



# ANNUAL REPORT 2020



 **Elk River** ELCA  
**LUTHERAN**  
Trusting in God's grace, an accepting,  
joyful community, serving God & neighbor.





## A MESSAGE FROM ELCA PRESIDING BISHOP ELIZABETH EATON

Dear friends in Christ,

This year has been a challenging one! The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the church and society. We have had to shift the ways we engage in ministry from a focus on in-person worship and meetings to livestream worship, virtual meetings and gatherings in the parking lot. We have had to shift to teaching children at home and working from home. We have not been able to travel to see friends or relatives or to celebrate life events. This has also been a time to address economic and social justice issues, to shift our thinking and our way of life.

In times such as this, our baptism in Christ makes a difference and makes us different. Like Christians before us, we recall that God is faithful to God's promises and God's people. We see that God enables us to connect with one another even when we are separated. Shifts in the world invite us to be innovative in how we do God's work and reach out to all ages in making disciples. We see that God is at work not only in our buildings but beyond them as well. We have found new ways to serve our neighbors and reach those in need.

As we experience this time of uncertainty, we sense something new emerging. In many places there are new strategies and renewed energy for ministry, often generated by emerging leaders. We have developed a framework to build on, and now is the time to engage in hard work together. As you do in your congregation, we want our collaborative efforts to be both faithfully thoughtful and sustainable. We want to build up the body of Christ today and for the future.

Looking across the church, I am grateful for your generous giving of time, talents and resources. Yes, God does continue to bless us! God will provide both relief from life's struggles and hope for a stronger church, God's church. We do not need to know how the future will unfold. As members in the body of Christ, we need only trust that God is with us and will provide.

Building up the body of Christ together,

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

*"The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ. We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people's trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming. But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love." —Ephesians 4:11-16*

## ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING **OPENING LITURGY**

# LITANY

L. O God of all power and love ...

**C. ... we give thanks for your unfailing presence.**

L. O God of all power and love, we give thanks ...

**C. ... for the hope you provide in times of uncertainty and loss.**

L. O God of all power and love ...

**C. ... we ask you to send your Holy Spirit to enkindle in us your holy fire.**

L. O God of all power and love, we ask you ...

**C. ... to revive us to live as Christ's body in the world.**

L. O God of all power and love, we ask to be ...

**C. ... a people who pray, worship, learn, break bread, share life, heal neighbors, bear good news, seek justice, rest and grow in the Spirit.**

L. O God of all power and love, we ask you to be with us ...

**C. ... wherever and however we gather. Unite us in common prayer and send us in common mission, that we and the whole creation might be restored and renewed, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

### Build Us Up, Lord

1 Build us up, Lord, build us up; set in  
2 Build us up, Lord, build us up; let our

us a strong foun - da - tion. Lead us to do your  
lives re - flect your glo - ry. Cast a - way all our

ho - ly will; form and shape your new cre - a - tion.  
doubts and fears; help us tell the world your sto - ry.

Build us up, Lord, build us up; as we  
Build us up, Lord, build us up; help us

guide and teach each oth - er, help us to share your love with the  
bear good fruit for you, Lord, give us vi - sion and keep us

world: ev - 'ry sis - ter, ev - 'ry broth - er.  
sure. Grant us faith that's stead - fast and true.

*Refrain*

Grow - ing in Christ, we plant seeds for the king - dom; we fol - low in  
faith what's be - gun! Lord, set in our hearts the pow'r of your  
word to spread the news of your Son!

Text: Mark Glaeser, b. 1956, and Donna Hanna, b. 1952

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In the early verses of Ephesians 4, the apostle Paul writes to the Christians in Ephesus, a city on the Aegean Sea at the mouth of a river and at the intersection of three trading routes. The letter was written about ten years after the church had started. During the early years of this congregation, Jews and Gentiles from several ethnicities and nationalities had come together to form "one body." Paul was aware that they had done well and commended them for their faith and love.

The word "one" appears more than seven times in the first four verses. This reflects the importance Paul gave to being called into the "unity of Christ." He wanted to note that, although many of the church members came from far off, there is "one Lord, one faith, one baptism." This oneness reflects God's gift of reconciliation in Christ.

A second emphasis from Paul was that, as believers, they were to "bear with one another in love." This would require humility, gentleness and patience as each of them practiced their faith. It would require tolerance to "maintain unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

A third emphasis was that each person had been given gifts by God and that these gifts were given to increase the whole. Because the Ephesian church was a young congregation and its members were just beginning in their faith journey, their understandings were often tossed to and fro. But as they grew in faith, each person contributed to building up the body of Christ.

The fourth and final emphasis was that by "speaking the truth in love," each person must grow into Christ. This means taking time to learn about one another and their gifts. Knowing these gifts, we can do God's work both within and beyond the faith community. When there are decisions to make or relationships to reconcile, we know to begin with prayer and reflection, always desiring to speak the truth in love — not for our own benefit but for God's glory, that we might become more complete.

As our members and friends gather today, whether face-to-face or online, we are reminded of our calling into "unity in Christ." We come from many places and work in many contexts, and yet we recognize "one Lord, one faith, one baptism."

Whether new to a worshiping community or further along the journey, we realize that humility, gentleness and patience are required both in the good times and especially in times of uncertainty and struggle. God wants us to be more complete through our work. Christ provides the way. The Holy Spirit is with us for guidance and courage. Each of us has been given the gifts to be complete, and through our faithfulness we will grow stronger and work together as one body.

