

ANNUAL REPORT

2021



 **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,

The last year has been one of adapting and learning. In many places we have seen vibrant and vital ministry spring forth from changes made due to the pandemic. Digital worship opportunities have introduced to our congregations people who may never have walked into one of our buildings. Many congregations have found new ways to invite people to share their generosity through online giving. And many ministries have found just how vital they are as they continue to serve alongside people in their communities.

The first chapter of James, verse 17, reminds us that "Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change." Yes, this has been a season of change, but Scripture also reminds us that we serve a generous, steadfast God.

While we stay rooted in God's enduring, unchanging promise, God also gives us the gifts of creativity and learning. Across all three expressions of the church we have used those gifts to serve God, love our neighbor and share the good news of Jesus Christ. In this time of change, we have opened our arms wider to meet people where they are, living into the reality that we are not defined or confined by the four walls of our buildings.

Through all this, I am so grateful for your generous sharing of creativity, time, talents and resources. All good gifts do come from God, and we are called to share and use those gifts. We have and will continue to answer that call. There is still much change and learning to come, but God's steadfast love energizes us for the work God is still doing in the world through this church.

Elizabeth A. Eaton

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

"Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change."

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

OPENING LITURGY

Litany

Today our congregation gathers in prayer and hope to begin another year of ministry. We bring with us the memory of a year like no other, even as we move into a future that we cannot yet imagine. Yet even now, as in every age, God is our refuge and strength. In times of plenty and want, in times of conflict and peace, in times of growing and pruning, we remember:

God has called us for such a time as this.

We remember the past year with lament and gratitude. We have lost so much, and so much still feels uncertain. We have also witnessed God's hand at work in new and unexpected ways. We delight at hidden seeds bearing surprising and wonderful fruit. When our own resources fail, when we cannot predict the future, when we must rely on God alone, we remember:

God has called us for such a time as this.

We celebrate this moment and the many ways God has held us together as a community. We give thanks for the gift of our church building and the welcome it provides, even as we bless God for the marvel of technology and the new bonds of connection it makes possible. When our bodies need sanctuary, when our minds need expanding, when your grace must transcend our limitations, we remember:

God has called us for such a time as this.

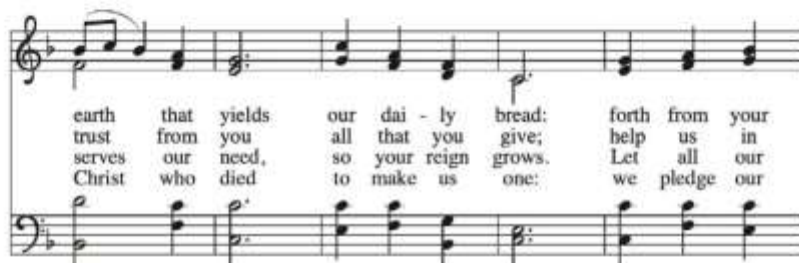
We look ahead to the road we will travel together this year. We anticipate and receive with joy the new gifts God's love has planned. We pray for the grace to let go of what has served its holy purpose. When we are trailblazers or followers, when we are seekers or visionaries, when we must walk by faith and not by sight, we remember:

God has called us for such a time as this.

And so we pray: Grace our meeting, O God, with the gift of your Holy Spirit: the Spirit who has guided the church from the beginning, the Spirit of our risen Lord Jesus, the Spirit who sends us as healers and restorers of your beloved world. You are the source of our life together. You are the rock and cornerstone.

You have called us for such a time as this.

God of the Fertile Fields



All Creation Sings #1063.

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**O God,
you have called your servants
to ventures of which we cannot see the ending,
by paths as yet untrodden,
through perils unknown.
Give us faith to go out with good courage,
not knowing where we go,
but only that your hand is leading us
and your love supporting us;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen. (ELW, p. 317)**

Change and the need for creativity have become constants over the last year and a half in many aspects of life, including the church. This was the case for **Living Christ Lutheran Church** in Flagstaff, Ariz., even before a global pandemic caused many of us to rethink what it means to be church. Generosity from all three expressions of the ELCA (the churchwide organization, the Grand Canyon Synod and members of Living Christ) helped turn a congregation “on the road out of town, near the mall” into an online presence reaching over 500 people a week from Phoenix to the Philippines. (Read more about Living Christ in the current issue of “**Stories of Faith in Action**” at [ELCA.org/SOFIA](https://elca.org/SOFIA).)

