fiscal year 2019
- 5) New Business:
  - a. Mortgage Update
  - b. Review and action on 2020 Budget
- 6) Presentation of Ministry Reports
- 7) Other Business
- 8) Adjourn

## **MINUTES OF MEETING ELK RIVER LUTHERAN CHURCH**

The ERLC Council held an Annual Meeting on January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at Elk River Lutheran Church

### **Call to Order**

President Kari Christianson called the meeting to order at 11:51am

Roll Call: Milo Christianson and Conni Natwick reported that 70 ERLC members are present. Quorum is established.

Pastor Nathan opened the meeting with a litany and meeting attendees sang the hymn Build Us Up Lord.

President Christianson thanked everyone for attending and outlined the agenda for the meeting. President Christianson welcomed and recognized Marv Ziner as the parliamentarian for today's meeting.

### **Action Items**

- Review and approval of January 2018 ERLC Annual Meeting Minutes
  - Motion to approve 2018 ERLC Annual Meeting minutes with minor edits. Dale Ziner seconded.  
All approved. Motion carried.
- 2018 Budget Report
  - Motion to approve the 2018 budget report. Ann Hove seconded.  
All approved. Motion carried.
- 2019 Budget
  - Motion to accept and approve the 2019 budget by Dale Ziner. Conni Natwick seconded.  
All approved. Motion carried.
- ERLC Constitutional Ratification
  - Motion to ratify C5.05 ERLC Constitution by Ann Hove. Dale Ziner seconded.  
60 approve, 0 oppose. Motion carried.

### **Finance**

- Treasurer Jennifer Stanley reported the budget for 2019. There is a deficit of \$22,668 projected. Expenses are higher in 2019 due to having a full staff for the entire year.
- Discussion on pledges and general income. ERLC staff member Linda Nielsen informed attendees that there are 76 giving units (pledges) for 2019.

### **Focussed Discussion**

- Brad Tesdahl discussed the Mission Endowment Fund. The first gifts were distributed in December 2018. Members can fill out an application from the ERLC website and request funds.
- A genealogy group meets at ERLC one Thursday a month from 10am-12pm.
- Pastor Nathan presented the Ministry Report. Presentation on statistics for 2018, and challenges for 2019.

### **2019 ERLC Council Elections**

- Ballots were distributed, collected, and counted.

- Taylor Quinn led meeting attendees in several hymns while ballots were tallied.
- Election Results:
  - ERLC Council: John Auel, Sarah Churr, Ryan Herbert, and Michele Smith. Officers: President John Natwick, Vice President Mark Schwarze, Treasurer Jennifer Stanley, Secretary Kari Christianson
  - Nominating Committee: Pauline Kuhn, Harry Maher, Conni Natwick
  - Mission Endowment Fund: Steve Boese

Meeting adjourned at 12:44pm.

Respectfully submitted, Matt Rotz, ERLC Secretary



**Elk River Lutheran Church-ELCA Special Congregational Meeting**  
**April 28, 2019, 9:30 AM**

A Special Meeting of the Congregation was called by the Council on March 19, 2019, to approve the hiring of a capital campaign consulting company.

- 1) ERLC President John Natwick called the meeting to order at 9:41 AM

Roll Call: 98 voting members present, counted by Jennifer Stanley, Treasurer. According to the ERLC Constitution, a quorum was established.

- 2) Pastor Nathan Mugaas offered a prayer.

- 3) Introduction of Council members and Capital Campaign outline – John Natwick

- 4) Brief History of Elk River Lutheran's positive presence and community activities in Downtown Elk River – Pastor Nathan Mugaas

- 5) Outline of Campaign Goals, both for mortgage principal buy-down and potential enhancement of sanctuary and outdoor spaces – Mark Schwarze, ERLC Vice President.  
ERLC President John Natwick, a retired architect, had a visual of a potential sanctuary remodel, recognizing that any decisions would follow the outcome of the capital campaign.

- 6) Capital Campaign Process and Selection of Blair Anderson, New Horizons Congregational Consulting – Kari Christianson, ERLC Secretary. The names of the Capital Campaign Interviewing Task Force were given. Following their recommendation after contacting six companies, the Council interviewed the consultants of three companies.

MOTION: Blair Anderson of New Horizons Congregational Consulting be the consultant for a capital campaign at ERLC at a cost of \$36,500.00. Motion made by the ERLC Council; seconded by Dale Ziner. 91 approved, one opposed. Motion Approved.

- 7) ERLC President John Natwick adjourned the meeting at 10:26 AM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kari Christianson, ERLC Secretary

## PASTOR NATHAN'S 2019 ANNUAL REPORT

I will always remember 2019 as the year we claimed our identity as a church **Powered by Love**. Our Powered by Love mural (painted in April of 2019) has become a downtown Elk River destination and, more importantly, we have put this phrase into action through numerous events, missions, and by simply living as caring people of faith.

This phrase, Powered by Love, served as both a theme for honoring and celebrating Elk River Lutheran's past and present as we marked our 10th anniversary as a worshipping community, and as a theme for our capital campaign, helping us cast a vision far into the future. I was humbled and awed by the success of our 2020-2022 Powered by Love capital appeal and I can't say thank you enough to everyone who volunteered, participated, prayed, and pledged, making this appeal a success. THANK YOU!!