**LET US PRAY: LORD, LET THE WORDS OF THE APOSTLE PAUL DWELL IN US DEEPLY. MAY WE EMBRACE THE RECONCILING POWER OF ONENESS WITH CHRIST. MAY THIS ONENESS GUIDE OUR CONGREGATION AS WE LIVE INTO THE NEW REALITIES OF THESE TIMES. AS WE MEET NEW PARTNERS IN MINISTRY, MAY WE TAKE TIME TO GET TO KNOW THEM WITH PATIENCE, HUMILITY AND LOVE. HELP US TO SEE HOW SHARING OUR GIFTS WILL MAKE YOUR WORK EASIER AND MORE FULFILLING WHILE BRINGING ALL OF US CLOSER TO CHRIST. MAY THE BLESSINGS YOU GIVE EACH DAY STRENGTHEN US TO A LIVING, DARING CONFIDENCE IN YOUR GRACE. AMEN.**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

Elk River Lutheran Church Personnel Directory.....	6
Elk River Lutheran Church Annual Meeting Agenda.....	7
2020 Annual Meeting Minutes.....	8
Pastor's Report.....	10
Meaning of ERLC in 2020.....	13
Team Reports and Highlights.....	14
- Adult Faith Formation.....	14
- Caring Faith Ministries.....	15
- Children, Youth and Family.....	16
- Endowment Fund Committee.....	18
- Facilities.....	19
- Hospitality Team.....	20
- Music Ministry.....	21
- Quilting Team.....	23
- Reconciling in Christ (RIC).....	24
- Worship and Music Team.....	25
Statistical Report.....	27
Treasurer's Report.....	28
2020 ERLC Ballot.....	31

## ELK RIVER LUTHERAN PERSONNEL DIRECTORY

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### **CHURCH STAFF**

*Pastor:* Nathan Mugaas

*Intern Pastor:* Jeremy Hallquist

*Director of Children, Youth and Family:*

Lisa Sampson

*Director of Music Ministry and Worship:* 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:* Kari Christianson

*Vice President:* Sarah Chur

*Secretary:* Sue Hales

*Treasurer:* John Auel

### **CONGREGATION COUNCIL**

Jodie Dahlheimer

Ryan Herbert

Brian McFarlane

Michele Smith

Jennifer Stanley

Ron Stricker

## ELK RIVER LUTHERAN ANNUAL MEETING

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### ERLC Annual Congregational Meeting Agenda January 31, 2021

*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 2020 ERLC Congregational Meeting Minutes
  - b. Review of finances from fiscal year 2020
- 5) New Business:
  - a. Review and action on 2021 Budget
- 6) Presentation of Ministry Reports
- 7) Other Business
- 8) Adjourn

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

The ERLC Congregation held an Annual Meeting on January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2020, at Elk River Lutheran Church

### **Call to Order**

President John Natwick called the meeting to order at 11:49am.

Roll Call: Nominating Committee member Conni Natwick reported that 64 ERLC members are present. Quorum is established.

Pastor Nathan Mugaas opened the meeting with a litany and meeting attendees sang the hymn "God of Tempest, God of Whirlwind."

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

### **Action Items**

- Review and approval of January 2019 ERLC Annual Meeting Minutes
  - Motion to approve 2019 ERLC Annual Meeting minutes made by Karen Maher; Larry Cook seconded.  
All approved. Motion carried.
- 2019 Budget Report
  - Motion to approve the 2019 budget report made by Dale Ziner; Paula Donnelly seconded.  
All approved. Motion carried.
- Mortgage Contract Authorization
  - Motion to authorize the Elk River Lutheran Congregation Council to enter into a mortgage contract up to \$1.3million with Mission Investment Fund made by Jennifer Stanley; John Natwick seconded.  
64 approve, 0 oppose. Motion carried.
- 2020 Budget
  - Motion to accept and approve the 2020 budget by Paula Donnelly; Dale Ziner seconded.  
All approved. Motion carried.
- Election Ballots
  - \* Motion to destroy the election ballots made by Dale Ziner; seconded by Jennifer Stanley.  
All approved. Motion carried.

### **Mortgage Update**

Pastor Nathan reviewed the work of the Task Force that analyzed commercial lending rates and interviewed five financial institutions prior to recommending Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA (MIF). Members of the Mortgage Task Force are Martha Hippe, Roger Rinerson, Chuck Cazett, Donna Heaston, Mark Johnson and Pastor Mugaas.



### **Finance**

- Treasurer Jennifer Stanley reported the proposed budget for 2020 with a projected surplus of \$96 and explained the lower expense difference of the new copier contract. The separate Capital Campaign fund will be used for mortgage payments.

### **Presentation of Ministry Reports**

- Pastor Nathan presented the Ministry Report, thanking the congregation for their participation in a busy and successful year with the Capital Campaign and in outreach into our community. He also thanked the outgoing Council members John Natwick and Mark Schwarze for their service.

### **2019 ERLC Council Election**

- Ballots were distributed, collected, and counted.
- Election Results:
  - ERLC Council: Kari Christianson, Sue Hales, Ron Stricker. Officers: President Kari Christianson, Vice President Sarah Chur, Treasurer John Auel, Secretary Sue Hales.
  - Nominating Committee: Christy Boese, Greg Pouliot, John Natwick.
  - Mission Endowment Fund: Adam Horner, Debby Pouliot.