Many other congregations have found new ways to connect both when in-person worship was impossible and when congregations began to return to their sanctuaries. Generosity, especially through Mission Support, helped us find and support these new ways of being connected. Early in the pandemic, ELCA Worship launched the “Worship in the Home” webpage, with Scripture, hymn links, prayers and reflections for each

Sunday. These resources were and continue to be used in congregations across the ELCA—even at **Sitka Lutheran Church** in Alaska, whose members printed and hand-delivered “Worship in the Home” resources to fellow members without internet access.

Change and creativity have taught us many things. As Pastor Sandra Rudd of Sitka Lutheran Church noted, “The pandemic was a stark illustration of the fact that the church is not a building. A lot of people say that, but we didn’t fully know it until we didn’t have a building to use. We learned that there are many ways to be connected as the church.” Throughout the pandemic, the ELCA has changed and adapted, doing ministry in new and creative ways, because of the generosity of its members. Even now, you may be gathering in a new way for your annual meeting, to discern how you will steward the gifts shared generously with your congregation to do ministry in your community and beyond. As you have these important conversations, remember that your gifts of time, talent and resources have helped create new spaces beyond our walls and buildings where we continue to worship, serve and love God and each other.

ANNUAL REPORT

— 2021 —

Bishop's Annual Report for 2021

God's grace, peace, and hope be with you through our Savior, Jesus Christ.

I begin by sharing my profound gratitude to you – for your faithfulness, perseverance, and compassion revealed in countless ways during this global pandemic, now nearing the start of its third year.

As I reflect on the ministry of our synod in 2021, I am surprised to discover a number of “firsts” – something I did not expect in a pandemic year. In 2021:

- We received an unprecedented \$285,000 gift to provide educational debt relief to synod rostered leaders who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC). Currently, 12 percent of rostered leaders serving synod congregations are BIPOC, a sign of growth which will be strengthened by this gift.
- With our first ever million-dollar grant from the Lilly Endowment, we called Nick Tangen and Maya Bryant to lead our [Faith and Neighboring Practices](#) program, currently working with 13 congregations.
- In October, we set a goal to **raise \$500,000 in three months** to partner with our global companion synod in launching the first ever [Lutheran University in Nigeria](#). As of this writing, we have \$298,000 in gifts, \$56,000 in pledges, and are awaiting word about a significant gift from the ELCA World Hunger Program!
- We rejoiced with Alleluia! Lutheran Church in St. Michael as they dedicated their brand-new church building. We have celebrated many remodeling projects in our synod, this was the first completely new structure built in more than ten years.
- We welcomed Holy Cross Lutheran Church, originally a Missouri Synod congregation, into the synod.
- Led by VP Felecia Boone and Eric Howard, a task force has been working to apply a racial equity lens to the way our synod distributes funds and utilizes resources.
- We helped launch the [Center for Leadership and Neighborhood Engagement](#) (CLNE) led by Rev. Kelly Chatman. CLNE convened a virtual prayer tent for 77 straight days during the trial of Derek Chauvin. Now, they host “Come Together,” a virtual conversation on the third Thursday evening of each month.
- We held our first [Zoom Synod Assembly](#) with speakers Dr. Drew Hart and Michael Osterholm; offered our first online [Tool Kit](#) (to be expanded in 2022); and provided four online worship services to provide respite and build unity across the synod.
- Listening to the weariness of our rostered leaders, we cancelled Bishop's Theological Conference for the first time and organized the whole staff in a caring process for our leaders, “Tending Weary Souls.”
- We are preparing to host the [ELCA Youth Gathering](#) – the first ever held in Minneapolis, July 21-28, 2022.

Though a list of “firsts” can make for an interesting annual report, the ministries that continue day-in and day-out are the work that sustains. We are blessed with over 675 rostered leaders, 307 serving in calls and 370 retired or without call. In 2021, we supported 57 persons preparing to become deacons or pastors. We work hard so the church has the loving, faithful, and theologically well-formed ministers it needs.

Our monthly conference meetings and other synod gatherings continue to reveal a real hunger for leaders to stay connected and discern best practices for ministry in these times. We are honored and humbled by our calling to serve as convener of such holy conversations.

It is the generosity of congregations like yours that make the synod's work possible. Thank you! We seek to be careful stewards of every gift.