In looking back at our goals for 2019 I am simply amazed at the ways we met and exceeded these goals, and how much we accomplished together in this past year! I'll reflect on each of these goals as a way of reviewing this year, and then look at our goals for the coming 2020 year.

### Last Year's Goals (2019)

1. **Living into our building and location-** *Identify improvements to our facility (inside and out) to better live into the space.*

The idea for our Powered by Love mural grew out of this goal of living into our building and location and the goal of connecting with our local community.

The Powered by Love capital campaign, and the work that preceded it, really helped us to identify, prioritize, and communicate needed improvements to our building. This campaign had a goal of \$1 Million and identified the following objectives (in order of priority):

- \$300,000 Capital Fund for Monthly Mortgage Payments (p and i) for the next 36 months
- \$200,000 Remodel/Enhance Sanctuary
- \$100,000 Outdoor Signage and Beautification
- \$100,000 Improve Main Entrance
- \$50,000 Deferred Maintenance Reserve Fund
- \$250,000 Additional Principal Buydown

Members have generously pledged to financially support these priorities with \$805,815.50 in pledges at the time of this writing. Thank you to everyone who has pledged!

The council is currently working on securing permanent financing for the building (a mortgage) and this year we will begin the process of more detailed planning for the proposed building projects. There is no exact timeline for these projects at this time, because we need to wait for the pledged dollars to come in before starting construction, but there will be additional opportunities for congregational input in the planning process, which will likely begin in 2020.



**2. Improve Communication-** *Embrace upgraded technology to more effectively communicate with the congregation and community.*

Much of this work on improving communication has happened behind the scenes in the church office through technology upgrades and redesigning our regular communications. We have updated our membership software, managed online and automated giving through Tithe.ly, redesigned our website, printed our hours and logo on our exterior doors, transformed our newsletter into a bi-monthly magazine, and found great success in utilizing online signups for events. Linda Nielsen, our Office Manager, has spearheaded many of these initiatives and deserves a lot of credit for our improved communication. So make sure to thank her!

While I understand that these might not sound like the most exciting changes, I am thrilled about how these upgrades and changes have allowed us to better communicate and build our joyful, accepting community!

3. **All Ages Practicing a Lifelong Faith-** *Providing opportunities for all in areas of service, learning, and fellowship*

I am exceptionally grateful to our church staff who do such great work in their specific ministry areas and work hard to coordinate and facilitate overlap between these focus areas. The end result are programs that serve a wide variety of ages and interests. A church is way more than programs, but programs help to create community and provide opportunities for our members to grow in faith. Some of my favorite programs bring different generations together, like Dinner Church, our Christmas and Palm Sunday programs where the choir joined our kids, and our variety of service opportunities



4. **Continue to Connect with our Local Community-** *We want to love our neighbors and continue to be the church downtown.*

Our reputation of being “the church downtown” has only been enhanced this year as we additionally tagged ourselves as “Powered by Love.” My office window is directly above our mural and I can attest to the fact that all summer long and into the fall there were people taking pictures in front of that mural every day. (literally, every day!) We also continue to bless this community and be blessed by this community in many ways, including: *Beer & Hymns, CAER, Dares Funeral Lunches, Fill-the-Firetruck Toy Drive, Downtown Block Party, Downtown Trick-or-treat and Trunk-or-Treat, Elk RiverFest, Kids Days and Seniors Days at the Farmers Market, and Meals on Wheels*

This year, 2019, has been an amazing year of ministry together. Thank you! The year before us also promises to be a year of blessings as we further live into our identity as a church Powered by Love.

To be Powered by Love is to live a life of purpose, committed to showing love. To be a member of Elk River Lutheran Church is to give and receive support, to seek God in the ordinary and the extraordinary, to find joy and acceptance in this church community, and to work for justice and peace.

Our congregation's goals for 2020 focus on **Connections**, **Community**, and **Communication**, with strategies to meet the needs of our own members and the needs of our community.



### **2020 General Fund Goals**

#### **Connections**

We will offer programs for people of all ages to provide opportunities for members to foster meaningful relationships, support one another, and enjoy life together.

#### **Community**

We will love and serve our neighbors through specific programs and events, volunteering and supporting social service agencies like CAER and LSS, and by simply being a loving presence in our downtown neighborhood.

#### **Communication**

We will improve how the church communicates with our members and the greater community, and in what promises to be a year of divisive political arguments we will work to make the church a place where we can have respectful conversations even when we disagree.

I am beginning 2020 with a profound sense of gratitude for this church and our shared ministry together, excited to see what God has in store for us. Many programs, events, and opportunities are already in the works to help make these new goals a reality. It will be exciting to see how we are blessed by Connections, Community, and Communication in this coming year.

God continues to do great things at Elk River Lutheran Church. Thank you for being a part of this church and this journey of faith we're on together.