Meeting adjourned at 12:34pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kari Christianson  
Council Secretary

## PASTOR NATHAN'S 2020 ANNUAL REPORT AND 2021 VISION AND PLAN

Dear Members and Friends of Elk River Lutheran,

At Elk River Lutheran Church 2020 started off as a pretty normal year. It began as we had just celebrated the completion of an exciting and successful capital campaign, which was followed by the celebration of our 10th Anniversary, and then Christmas. In March we entered the season of Lent and these pictures from March 11 show a pretty normal, joyful Dinner Church gathering. I remember that night talking to people about the NCAA basketball tournament being called off and hearing that Target Corporate and GRE employees were going to start working from home. So, while there were hints that things were changing, that night I could not have imagined that this would be the last time in 2020 that we would gather inside 729 Main Street.



We all know the changes and challenges the rest of 2020 brought, but as I have reflected on 2020, even with all the hardships and pain, there is so much I'm grateful for. This year, in the middle of a global pandemic, my family grew by one as we welcomed little Ben into our family. And even though working from home and distance learning are hard, and some days it has felt like too much together time, I will forever be grateful for the time I've been able to spend at home this year.



I'm grateful for the ways our church staff quickly adapted how we carry forward the mission and ministries of Elk River Lutheran. Both the staff whose faces you see online each week, and the staff who are working hard behind the scenes to make sure the church continues to function, have gone above and beyond the call of duty this year.



And I am so grateful for you, the people of Elk River Lutheran. On Sunday, March 15, 2020 we started worshiping online and as the staff scrambled to figure out how to broadcast worship, you scrambled alongside of us to figure out how to tune in. As we could not meet indoors, you came out to worship at Drive-in Church in the parking lot. As we formed a Community Care Team to call through the

membership list just to check in with folks, you all individually also took it upon yourselves to connect with your own church friends. From the early weeks of the pandemic when we realized that some people in our community would face extreme financial hardship, you answered the call to support CAER, donating an amazing \$14,500 in 2020. Even as we could no longer pass an offering plate around worship, you continued to give to financially support the church. Adapting to the changed format of online worship, you responded to invitations to create videos making music, reading scripture, greeting people, and many other crazy requests the staff and I made. Thank you for all the ways you've been the church Powered by Love this year.

While many have loved online worship and we've seen our church community expand far beyond the walls of our building, I also know there are several members who have not been able to connect online, for a variety of reasons. For their sake, and for all our sakes, I am grateful that 2021 promises to bring a return to in-person worship and other ministries.



### Looking Ahead to 2021

Our goals and priorities for 2021 are broken into these three categories: Connections, Community, and Communications.

#### Connections

**LIFE Groups-** We are currently forming weekly small groups that will meet during the season of Lent to discuss the themes of the previous Sunday's sermon. Life Groups have been a great source of support and enjoyment in the past, and in these dark months of winter we all need a little boost. These groups, meeting via Zoom or phone, will provide people a regular opportunity to connect with one another.

**Transition to In-Person/Hybrid Worship-** As vaccines become available, and safely gathering in-person indoors becomes the norm once again, we will still be able to apply all the things we have learned about online community engagement. Rather than one big day when everyone returns to in-person worship, we will see a months long, gradual return of people to in-person gatherings, while many continue to connect online. This hybrid online/in-person format for worship and other church gatherings will become the norm going forward, allowing people to stay connected with their church even if they have gone south for the winter, are homebound, or simply out of town for the weekend.

**Continued Adaptation & Innovation-** The staff and members of Elk River Lutheran will continue to experiment and explore new and creative ways to help people stay connected with the church and each other through formal programs and encouraging organic relationships.

#### Community

**Global Response-** Through our support of our denomination, the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America), we are supporting pandemic response around the world. Through a vast network of missionaries and partner organizations the ELCA is actively responding to the needs of the most vulnerable during the pandemic and other disasters occurring around the country and around the globe.

**Local Nonprofits-** Through Beer & Hymns and other special occasions we will promote financial giving to local nonprofits. In 2020 matching gifts supported by our endowment fund and generous members made record gifts to CAER possible. If you would like to make a major financial gift as a



matching incentive to encourage ERLC members to generosity, please talk to me. We also hope that this year will allow us to return to regularly volunteering at CAER and other non-profits.

**Blessing Box-** One of our high school youth spearheaded a project to add a “Blessing Box” to the grounds of Elk River Lutheran. This Blessing Box has been placed outside and stocked with basic food and supplies to meet emergency needs of people in our community.

### Communication

**Worship-** Whether in-person or online, worship continues to be our greatest platform to communicate everything from deep issues of faith and concern, to announcements about upcoming events. We will continue to improve broadcast quality and reach online, even as we eventually move back toward in-person worship.

**Regular Email and Mailings-** When the pandemic began, we moved from a weekly email to twice a week so that we could effectively deliver updates and keep people informed about our new online life together. This year we will continue to embrace online communication while also incorporating traditional paper mailings.

**Social Media-** If you have resisted joining Facebook up to this point, now might be the time to give in and join! Facebook provides us a great platform for everything from broadcasting worship and sharing events via our page to allowing conversation via our Elk River Lutheran Group.