A year of firsts. More importantly, we gather around the unique, first-ever, Word made flesh – the Christmas miracle of God becoming human for us and our salvation. And even more, this Word made flesh abides with us – through all our firsts and lasts and everything in between.

With a grateful heart,
Bishop Ann Svenningsen

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ELK RIVER LUTHERAN PERSONNEL DIRECTORY

CHURCH STAFF

Pastor: Nathan Mugaas

Minister of Congregational Care and Discipleship:
Jeremy Hallquist

Office Manager: Linda Nielsen

Director of Music Ministry and Worship:
Taylor Quinn

Bookkeeper: Lori Sundman

Pianist: Lisa Griffin

Custodian: Brian Harding

CHURCH COUNCIL OFFICERS

President: Sarah Chur

Vice President: Ron Stricker

Secretary: Sue Hales

Treasurer: John Auel

CONGREGATION COUNCIL

Kari Christianson

Mark Johnson

Dave Katzner

Jennifer Stanley

ELK RIVER LUTHERAN ANNUAL MEETING

ERLC Annual Congregational Meeting Agenda January 30, 2022

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 2021 ERLC Congregational Meeting Minutes
 - b. Review of finances from fiscal year 2021
- 5) New Business:
 - a. Review and action on 2022 Budget
- 6) Presentation of Ministry Reports
- 7) Other Business
- 8) Adjourn

MINUTES OF MEETING ELK RIVER LUTHERAN CHURCH-ELCA

The ERLC held an Annual Meeting on January 31, 2021 via ZOOM.

Call to Order

President Kari Christianson called the meeting to order at 10:39 am.

Roll Call: President Christianson noted 64 participants. A quorum is declared.

Pastor Nathan Mugaas opened the meeting with a litany and members sang the hymn "Build Us Up, Lord".

President Christianson thanked everyone for attending and thanked outgoing council members Brian McFarlane, Jodie Dahlheimer and Ryan Herbert for their service. Marv Ziner is recognized as the parliamentarian for today's meeting.

Action items

- Motion to elect all those on the ballot to the indicated offices made by Dale Ziner and seconded by Harry Maher. All approved, motion carried.
- Motion to accept the minutes as printed of the 2020 Congregational Meeting made by Dale Ziner and seconded by Jim Acers. All approved, motion carried.
- Motion to accept the 2020 financial report as presented by Treasurer John Auel made by Greg Pouliot and seconded by Jenny Stanley. All approved, motion carried.
- Motion to approved the 2021 budget as presented by Treasurer Auel made by Dale Ziner and seconded by Jenny Stanley. All approved, motion carried.

Election results

- Congregation Council: Jennifer Stanley, Mark Johnson, Ruth Lemke, Dave Katzner.
- Council officers: President Sarah Chur, Vice-President Ron Stricker, Treasurer John Auel, Secretary Sue Hales.
- Nominating Committee: Pauline Kuhn, Harry Maher, Conni Natwick.
- Mission Endowment Fund Committee: Kerry Livingston, Brad Tesdahl.

Presentation of Ministry Reports

Pastor Mugaas encouraged everyone to read the annual report which is available online and in printed form. He noted that 2021 will be an exciting year with challenges and joyful reunions.

President Christianson thanked members of the Elk River Lutheran and recognized the staff for their excellent work in adapting the worship opportunities in this challenging year.

Meeting adjourned at 11:13 am.

Respectfully submitted,
Sue Hales, secretary

PASTOR NATHAN'S 2021 ANNUAL REPORT AND 2022 VISION AND PLAN

Dear Members and Friends of Elk River Lutheran,

This past Christmas we embraced the theme “A Weary World Rejoices.” When we chose that theme early in the fall, I couldn’t imagine how weary I and others would be during this season as the pandemic drags on. There was one week in December when I had sick kids at home, our dog was diagnosed with terminal cancer, Annie went to the ER with a kidney stone, my car broke down (twice!), and I thought “Enough!” weary... I get it. I’ve talked to so many people feeling so weary right now, but the promise we celebrate at Christmas, and always as people of faith, is that God shows up in the midst of our weariness bringing hope, peace, and even joy.

During Lent last year we explored the poetry of Mary Oliver and here I want to share one of her poems, **The Gift**.

Be still, my soul, and steadfast.
Earth and heaven both are still watching
though time is draining from the clock
and your walk, that was confident and quick,
has become slow.