Peace,  
Pastor Nathan



## POWERED BY LOVE CAPITAL CAMPAIGN REPORT 2020 – 2022

With prayers of thanksgiving and gratitude for the commitment of the members to the future of Elk River Lutheran Church-ELCA, the first phase of the capital fund appeal has ended. We want to take this opportunity to recap the planning and activities that dominated much of our time together as a congregation this past year.

In April the congregation voted to hire Rev. Blair Anderson, New Horizons Congregational Consulting, as the consultant for a capital campaign to secure a mortgage for the church building and, with additional funds raised, to consider improvements to the building and grounds that would enhance the ministry outreach of ERLC in our community. Blair's prayerful presence was a beacon throughout the campaign.

In late May members of the campaign executive team met with the appeal consultant to study the campaign outline and to begin recruiting members for the specialized teams needed. The teams were quickly developed and the "quiet" planning phase of the campaign began. Our consultant met one-on-one and in focus groups with members to hear from congregation members about this church and its ministry.

Throughout the Fall, prayer and celebrations drew us together as a congregation and as stewards of this ministry. Colorful printed materials presented all the information about our congregation and the campaign goals. Invitations to special meals with beautiful decorations set a tone of welcome that nourished the body and the spirit. Over fifty members shared their faith experiences in a devotional booklet sent to every church household. A special sermon series, youth events, a prayer vigil with Stations of Prayer and a Concert of Prayer all prepared us for our prayerful consideration of our pledges, which were received on Commitment Sunday in November. As of this writing, \$805,815.50 has been pledged over the next three years of this capital appeal.

There are not enough ways to thank everyone in this congregation for giving their time and prayerful commitment to every aspect of this campaign. Every member of every team cannot be thanked enough. We offer special thanks to Pastor Nathan, Taylor, Linda and Jeremy for all the additional time and leadership that they provided. It has been a joyful experience to work together!

With the completion of this first phase of our three-year campaign, we look forward to our future growth as stewards of this congregation. We have made our financial commitments, but more importantly, we have experienced a time of prayer and service together. While our dollar amounts for this campaign are amazing, our true gift as a congregation has been in sharing these months of living all the adjectives of our mission statement – **trusting, accepting, serving** – and being the joyful community that is Empowered by God's Love!



Thank you, thank you, thank you!

Kari Christianson and Adam Horner,  
Capital Campaign Co-Chairs

## TEAM ANNUAL REPORTS AND HIGHLIGHTS

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### ADULT FAITH FORMATION

2019 has been an exciting and very busy year at Elk River Lutheran. Some of the highlights as it affected the Adult Faith Formation are listed below.

1. **LIFE (Living in Faith Everyday)** groups began the week of January 17<sup>th</sup> through the week of February 17<sup>th</sup> with the topic being “What is the Bible”. About 40 people participated. The weather made it a bit difficult for groups to get together but the groups found a way to make them happen even if it meant combining some of the topics. Another round of LIFE groups was held in October centering on the topic of “prayer” in conjunction with the Capital Fund Appeal. There were approximately 7 groups that involved about 80 members and 13 children.



2. **Financial Peace University** was also set up in January with 25 people in attendance mostly members but some non-members also attended. The group focused on deeper conversations around financial education and awareness. Supper was included. The evaluation of this project was very positive and there is hope this can be set-up again in the future

3. A study of the book “**Just Mercy**” by Brian Stevenson occurred in February 2019. Currently a movie has been made of this book relative to the biases of prisons toward people of color and how this relates to justice for all (or not!)

4. “**Love without Limits**” was another book that was studied in June. This book was a review of Jesus radical vision for Love with No exceptions. Written by Jacqueline A. Bussie a professor at Concordia in Moorhead, MN. This book encourages us to love without limits, just as Jesus did.

5. **Lights for Liberty** was held (on short notice) outside the Sherburne Government Center. It was a candlelight vigil with prayer, songs, and speakers. This was a national movement to shine a light on the plight of immigrants in America. Locally there were over 200 people in attendance at this important event. It was encouraging to see such a



show of support for this social justice issue.

6. **Farmer's Market/Senior Day:** at which we had an art exhibit by members and local artists in July and in August had a "classic car show & other unique vehicles" in the ERLC parking lot.

7. **"God's Work our Hands"** was held in place of Rally Sunday and in conjunction with this same initiative being held in other ELCA churches. We had several opportunities for service either in the community that day (e.g., a tour of *Open Doors* that assists homeless students) or at the church such as; tie-dying blankets, helping local pet shelters with adopting out pets. Members reported that this was a big success and hope it would continue in the future.

8. **Mission Fair:** was held in November to help us to become better acquainted with all that ERLC has to offer and included all of the groups that make use of the church as well as to encourage others to join some of these groups. AFF got some important feedback as to what others would like Adult Faith to offer. We are always open to any ideas others might have for us.

9. **Singles of a Certain Age:** Out of conversations with members, and the wisdom of Carol Vikstrom we formed the group Singles of a Certain Age. The group met for the first time for a meal and some fellowship and brainstorming. This group will continue to meet regularly throughout 2020.