**Equipping-** Through many of the communication platforms mentioned previously, we will provide members with resources to help learn, grow, and strengthen their faith. During Advent, we distributed many advent wreath building kits and a daily Advent devotional book written by members of ERLC. For Lent, we are putting together similar resource kits.

This year has been tremendously challenging in so many ways, and yet I have never been more grateful to be serving as your pastor here at Elk River Lutheran. Thank you for an amazing year of flexibility, openness, and generosity. For all the flexibility, openness, and generosity you’ve shown in 2020, I want to warn you that it may take even more in this coming year as we find our new normal. We have a once in a lifetime opportunity to learn and discern who God is calling us to be as a church while we restart all our ministries. Much of what we’ve done before will start back up again, but we also need to be praying about and looking for what new or adapted ministries God might have in store for us. We made it through 2020, but God’s not done with us yet. We are the church Powered by Love, and I can’t wait to see what all that means in 2021.



With thanks,  
Pastor Nathan Mugaas

## MEANING OF ERLC IN 2020

**Larry & Jean Cook**



This year was amazing for us. The ERLC staff was innovative in keeping members, and guests, informed and participating in the spreading of Jesus Christ's word in Elk River and the surrounding communities. From utilizing Zoom to "drive-in," church, to Holy Communion "on a stick," and all the associated programs such as a virtual children's program and Bible studies. The entire staff needs to be recognized. We have also enjoyed a baptism and accepted new members.

Elk River Lutheran Church has been a source of support and encouragement and provided hope and inspiration to us through the difficult year of 2020. We continue to be grateful for online Sunday services, which allows us to worship together in prayer, song and communion and maintain connection to our church community.

**The Horner Family**

Adam, Kelli, Audrey and Katherine



Elk River Lutheran is like an extended family. Even though we haven't seen each other in person for almost a year, we have still stayed connected through emails, Zoom calls, and notes. We continue to be the church "Powered by Love" spreading joy in our community and beyond - whether it has been Sunday morning worship online and drive in, Sacred Wit, Beer & Hymns, Advent Vespers, Operation Joyous Light, the list goes on and on! We can't think of anything more important, especially during 2020.

**Phyllis Lehrke**



The people are so friendly and welcoming so I feel very comfortable at Elk River Lutheran and love the fact that we can still keep in touch even during the Pandemic. Such a great staff that loves the Lord, people and even animals. Thank you!

**Vicki and Jim Simpson**



We are grateful to ERLC for friendships. Even though we can't see each other, we know the relationships will be there when we are able to return.

**Mary & Rick Hansen**



## TEAM ANNUAL REPORTS AND HIGHLIGHTS

### ADULT FAITH FORMATION

What a year 2020 has been. Like most things, this year began with beautiful hopes and expectations. We started 2020 thinking about book studies, bible studies, LIFE groups, and so much more. We quickly realized that amidst a pandemic, we wouldn't fully live into those opportunities. This year looked radically different than most in that we scaled down our goals with the considerations needed to maintain physical distancing and safety for each of our members. In 2020 we opted for ways to connect people digitally. Here are a few of the things that happened this year.

- Sunday evening Genesis to Revelation Bible Study
- God's Work Our Hands Digital opportunity
- Advent Devotionals
- 3rd Sacrament Coffee Hour on Sunday Mornings

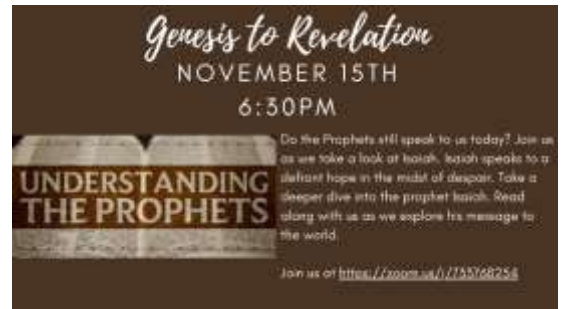
The Adult Faith Formation team has kept an eye on 2021 with the hope that we can gather in person for new opportunities. Until then, here are just a few of the ways that you can continue to connect with this ministry group.

- Genesis to Revelation Bible Study- Every Other Sunday
- LIFE Groups Feb 14th-March 21st
- 3rd Sacrament Coffee Hours- Sunday's Following Worship
- How to Be An Antiracist Book Study- Jan 31st to March 14th
- Men's and Women's Bible Studies- Check the weekly announcements for these ministries.
- And many more...

As we navigate the unknown of 2021, we hope that you will find ways to deepen and grow your faith gathering in whatever ways are available to us. We look forward to connecting with you in 2021.

Respectfully,

Adult Faith Formation Team and Intern Pastor Jeremy Hallquist



#### **BIBLE STUDY via Zoom**

Join via Computer or Smart Device: Find instructions at <https://www.elkriverlutheran.org/adult-ministries.html>

Join via Phone Call:  
+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)  
Meeting ID: 891 0536 5912

#### **MEN'S BIBLE STUDY**

Meets every Saturday morning @ 8am  
looks at the Biblical texts for the upcoming Sunday.

#### **WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY**

Meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month at 6:30pm  
group follows the Bible Studies in the Women's ELCA magazine, Gather.



## CARING FAITH MINISTRIES

These are 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)
- The quilting group makes and sends out quilts to those in need annually.
- 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.
- Blessing Box made available to the community on ERLC property

### Community Aid Elk River (CAER)

Community Aid Elk River has had a longstanding relationship with Elk River Lutheran Church. In 2021 prior to the great toilet paper shortage, our congregation supplied CAER with toilet paper – an item the organization is unable to spend their food money on.