So, be slow if you must, but let
the heart still play its true part.
Love still as once you loved, deeply
And without patience. Let God and the world
know you are grateful.
That the gift has been given.

-The Gift, by Mary Oliver pg 14 *Devotions*

I feel like the weariness from this past year has slowed me down a bit, and yet I continue to be grateful for the gifts in my life, including the gift that Elk River Lutheran continues to be. For all of the challenges this year brought, we have also experienced many blessings together, including:

Outdoor Worship with Special Themes: In 2021 we held 28 outdoor worship services in all kinds of weather. Joyful special themes included Smores Sunday, Bless My Ride, Pet Blessing, Confirmation, and Flannel Sunday.

Reconnection Gatherings: In the summer of 2021 (when we thought/hoped the pandemic was over) ERLC members gratefully gathered for social meetups at the church, coffee shops, a brewery, and members’ homes.

Support for CAER and Other Ministries: In 2021 we gave an amazing \$21,000 to CAER, \$4500 to Lutheran World Relief for global covid relief,





on top of \$2300 to other nonprofits, and \$36,800 to the Minneapolis Area Synod, which not only supports the work of our local synod but ELCA missions and programs around the world. This means in 2021 ERLC gave an amazing \$64,600 to support ministries beyond our walls. Thank you for your generosity, which makes this generosity possible!

Return to Indoor Worship: On Sunday, July 4th we gathered for worship in the sanctuary for the first time in over fifteen months, and in November our 10:30am service also moved indoors. It is an absolute blessing to have that sacred space once again filled with the joyful sounds of God's people worshipping.

Downtown Community Engagement: We found new, more pandemic friendly ways to participate in community events. We utilized our portable outdoor staging to host the family stage entertainment at Elk RiverFest and we connected with countless families as we handed out over 8000 pieces of candy through downtown trick-or-treating and our Trunk-or-Treat event.

Celebrating Christmas: We held five in-person Christmas services this year (more than normal, so as to spread out attendance and limit potential covid exposures). Over 330 people attended these services in-person, in addition to the many who joined us online.

If I'm being honest, 2021 was a challenging year, but in taking time to list these blessings I'm reminded that God has continued to be faithful and active in our lives together. More than ever, I don't know exactly what the future will hold, but I'm excited about what God is doing in our midst and I'm excited to share the following priorities we've identified for this coming year.

Priorities in 2022

Grow our ability to care through connecting

As the pandemic wains we look forward to many small and large group church gatherings. We celebrate the return of some of our favorite gatherings like Beer & Hymns at Pour, LIFE Groups (in-home small groups), other Bible studies, community events (like the Farmers Market, Elk RiverFest, Downtown Trick-or-Treating), and regular volunteering with local organizations like CAER, while also embracing new ways and reasons for gathering.

Refresh and focus ministry with kids, students, and their families

Children, Youth, and Family Ministry continues to be a top priority for our church. The pandemic and staffing transitions in the past two years have provided challenges, but also opportunities for us to reimagine what CYF ministry looks like. We are exploring ways to help CYF ministry be even more integrated into the overall life of the congregation.

Online is the new front door

Online worship has not only been a blessing to our current church members, but people are regularly discovering Elk River Lutheran Church for the first time online. We are committed to continuing to livestream worship services and expand our online presence.

Make our building as welcoming as our people

This year we plan to begin construction on improvements to our building. All of the proposed changes serve the goal of making our physical space as welcoming as the people who fill it. For more on this, see the Building Committee's report.

Staffing Transitions

This year we were sad to say goodbye to Lisa Sampson, our Director of Children Youth and Family Ministry, after a short but impactful time on staff at ERLC, and we are preparing to say goodbye to Jeremy Hallquist, who has filled a variety of roles at ERLC including Minister of Congregational Care & Discipleship, Intern Pastor, and Interim Director of Children Youth and Family Ministry. Upon completing seminary, Jeremy has been assigned to the Southwest Minnesota Synod and is interviewing at congregations in that synod.