It was a busy year for all of us at Elk River Lutheran but there were so many wonderful opportunities. We hope to continue many of these initiatives and are always welcome to the input of members as to what they would most like us to offer. This year has been a joyful exploration into what Adult Faith Formation could look like as we move forward into 2020. As we continue to grow, explore and navigate the complexities of life and faith together, our hope is that you would continue to find a place to land. We are excited about the 2020 year ahead and cannot wait to see where God takes this group!

Committee members include: Myron Grams, Jeremy Hallquist, Conni Natwick, Diana Schansberg, Michele Smith, Lorie Schulstad-Werk (chair), Carol Vikstrom. We are always open to new members should you be interested in joining us, please connect with the current members.

~ Lorie Schulstad-Werk and Jeremy Hallquist





## CARING FAITH MINISTRIES

There are also some community services that the ERLC is involved with over the course of the year.

- Elk River Lutheran delivers food to those in need of assistance through Meals on Wheels. (February and September)
- Also, the Monthly Women's Bible Study serves a birthday bash at the local nursing home for all the birthdays in a given month once per year.
- The quilting group makes and sends out quilts to those in need annually. School supplies for children including a homemade bag are sent out to needy children in the Fall by the Gather Bible Study.
- Several members knit and crochet prayer shawls and baptismal blankets.
- CAER (Community Action of Elk River), the local food shelf that several people work at 3 days for one week each month.



### Community Aid Elk River (CAER)

Community Aid Elk River has had a longstanding relationship with Elk River Lutheran Church. Part of our aim for 2020 is to bolster our commitment to this organization by bringing awareness to the incredible work that is done through this program. Our hope and aim would be to invite you to experience the joy of serving through this unique organization. You can sign up to volunteer through this organization via our Volunteer Opportunities page on our Website or by checking your email announcements for opportunities to serve.



*ERLC-CAER Volunteering*

There are a variety of ways that you can serve through CAER this year. Check out their website or ask Jeremy about opportunities to serve.

- Food Shelf- Families and individuals shop in a grocery store atmosphere, making their own food selections.
- Kidz Kitz- A weekly supplemental food package made available to families with school-age children.
- Senior Delivery- Delivers food to low-income seniors.
- Young Adult- Reaches teens and young adults at Open Doors for Youth.
- Financial Assistance- Offers emergency financial assistance for shelter and utilities for those in need.
- Car CAER- provides assistance with minor car repairs and tires done by volunteer mechanics.
- Food Collection is gathered throughout the month at Elk River Lutheran.

We hope that you have a chance to get connected to those in need in the Elk River community and find a way to connect and serve our neighbors.

## CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILY

After two years of wonderful ministry at Elk River Lutheran Church, we were sad to bid farewell to Martha Herbert, our Director of Children, Youth, and Family Ministry. As a pastor and as a parent I was blessed by Martha's time here. She loved the kids and families of this church and worked exceptionally hard on behalf of the whole church. I am so grateful for Martha's time at ERLC and we wish her well in all her future endeavors.

When Martha resigned in August we were fortunate that Jeremy Hallquist, our Minister of Congregational Care and Discipleship, was able and willing to step up and fill that role in an interim capacity. He has done an exceptional job of juggling his regular commitments here and helping CYF Ministry to not only maintain but thrive. Jeremy has connected with the kids, provided fun, thoughtful programming, and rallied a great group of parents to support CYF Ministries this fall and into the new year.

We are now poised and excited to welcome Lisa Sampson to Elk River Lutheran Church as our new Director of Children, Youth, and Family. Please see her bio information and welcome her into our church family!

~ Pastor Nathan



*Hello everyone! First of all, let me say how excited I am to be joining you at Elk River Lutheran and to engage in ministry with this community. I'm a life-long Lutheran, mom, student, Child of God, who loves to travel, engage in conversation and create things. Duluth is my hometown where I attended UMD then moved to the Twin Cities. Before accepting this call to ERLC, I have served three congregations (one small, one medium and one large) over the past 20 years. I have three children, Kjerstin (Danny) who live in NYC, Ben (Adelle), and Luke who is a senior at UMD. Two years ago, I began a crazy journey at Luther Seminary where I am earning a Master's in Leadership and Innovation in Ministry. Fun fact - my son Ben also a student at Luther to be a pastor and we will graduate together in May! I am passionate about congregational worship where all ages are present and engaged, building relationships with kids of all ages, and listening for the Holy Spirit to participate in what God is up to in our community and in the world. I am looking forward*

*to getting to know everyone at ERLC!*

~ Lisa Sampson



Transitions are never easy. Yet, in the middle of all of the upheaval, there were some wonderful and beautiful things that happened throughout the course of this year. The LiFT program worked through a brand new curriculum and developed some great leadership. We kicked off our Club 456 team with a bang and had a fun time with Grog. Our confirmation program has been filled with laughter and great lessons. We spent time Ice Blocking, purchasing items to fill the fire truck, gathered food for the food shelf, grappled with the ten commandments, and so much more. Our Christmas program this year included many elements, including the Bell Choir and Choir, as well as the worship team. It was a delight to watch the leaders take charge and run with the program and share the joy of the holiday season. The reality is that these things couldn't have been done without a supportive congregation and community! Thank you for supporting this program.