Then in December, a member challenged the congregation to a matching donation of up to \$3000. That money was raised in 2 days and the congregation is giving over \$9,000 to CAER as part of this giving challenge.



## Blessing Box



*Girl Scouts Emma Anderson and Lillie Beaudry have completed their Silver Award project by creating a Blessing Box that is in front of ERLC.*

*The Blessing Box holds non-perishable food (non-liquid in winter months) and household items as well as contact information for other local resources for individuals and families.*

*Others are invited to help them keep the Blessing Box stocked and have asked ERLC to help spread the word to our community.*

## CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILY

The beginning of 2020 brought me to ERLC excited to begin building relationships through LiFT! Club 456, Confirmation, High School Youth Group and more. I spent the first six weeks learning names and getting to know the congregation. I especially enjoyed working closely with a group of dedicated parents including Janelle Katzner, Kelli Horner, Matt Glasoe, and Ellie Hallquist who warmly welcomed me and showed me the ropes. When COVID forced us to begin cancelling events, gatherings and in-person worship, our staff had to re-think ministry and get creative. We balanced meeting safely in person when the weather permitted us to do so and over Zoom.

**LiFT!** – we “test drove” several different formats for LiFT! and this fall landed on Zoom Kids as the best option since moving to the online format. Zoom Kids meet following worship in our own breakout room where we share a story, play a game or do a project together and then end with Highs & Lows.

**Club 456** – had a safe, in person gathering outside the church this fall. It was really fun to see the kids (and their parents!) for some face-to-face fun!

**Confirmation** – On September 27<sup>th</sup>, 14 ninth graders confirmed their faith in the parking lot during drive-in worship. They were surrounded by family, friends, the congregation in lawn chairs and even more watching at home via Facebook and Zoom. It was a great celebration! Pastor Nathan and I meet on Wednesday evenings for Confirmation for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders via Zoom or outdoors when weather permitted.

**Youth Group** – throughout the summer, I met with middle and high school kids on Wednesday nights via Zoom. Even though meeting in this format will never replace in-person gatherings, we still enjoyed great conversations and experienced joy playing games and getting to know each other. In fall, the high school youth meet following Confirmation for bible study, games, Highs & Lows and prayer.





**Quilts for Graduates** – thank you to the talented quilters who crafted beautiful quilts for each of our graduating seniors. Jeremy and I hand delivered quilts to the very excited and grateful seniors!

**Special Events** – In Aug. families got to explore and interact with the story of David and Goliath in “King David’s Adventures” through stations set up outside of the ERLC building. In October nine teams participated in the “Chopped Challenge,” After the live-stream premier on Facebook the “prize patrol” awarded Mark and daughter Amelia Schwarze the golden spoon for their creative and yummy-looking appetizer!

A huge THANK YOU to the congregation for their continued support of the children and youth! Thank you, too, to the parents of all our kids for their patience, grace, and support as we navigate being the Church in the midst of a pandemic. We eagerly and joyously look forward to a future where in-person gatherings, summer camps, and hugs are possible again!

~ Lisa Sampson





## ENDOWMENT FUND COMMITTEE

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

COVID has brought changes to all our lives and how we handle committees. The committee has been asked by the church council to continue with our current committee members for another term. We are happy to provide our time and continue to serve as the Endowment Committee. We are always open to hear of new and different groups in our community to contribute to. If you have a suggestion, please contact one of our members. During 2020 we approved motions to present Endowment Fund gifts to the following community groups and were approved by the church council:

CAER	\$1,000
Open Doors	\$3,000
Thumbs Up High 5k	\$1,000

The financials are as followed:

	2020	2019	2018
Endowment Fund Principle -	\$199,385.00	\$192,048.00	\$179,182.00

Cash for Grant Disbursements - \$2,212

Total Fund Assets – \$201,597.00

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

Together with the Staff and Church Council, oversees and participate in all facets of the operation, maintenance, repair and improvement of the building, systems, grounds, parking lots, finishing and equipment of ERLC.

Additional day to day duties during 2020 included ensuring all areas of the church and offices were cleaned and sanitized according to CDC Covid-19 guidelines and ready for other staff members and small groups to use.

Although the building was not as actively open and used by the congregation in 2020, a number of projects and duties were performed during 2020:

- Replace as many lights as possible with LED.
- Vacuum and clean all ceiling duct work in church.
- Stucco patch church structure being damaged by swallows.
- Stucco patch wall along steps to the back ground level and point
- Patch concrete around building foundation to seal large cracks.
- Repair leak in sprinkler line replacing toro head by gazebo.
- Paint deck and structure below
- Paint picnic table overlooking river.
- Spackle and paint community room walls
- Move rock on rubber roof and repair leaks as needed.
- Seal around A/C roof top units as needed.
- Change filters on all units as needed this summer and fall.
- Replace ceiling tiles that collapsed in Taylor's office due to roof top A/C unit water drain plugged.
- Sanitize all tables and chairs and then maintain sanitization of these after each use
- Shampoo and sanitize all carpeted areas in church.
- Put fertilizer and weed control on church property and spray for weeds.
- Trim trees for viewing outside services.
- Working with contracted resources needed throughout the year including elevator inspectors and repair, electricians, plumbing, snowplow, lawn maintenance, sprinkler systems, HVAC systems.