*Confirmation Class*



*Luther Crest Family Camp*

I especially want to thank Janelle Katzner, Kelli Horner, Matt Glasoe, Jennifer Stanley, Sondra Dickman, Patty Herbert, and Ellie Hallquist for showing up to pull the LiFT program together weekly and for their incredible dedication to the CYF program at Elk River Lutheran. A special thank you to parents and grandparents. Thank you for your grace and joy in the midst of this transition as we worked through scheduling and developing a new curriculum in the midst of all of these staffing changes.

As we think about the future, we do so with joyful hope! The incredible support of this congregation, the gifts and talents of leaders, and the passion for a great program will lead us into a great future. Thanks for being a part of the journey!

~ Jeremy Hallquist

## ENDOWMENT FUND COMMITTEE

After the generous gift from the Patten Family in 2016, the Mission Endowment Committee became active in 2018.

2019 was a quiet year for the Endowment Committee. There were no award disbursements. We participated in the Mission Fair this fall to let people know about this wonderful opportunity to receive grants. We will be meeting in January to discuss how to become more known and to encourage people to apply for grants.

The financials are as follows:

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>
Endowment Fund Principle -	\$192,048.00	\$179,182.00
Cash for Grant Disbursements -	\$ 6,406.00	\$ 3,372.00
Total Fund Assets -	\$198,454.00	\$182,554.00

Keeping with the goal of awarding grants quarterly, applications are due January 15th, April 15th, August 15th and October 15th. The Endowment Committee will notify applicants of the committee's decision within 60 days of each submission deadline. The application form is available in the church office or it can be downloaded from the ERLC Mission Endowment Fund page on the ERLC website. Information regarding "Leaving a Legacy of Faith" by donating to the ERLC Mission Endowment Fund is also available in the ERLC Office.

Direct website link: <https://www.elkriverlutheran.org/mission-endowment-fund.html>

ERLC Mission Endowment Committee Members:

Kerry Livingston, Chair  
Adam Horner, Treasurer  
Debby Pouliot, Secretary  
Steve Boese  
Brad Tesdahl



## FACILITIES TEAM

The Facilities Team is a group that focuses on maintaining the physical integrity of the building.

We also review some of the contracts the church has in place as they come up for renewal.

We mainly work from a “to do list” completing what is possible for us to do and contracting out what we feel needs professional attention.

Our group at present includes:

Greg Pouliot – chair  
Lee Davies  
Vance Zehringer  
Jim Acers  
Brian Harding  
Taylor McFarlane

Mike Roden  
Bob Wolff  
Bob Krumwiede  
Chuck Naig  
Kirby Paulson  
Brian McFarlane (council liaison)

We meet on an “as needed” basis and when a large project such as fall or spring cleanup occur, we will ask for volunteers to help out. Maintaining the defibrillators and checking the fire alarms is also some of our routine.

We also monitor the utility bills and make suggestions as to where we could possibly save extra dollars.

The use of the building keeps growing which is fantastic but also means more wear and tear and upkeep. This group is happy to do what we do and asks for your continued support and input.



*Remembering some of the snow that greeted us the beginning of 2019*

## HOSPITALITY TEAM

The ERLC Hospitality Team mission is to create an atmosphere of love, fellowship and community. We carry out this mission by coordinating and hosting Sunday Fellowship Coffee hour, other food related events, and member and Dare funeral luncheons.

This past year we added one member to our ministry team for a total of nine who along with Jennifer Tesdahl and Babs and Don Armagost are also Sunday Fellowship Coffee coordinators. The team members are Karen Acers, Barb Burandt, Peg Davies, Sue Hecker, Gwen Krizek, Sandy Krumwiede, Toby Moe, Garnet Novotny and Barb Overbye.

In addition to hosting special events such as celebrations for Confirmation, ERLC High School Graduates and funeral luncheons, we maintain the kitchen and café areas and purchase supplies as needed. We also supply all paper products, condiments, coffee and lemonade for member and Dare funeral luncheons.

Our team is supported by many faithful volunteers who generously give their time in serving and providing treats for Sunday morning Fellowship and serving funeral luncheons and special events. We always have a need for and welcome more volunteers to help support our ministry.





## MUSIC MINISTRY

### Notes from 2019...

There's much to celebrate in the music ministry from 2019. Over 90 musicians participated in our music ministry in some way throughout the year. Young and old, new and veteran, vocalists and instrumentalists, ensembles and solos.

- Ensembles included ERLC's choir, the Worship Band, Ron Sass's ANF, the Land of Lakes Choirboys, the Pearson Quintet, Taylor's Friends Quartet, the Riverside Ringers, a youth choir (in multiple forms), LiFT kids, the Instrumental Ensemble, River's Edge Quartet and the RIC Choir (HTE, UCC, ERLC).
- We were introduced to several family ensembles: Rotz's, Anderson's, Budish's, Hallquist's, Katzner's, Heaston's, Howland/Granros', Weber's, and Horner's.
- We also welcomed many solo musicians to ERLC for the first time: Emma Anderson, Amy Anderson, Hannah Boese, Katie Carlson, Shanon Dickman, Hans Dubois, Ellie Hallquist, Weston Hallquist, Clayton Hallquist, Bella Hegvik, Lilly Hoeft, Alex Howland, Justin Howland, Freya Klein (Hanson), Gabby Klinkenborg, Joshua Miernicki, Amanda Murphy, Jackson Rosati, Adrienne Rotz, Everett Rotz, Isaac Rotz, Hannah Sasse, Ron Stricker, Ryan Vevle, Jim Waydula, Amelia Weber, Cale Wornson, Mikenzee Zins, Neveah Katzner, Matthew Katzner, Heaston Hutton, and Wyatt Ward.

Besides the plethora of musicians who were involved with the music ministry, here are some highlights of the year...

- In Feb the ERLC Choir combined efforts with the choirs of Union Congregational Church UCC and Holy Trinity Episcopal to sing at our RIC service.
- The Riverside Ringers had their first full year of performing for us.
- Beer & Hymns averaged 36 attendees throughout the year and raised money for these charities: ERLC CYF, Luthercrest Bible Camp, Lincoln Elementary for their lunch program, Lutheran Social Services, ReconcilingWorks, CAER, Great River Family Promise, Great River Area Faith in Action, Running for Justice, and Operation Fill a Fire Truck.
- The Worship Band welcomed 6 more members!





- We had our first “All-Music” Sunday on Sept 29th.
- The *Chicago Folk Service* was used in our services during Lent.
- Our community outreach is continuing strong with the Guardian Angels Hymn-sings and caroling at Santa in the Park and the Downtown Tree Lighting.
- The *Liturgy of Welcome* was used during our Bible sermon series in January and February.
- The Capital Campaign allowed us to explore possibilities in creating unique and memorable events like the Mission Fair & Concert of Prayer.
- “Baby Shark” appeared in our Palm Sunday services.
- All our musicians participate in ERLC’s combined service on May 19th.

There truly was so much to celebrate in the music ministry for 2019. Let us be glad for the variety of talented volunteers who generously contribute to both our inner and outer church lives.

### QUILTING TEAM

As part of our outreach ministry, the ELCA quilters made 66 quilts this year that were given to Lutheran World Relief. They were shipped to families in Mozambique whose communities were utterly ravaged by Cyclone Idai. . We also made quilts to wrap around our graduating seniors as they continue on their life journeys. With the help of the evening Bible Study Group and others, 40 school backpacks were sewn and filled with basic school supplies and given to LWR, so that children in need can attend school. These were sent to schools in Syria.

We repurposed some unusable quilt materials and made decorative pillows. Donations for these and cash received for LWR shipping and additional quilting supplies brought in a very generous \$539.61. Thank you to all!

Quilters meet every Tuesday at 9:00 a.m, and the first Tuesday of the month we go to lunch. All are welcome!

~ Sue Hecker and Linda Felska



## RECONCILING IN CHRIST (RIC)

The RIC Team had our annual celebration of becoming a Reconciling in Christ Congregation on February 3rd. RIC is the designation of becoming fully open and welcoming to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning people into the life of our congregation. Our guest speaker was Austen Hartke author of “Transforming: The Bible and the Lives of Transgender Christians” using the scripture of John 10:7-16. He shared more of his life and challenges between services and responded to questions.

The Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall were decorated with the Rainbow Flag and Transgender Flag and 50 stoles from the “Shower of Stoles Project” of LGBTQ+ clergy which documented their stories of struggles and/or joys. The congregation was invited to read the inscriptions on the stoles and several inscriptions were read as part of the service.

“Gather” is an LGBTQ+ group that was started in April. It is a safe and open group for LGBT+ and ally members of the community and surrounding areas. The group is for support, fun and friendship.



Members of the RIC Team are: Pastor Nathan, Taylor Quinn, Carol Vikstrom, Phyllis Scroggins, Diana Schansberg and Sonja Tesdahl.

### *Elk River Lutheran Affirmation Statement*

Here at Elk River Lutheran Church—ELCA—we are committed to being a loving and welcoming community of faith, centered in the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Therefore, in faithfulness to the Gospel and consistent with our Mission Statement, to the best of our ability, we promise to provide worship opportunities, programs, ministries, leadership opportunities and pastoral care to all who seek God in this place. We all belong to the Priesthood of All Believers.

As a community striving to serve God and neighbor and to be open to all people, we at Elk River Lutheran Church welcome all to join us as we struggle to better understand the mysteries of God's teachings. We are challenged by Christ to care for, to love, to understand and to listen to each other, regardless of race, ethnicity, age, gender, marital status, physical and mental abilities, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin or economic status. We celebrate together our unity as God's people. ERLC is a place where all are welcomed to participate fully in the life of this congregation and each person is invited to share his or her own unique gifts.

To this end Elk River Lutheran Church is officially now a Reconciling in Christ congregation and affirms our position of Welcome and Ministry with the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community.



## WORSHIP AND MUSIC TEAM

The Worship and Music team proclaims our Lutheran heritage through Music, the Word, the Sacraments and God's Grace. We welcome all and strive to create a worship experience that is inviting, inclusive, uplifting, Christ-centered, and deeply spiritual.