~ Brian Harding, Custodian



One of the few opportunities to have a crew assist with maintenance – deck painting this summer.

## HOSPITALITY TEAM

The ERLC Hospitality Team mission is to create an atmosphere of love, fellowship, and community. In the past we carried this out by coordinating and hosting Sunday Fellowship Coffee hour, serving member and Dare funeral luncheons, serving confirmation and graduation celebrations and other food related events. In addition, we maintained the kitchen and café areas and purchased all paper products, condiments, coffee, and lemonade, as needed.

The team members are Karen Acers, Barb Burandt, Peg Davies, Sue Hecker, Gwen Krizek, Sandy Krumwiede, Toby Moe, Garnet Novotny and Barb Overbye. Our team is supported by Sunday Fellowship coordinators, Jennifer Tesdahl, Babs and Don Armagost, and many faithful volunteers who generously give their time in serving and providing treats and assisting with funeral luncheons and special events.

Due to COVID 19 we are currently on furlough. We anxiously await our return to the church building as a congregation and stand ready to serve in whatever capacity is needed.



Sunday morning coffee time.  
Julie, Elsie, Bob, Bev, Dawn, Dale, Jon, Gwen



## MUSIC MINISTRY

“Trusting in God’s Grace, a joyful, accepting community, serving God and neighbor”. I try to keep this statement in mind as much as possible throughout the year, and especially through 2020 where we experienced a dramatic change in how we do worship and how music is used in those services. I still involved musicians unbiasedly in our services, engaging them in our community so they can feel a part of it, nurturing a sense of belonging in our loving church.

As I look back at the year from the music ministry perspective, I’m reminded that we *did* have a couple of months without COVID19. January, February, and part of March were still part of 2020 and it’s enjoyable to remember the goings-on before we had to adjust to COVID19. The choir met regularly on Wednesdays. The Worship band and Riverside Ringers were in their regular schedule. The Worship/Music Team met every month.

Then came the whirlwind of COVID19. We scrambled to figure out how to do worship. We were in the middle of Lent and had a few Dinner Churches left to do. Due to Nathan’s leadership and the willingness of the staff we were able to bounce back with some creative ways of keeping you all connected, even if it wasn’t through weekly in-person services. Still, the music went on. It didn’t change because we were in a pandemic. We sang the same songs, whether they were from traditional or modern services. I was intentional about selecting songs that spanned both worship tastes. ERLC worshipped, praised, thanked, prayed, and grieved to God through music in the form of hymns *and* contemporary music. The circumstance may have pushed us out of our comfort zone, but the music was still there to keep us sane and nurtured.

June came with the introduction of *Out and About* in which we were introduced to Nathan’s harmonica and Jeremy’s guitar playing sprinkled with some accordion and melodica. *Out and About* was fun while it lasted. The staff adjusted their plans to create *Sacred Wit*, still, a weekly “service” that helped the people stay connected but adjusted to fit the needs of the people better.

Wow, what a year. Now, we finally bid a well-deserved *adieu* to 2020 with the Annual Meeting. Every year the synod picks a song for the whole ELCA congregation to sing during their Annual Meetings and this year “Build Us Up, Lord” was chosen. Judging on the amount of stress we went through, combined with the tears, laughter, and hard work, I would say the Lord really built us up. On March 15th, little did we know we were about to be forced into the whirlwind of COVID19. Remember back in 2019 when the Grinch came to steal Christmas? Well, it seems that COVID19 was the Grinch this year and it came to steal our whole year. But guess what? COVID19 may have thought it stole everything from us but we knew it wasn’t about the in-person worship, the weekly rehearsals, and meetings, or the spontaneous social events that kept us together. It was the knowledge that “the church is not a building where people go to pray”. We discovered the church is found outside the walls of our sanctuary and in the gathering of souls through any means necessary. The Church “is the people, living out their lives; called, enlightened, sanctified for the work of Jesus Christ”.

~ Taylor Quinn

# Music Ministry

## Highlights

**2020**



RIC Sunday: "Let Us Not Become Weary" • Shower of Stoles • Justin Howland's rendition of "Brother" • Special guests: ANF. Becky Shaheen, Land of Lakes Choirboys • Beer & Hymns • "Some Things Never Change" • the beginning of virtual ensembles • Easter was outside, and snowy • Riverside Ringers' recording of "Christ is Risen, He Is Risen Indeed" • "Easter Celebration" • "Hold Us Together" • River's Edge Quartet "America the Beautiful" • Thursdays with Taylor • Sacred Wit Season 1 • Aziley Welton and Ron Sass's "Psalm 42" • "Fear Is a Liar" • The Great Debate of 2020 - Bass vs. Bass? • "Mostly Music" Sunday • "God of Science" • Outdoor services and horns honking in holy rowdiness • Videos of members leading the songs: ERLC Choir "Joyful, Joyful", Hallquist family "Rejoice in the Lord Always" • Riverside Ringers reprised the song "Sweet Hour of Prayer" originally to be aired March 15th • Goodbye to Patty Herbert, director of the RR • Advent begins: carols, carols, carols • Holden Evening Prayer • Kids' Christmas Program • "Deck the Halls" • "Hope for Everyone" • a simple Lessons and Carols service

## QUILTING TEAM

As part of our outreach ministry, the ELCA quilters of 2020 started out the year sewing and tying only a handful of quilts before shutting down from covid19. During May we set out some quilts for graduating seniors as they continue their life journeys. In September, a few quilters returned to carry on quilting for Lutheran World Relief. Brian cleaned and sanitized the quilting rooms thoroughly for us, we set up sewing machines in the outer room to help us with social distancing, we made each quilter a quilted pocket, so each quilter only used their scissor and needle.

We have 28 quilts ready to go to LWR and 21 sewed together just needing to be tied.  
Quilters meet every Tuesday at 9:00 a.m.

~ 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 2. 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 Rev. Jia Starr Brown who served in our congregation during the summer of 2018 before being ordained. She then became pastor of Park Avenue United Methodist Church. She shared story of what it meant to embrace her Lesbian identity and is now happily married to a woman who has been in her life for many years.- Since this service, the United Methodist Church voted to not to allow gay clergy to serve in their congregations. Jia has since resigned from her position at Park Avenue.

The Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall were decorated with both the Rainbow Flag and Transgender flag and 40 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 of 2019. It is a safe and open group for LGBTQ+ and ally members of the community and surrounding areas. The group is for support, fun and friendship. Since the church building has been closed due to COVID the group met once outside in the summer of 2020

~ The RIC Team



### *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.

This year of COVID presented many challenges. The church has been closed to large group worship since March 14. At that time no one knew how long it would be before we would be back together. Virtual worship, using ZOOM and Facebook, began March 15. The staff has done a remarkable job of adapting, keeping in mind the goals of our church. They have worked hard to keep members engaged. The participation of members online has been encouraging. We hope we can be together soon.

Our year began with regular services at 8:15 and 10:30. We welcomed back Pastor Jia Starr Brown who spoke at the RIC service early in the year. Lent included Dinner church. Everything changed with the lock down March 14. Since then, services have included a 9:30 online Sunday morning service, several drive-in services (also available online), Wednesday night Dinner Church online, and beginning in the summer, Sacred Wit, a mid-week playful online introduction to the upcoming Sunday's theme. Services have evolved in answer to what members requested, such as Holy Communion,



Last in person service  
March 11, 2020 Dinner Church



First online service  
March 15, 2020 Sunday Online Worship



Baptisms during outdoor Drive-In Worship





more liturgy, sermon shorts. Members have been recorded on video reading scripture and greeters have been recorded to begin and end the online services with messages of welcome. Pastor Nathan Mugaas, Intern Pastor Jeremy Hallquist and staff have created several sermon series including: *Let Me Google That for You*; *At This Table*; *Home Alone? Stories of God Showing up at Home*; *Re:Creation : Wired for Adventure*; *Out and About*; *David Almost Perfect...But Not Quite*; *Still Called to Be - Grace-filled, Serving, Accepting, Welcoming, Joyful*; *Give Thanks in ALL Circumstances ... Really?* There was also The Blessing of the Animals, Reformation Day and All Saints Sunday. Advent has added an online Sunday evening Vespers using the Holden Evening Prayer service. There were several services on Christmas Eve and one on Christmas Day. There was a window display of the nativity scene, an outside manger scene and an outdoor light display with dancing snowflakes tied to music. These were a part of our outreach to the community.

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



Evening Vespers – Holden Evening Prayer Service  
Held Sundays through Advent



Christmas Eve Worship Service Online



## STATISTICAL REPORT 2020

	2019	2020
TOTAL MEMBERS (AS OF DECEMBER 31)	690	689
BAPTIZED	620	616
CONFIRMED	495	512

ACCESSIONS	2019	2020
Received by Baptism	9	2
Confirmed	3	14
Received by Transfer	28	4
Total	39	20

Losses	2019	2020
By Death	3	8
By Transfer	4	10
Inactive	39	6
Total	49	18

Net Gain/Loss		
	39/40*	20/18

AVERAGE WORSHIP ATTENDANCE	2019	2020
In Person	248	184
Online Average**		527
Add and Divide by 2**		356

EDUCATION ENROLLMENT	2019	2020
Sunday School (LIFT!)	91	91
Confirmation	24	24

PASTORAL ACTS	2019	2020
Baptisms	9	2
Confirmations	3	14
Funerals	8	5
Weddings	1	0

\* Capital Appeal communication cleaned up membership data in 2019

\*\*Per ELCA "Tracking Online Worship Attendance"

## TREASURER'S REPORT

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**Mortgage Signing – March 3, 2020**  
Kari Christianson, President; John Auel, Treasurer,  
Pastor Nathan Mugaas and Lori Sundman, Bookkeeper/Notary

The year 2020 has had its challenges and the church budget was no different. With that said here are some examples of the challenges and achievements from 2020. We ended the year with a positive balance of \$19,475.42.

The mortgage was able to be finalized in March right before the shutdown due to COVID-19. With the mortgage in place, we can run the funds through the building fund instead of the rent payment that came out of the general fund. Rent was \$9,000 for 2020 which kept our facilities/building actuals much higher for the

year. Knowing that we had rent on the books we were able to save \$7,900 on utilities when we had to close our doors to in person worship. Snow removal and an extra five-year fire inspection helped keep our numbers high for the rest of the year.