Our sanctuary is the centerpiece for all our efforts, whether through music, decorating or the assistance in worship by nearly 200 volunteers. We want to create a vital, flowing and engaging worship experience. We are continually working on innovative ways to worship.

This past year we continued our work on redesigning the sanctuary to improve the worship experience. Improvements were part of the Capital campaign. John Natwick held a series of forums on the proposed new design. We hope to be able to implement these plans in the future, including the installation of the stained glass window created for our church and donated at the 2013 annual ELCA convention in Pittsburgh PA.

A playground was created as a place for young ones to be engaged and also participate in the service. Pastor Mugaas created several sermon series including, *Rockin' On The River*, *Powered by Love*, *Animals of the Bible*, *Hey God, It's Me Again*, and *This is Us* focusing on serving, welcoming, accepting, music, joy and grace. The sanctuary has been enhanced by posters throughout the year and flowers at Christmas and Easter. An additional service was added for Christmas Eve. We now have services at 10:30, 2:30, 4:30 and 10 pm. Dinner church continues to be well attended and in addition to Lenten services has been added to welcome new members.

Members are Pastor Nathan Mugaas, Director of Music Ministry Taylor Quinn, Bea Bastyr, Pam Black, Delphine Dietz, Karen Froelich, Sue Hales, John Natwick, Dan Nelson, Garnet Novotny and Sue Sass.



## STATISTICAL REPORT 2019

	2018	2019
TOTAL MEMBERS (AS OF DECEMBER 31)	698	690
BATIZED	630	620
CONFIRMED	499	495

ACCESSIONS	2018	2019
Received by Baptism	3	9
Confirmed	4	3
Received by Transfer	45	28
Total	52	39

Losses	2018	2019
By Death	6	3
By Transfer	8	4
Inactive	70*	39
Total	84	49

Net Gain/Loss		
	52/84*	39/49*

AVERAGE WORSHIP ATTENDANCE	2018	2019
	233	248

EDUCATION ENROLLMENT	2018	2019
Sunday School (LIFT!)	45*	91
Confirmation	17**	24

HOLY COMMUNION	2018	2019
Communion Services Held	109	107

PASTORAL ACTS	2018	2019
Baptisms	4	9
Confirmations	4	3
Funerals	8	8
Weddings	1	1

\* Membership data clean up of Inactives took place in 2018, Capital Appeal communication cleaned up membership data in 2019

\*\* Actual number attendees.

## TREASURER'S REPORT

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### Financial Report Introduction

Thank you to everyone who generously gave financially to support the mission and ministry of the church in 2019. We passed a deficit budget for 2019 (meaning we planned to spend more than we took in) and while we did end the year with a deficit, it was not nearly what we had budgeted for. Giving was significantly higher than we had even hoped for, so thank you! We had a few categories that went over budget, the largest being snow removal (if you remember, last spring we had a lot of snow!).

The 2020 budget presented here represents a great opportunity to invest in ministry priorities, while not drastically increasing the budget, because we have removed two major expenses from our budget in 2020. Our new photocopier contract will save us just under \$10,000 per year and our rent payments of \$36,300 per year go away as we transition to a mortgage, which will be paid out of capital campaign funds (from the Building Fund). This allowed us to prepare a budget in line with the actual giving received in 2019, that also makes some wonderful ministry investments in new programs, provides staff raises and a new retirement benefit for staff half-time and greater, generously supports ministries beyond Elk River Lutheran, and fully funds our own ongoing ministries in a way that allows for growth. Thank you for your generous support of our church and life together.

~ Pastor Nathan Mugaas & Jenny Stanley, Treasurer

### Financial Report and Budget

	2019 Budget	2019 Actual	2020 Budget
<b>General Income</b>	\$ 455,720.00	\$ 475,537.54	\$ 476,250.00
<b>General Expenses:</b>			
Office/Admin	\$ 34,175.00	\$ 36,670.35	\$ 28,550.00
Worship	\$ 6,460.00	\$ 7,020.05	\$ 7,954.00
Hospitality	\$ 4,975.00	\$ 6,572.32	\$ 6,300.00
Music	\$ 3,105.00	\$ 2,519.03	\$ 5,300.00
CYF	\$ 5,080.00	\$ 5,965.45	\$ 6,600.00
Adult Faith	\$ 1,970.00	\$ 1,987.97	\$ 1,910.00
Facilities/Building	\$ 76,950.00	\$ 80,478.86	\$ 40,450.00
Staff	\$ 307,673.00	\$ 304,102.10	\$ 337,090.00
Benevolence	\$ 38,000.00	\$ 41,800.67	\$ 42,000.00
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$ 478,388.00</b>	<b>\$ 487,116.80</b>	<b>\$ 476,154.00</b>
<b>Profit/Loss</b>	<b>\$ (22,668.00)</b>	<b>\$ (11,579.26)</b>	<b>\$ 96.00</b>



## Balance Sheet

<b>Account Balances</b>	<b>2018 Year End</b>	<b>2019 Year End</b>
General Checking	\$ 76,880.07	\$ 79,596.71
Building Fund	\$ 107,825.74	\$ 154,649.38
Reserve Savings	\$ 15,031.16	\$ 15,046.09
MIF Account	\$ 212,994.94	\$ 216,029.57
ERLC Endowment	\$ 183,612.86	\$ 198,454.53
Capital Improv.	\$ 37,305.04	\$ 39,505.63
Dedicated Accounts:		
CYF	\$ 3,720.36	\$ 5,523.96
Memorial	\$ 14,451.75	\$ 3,643.94
Comm Outreach	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 327.00
Equip. Purchase	\$ 2,089.40	\$ 2,089.40
Good Samaritan	\$ 147.30	\$ 125.49
Quilting	\$ -	\$ 542.01
Hospitality	\$ 3,985.72	\$ 3,450.76
Total Dedicated Accounts	\$ 25,394.53	\$ 15,702.56
<b>Total Account Balances</b>	<b>\$ 633,649.81</b>	<b>\$ 718,984.47</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
MIF Loan Payable	\$ 1,621,011.36	\$ 1,573,711.36

## COUNCIL BALLOT 2020

### Terms for Current Council Members:

Jodie Dahlheimer (2021)  
Brian McFarlane (2021)  
Jennifer Stanley (2021)  
John Auel (2022)  
Sarah Chur (2022)  
Ryan Herbert (2022)  
Michele Smith (2022)

### Outgoing Council Members

Kari Christianson (2020) *\*Seeking re-election*  
John Natwick (2020)  
Mark Schwarze (2020)

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Congregation Council: (Three needed, three 3-yr terms)  
**(Vote for 3)**

- ☐ Kari Christianson
- ☐ Sue Hales
- ☐ Julie Haugen
- ☐ Ruth Lemke
- ☐ Ron Stricker

Council Officers candidates – 1-yr term:  
**(Vote for 4)**

- ☐ President – Kari Christianson (requires reelection to the Council)
- ☐ VP – Sarah Chur
- ☐ Treasurer – John Auel
- ☐ Secretary – Sue Hales (requires election to the Council)

## **NOMINATING COMMITTEE BALLOT 2020**

### **Current Nominating Committee Members**

Pauline Kuhn (2021)  
Conni Natwick (2021)  
Harry Maher (2021)

### **Outgoing Committee Members**

Christy Boese (2020)  
Greg Pouliot (2020)  
LuAnn Wingard (2020)

Nominating Committee: (2-yr. term)

**(Vote for 3)**

- ☐ Christy Boese
  - ☐ Greg Pouliot
  - ☐ John Natwick
- 

## **Mission Endowment Fund Committee Ballot 2020**

### **Current Mission Endowment Fund Committee Members**

Kerry Livingston (2021)  
Brad Tesdahl (2021)  
Steve Boese (2022)

Mission Endowment Fund Committee: (3-yr. term)

**(Vote for 2)**

- ☐ Adam Horner
- ☐ Debby Pouliot

# Overcoming Barriers: Making All Things New



When have you discovered newness in life through Christ? Did you have to step out in faith to do so? Perhaps you had to let go of your will and accept God's will. This

is a major turning point in the faith journey of many people. There are examples in Scripture about Job (Job 29-30), Elijah (I Kings 19:4-14), Mary Magdalene (Luke 8:1-2) and the women at the tomb (Luke 23:55 – 24:5). Consider the story of the rich young man (Matthew 19:16-26, Mark 10:17-31, Luke 18:18-30). He approached Jesus with a simple question: "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus replied, "Go, sell what you own, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven." When the young man heard this, he was very sad and walked away, because he was very rich. Given the choice, he found it difficult to forsake wealth in this world for the promise of God and eternal life.

Sometimes there are barriers or walls that complicate trying something new or stepping out in faith. What walls or barriers have you encountered? Consider the story of Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10), who wanted to witness Jesus preaching but was too short to see past the crowd. After Zacchaeus climbed a tree, Jesus called out to him and invited himself to lunch in Zacchaeus' home. We know what Jesus said to Zacchaeus,

and he was a different person afterward. He had changed from wanting wealth and success in this world to desiring significance through a life of faith. When have you, or your congregation, chosen success over significance? Perhaps when using numbers or the size of your facilities as a measure. Moving toward significance usually means sacrificing success. In what areas of ministry is your congregation seeking significance today?

Stepping out in faith may be a personal choice for a short time but usually involves accompanying others. As members in the body of Christ, we are not called to meet our own needs alone. The Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20) calls us to go beyond our barriers and bring the message of Jesus Christ to others. This helps us grow beyond a Christian enclave to become servants of Christ and a serving community. In what ways has your congregation moved from an enclave to a servant community?

Overcoming barriers and walls to make things new involves stepping out in faith. It means shaking loose from lethargy and moving out from sheltered comfort. In the process we break the chains of sin that hold us back and divide us from making us one in Christ. When we share in the distress of God's heart to do the kingdom's work, we are in tune with God's will, choosing significance over success and becoming a servant community. This is when we feel the vitality of our faith and the power of the Holy Spirit. May you experience this newness in Christ in and through your ministry.