We were able to secure a paycheck protection program loan back in April for an amount of \$43,600. At this time, it is unknown if any of this will need to be paid back. Since the shutdown offerings have remained relatively the same, which we thank everyone for their generosity. While saving an additional \$15,200 on mission supplies, and copier expenses. We did have a huge bump in insurance premiums where we saw a change from \$1,700 per year to \$7,100 a year with the change of renting our building and owning a mortgage.

The 2021 budget is on track to stay the same as 2020 since we thought it would be easier to do then guessing on what the future of 2021 might bring us. We will be offering our half time and greater employees a retirement package which was mentioned in the 2020 budget but did not take place because of the uncertainty with COVID-19.

We ended the year 2020 on a high note, donating \$6,500 to CAER in December after a generous donor pledged to match \$3,000 in donations. After hearing this, the congregation rose to the challenge and well exceeded the \$3,000 match. Total donations to CAER in 2020 was \$14,469. Some of that generous year end giving to CAER did not come in time to be recorded in 2020, which means at this point of 2021, we have already received over \$5,000 in giving to CAER.

~ John Auel, Treasurer



## Financial Report and Budget

	2020 Budget	2020 Actual	2021 Budget
<b>General Income</b>	\$ 476,250.00	\$ 479,079.41	\$ 479,000.00
<b>General Expenses:</b>			
Office/Admin	\$ 28,550.00	\$ 32,939.11	\$ 35,850.00
Worship	\$ 7,954.00	\$ 4,591.76	\$ 7,954.00
Hospitality	\$ 6,300.00	\$ 669.92	\$ 6,300.00
Music	\$ 5,300.00	\$ 3,982.09	\$ 5,300.00
CYF	\$ 6,600.00	\$ 395.48	\$ 6,600.00
Adult Faith	\$ 1,910.00	\$ 308.16	\$ 1,910.00
Facilities/Building	\$ 40,450.00	\$ 43,916.31	\$ 41,950.00
Staff	\$ 337,090.00	\$ 321,982.27	\$ 318,590.00
New Ministry Initiatives			\$ 7,700.00
Benevolence	\$ 42,000.00	\$ 50,818.89	\$ 46,800.00
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$ 476,154.00</b>	<b>\$ 459,603.99</b>	<b>\$ 478,954.00</b>
<b>Profit/Loss</b>	\$ 96.00	\$ 19,475.42	\$ 46.00

## Balance Sheet

Account Balances	2019 Year End	2020 Year End
General Checking	\$ 79,596.71	\$ 133,970.76
Building Fund	\$ 154,649.38	\$ 248,276.84
Reserve Savings	\$ 15,046.09	\$ 15,057.60
MIF Account	\$ 216,029.57	\$ 5,536.16
ERLC Endowment	\$ 198,454.53	\$ 201,597.31
Dedicated Accounts:		
Deferred Maintenance Rsv Fund (prev. Capital Improv.)	\$ 39,505.63	\$ 41,495.87
CYF	\$ 5,523.96	\$ 5,675.22
Memorial	\$ 3,643.94	\$ 11,090.45
Comm Outreach	\$ 327.00	\$ 2,165.22
Equip. Purchase	\$ 2,089.40	\$ -
Good Samaritan	\$ 125.49	\$ 638.19
Quilting	\$ 542.01	\$ 567.01
Hospitality	\$ 3,450.76	\$ 3,450.76
Total Dedicated Accounts	\$ 15,702.56	\$ 65,082.72
<b>Total Account Balances</b>	<b>\$ 679,478.84</b>	<b>\$ 669,521.39</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
MIF Loan Payable	\$ 1,573,711.36	\$ 1,269,977.33
Paycheck Protection Program Forgivable Loan		\$ 43,600.00

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## **COUNCIL BALLOT 2020**

### **Terms for Current Council Members:**

John Auel (2022)  
Sarah Chur (2022)  
Ryan Herbert (2022)  
Michele Smith (2022)  
Kari Christianson (2023)  
Sue Hales (2023)  
Ron Stricker (2023)

### **Outgoing Council Members**

Jennifer Stanley (2021) *\*Seeking re-election*  
Brian McFarlane (2021) *\*Seeking re-election*  
Jodi Dahlheimer (2021)  
Ryan Herbert (2022 – resigned early due to move)

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Congregation Council: (Four needed, three 3-yr terms)  
**(Vote for 4)**

- ☐ Jennifer Stanley
- ☐ Brian McFarlane
- ☐ Ruth Lemke
- ☐ Dave Katzner

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

- ☐ President – Sarah Chur
- ☐ VP – Ron Stricker
- ☐ Treasurer – John Auel
- ☐ Secretary – Sue Hales



## **NOMINATING COMMITTEE BALLOT 2021**

### **Current Nominating Committee Members**

Pauline Kuhn (2021)  
Harry Maher (2021)  
Conni Natwick (2021)  
Christy Boese (2022)  
John Natwick (2022)  
Greg Pouliot (2022)

Nominating Committee: (2-yr. term)  
**(Vote for 3)**

- ☐ Pauline Kuhn
  - ☐ Harry Maher
  - ☐ Conni Natwick
- 

## **Mission Endowment Fund Committee Ballot 2021**

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

Kerry Livingston (2021)  
Brad Tesdahl (2021)  
Steve Boese (2022)  
Adam Horner (2023)  
Debby Pouliot (2023)

Mission Endowment Fund Committee: (3-yr. term)  
**(Vote for 2)**

- ☐ Kerry Livingston
- ☐ Brad Tesdahl