When we had hoped that Jeremy might be able to stay at Elk River Lutheran, the Church Council had conversations with the Minneapolis Area Synod about what would be involved to create a position for a second pastor at ERLC. Now that we know Jeremy has been assigned to another synod and is unable to stay at ERLC, the council is moving forward with creating a position for an associate pastor and hopes to start a call process very soon. **We hope that an associate pastor will provide:**

- Greater longevity and stability in the staff
- Children Youth and Family Ministry that is more integrated in the overall life of the congregation
- A person with gifts and interests different than what I (Pastor Nathan) bring to the role of pastor

This is a major step in the life of our congregation. I am excited for the ways God continues to guide us in this life together. Like the old song says, together we “Keep on keeping on,” so “Let us not become weary in doing good.” (Galatians 6:9) Thank you for being the joyful, accepting community God has called us to be. In 2022 may we rise to meet challenges together and celebrate the abundance of blessings in doing life together.



Grace and Peace,
Pastor Nathan

TEAM ANNUAL REPORTS AND HIGHLIGHTS

ADULT FAITH FORMATION

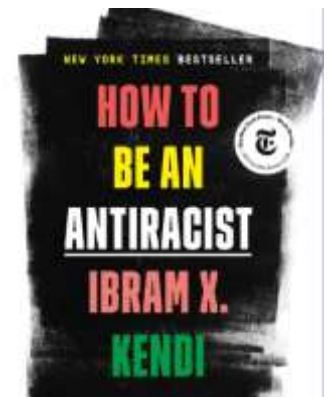
Adult Faith Formation this year looked different than our original plans. We were able to do some wonderful things despite the limitations of pandemic life and the risks of large gatherings. I am grateful for the opportunities to gather with members, to serve boldly in our community, and for chances to live our faith, even if it is at a distance.

Bible Studies: This year, our Genesis to Revelation Bible study wrapped up its journey through the entire Bible! We had plenty of great discussions on current events and the ways our faith and Bible intersect those realities. Our Men's and Women's Bible studies continued to meet regularly throughout the pandemic, thanks to the wonderful leaders of those groups.



How to be An Anti-Racist: Our How to Be An Anti-Racist books study delved into the hard realities of policy, politics, and everyday dialogue around racism in our country. We met bi-weekly from January 31st to March 14th.

LIFE Groups: Groups gathered in-person and online throughout the season of Lent as we discussed Mary Oliver's poetry and wrestled with great Instructions for Living Life: Pay Attention, Be Astonished, Tell About It.



Paul Douglas: In October, our Adult Faith Team, in partnership with Elk River UCC church were able to bring Paul Douglas to our congregation to give a talk on Faith and Climate Change. Paul spoke words of encouragement about climate change and invited us to wrestle with how our faith intersects these conversations. It was a hope-filled conversation about climate and our responsibility to care for God's creation.

Meals on Wheels: After a long tenure as our Meals on Wheels coordinator Garnet Novotny had decided to step down. Our Adult Faith ministry team, in partnership with Barb Overbye and Linda Felska, took over coordination for September and February and look forward to continuing to partner with them in the coming years.

We continue to look for more ways to grow our Adult Faith Ministry and would love and welcome your input as we move forward into 2022! We thank you for joining us on these journeys of discovery and experience and can't wait until the next event!

BUILDING COMMITTEE

As 2021 has come to an end and we move forward into a new year, we typically end up reflecting on the year we are leaving behind. The building committee has been reflecting on the work done this last year at Elk River Lutheran Church and recognizes that our POWERED BY LOVE congregation has much to look forward to, as our capital campaign continues and new construction is anticipated.

The continued project goal is to make our church building, facilities and property as welcoming as our members.

- The campaign priorities include:
 - 1 – Sanctuary - \$200,000: A total replacement of current audio and video systems, as well as rotating the sanctuary 90 degrees to help provide a greater sense of community in worship and allow fellowship hall to better serve as overflow.
 - 2 – Exterior Beautification - \$100,000: To enhance front landscaping as well as reconfiguring signage, and to integrate new patio/gathering space into the front landscape. Another priority is to reconfigure the drive-through front parking for an easier drop-off and pick-up area.
 - 3 – Entry - \$100,000: To construct a vestibule bump-out on the east side of the building to create a brighter, spacious, obvious, and more welcoming front entrance.

ERLC Building Committee summary of 2021 activities are as follows:

- Started in June/July to plan initial activities, listening sessions and to assess existing building systems (HVAC, Roof, etc.)
- Engaged with Terra Construction and CNH Architects to develop an initial estimate
- Contracted with Terra Construction and CNH Architects to formalize a concept to provide pricing for options, with a maximum cost of \$8,700 for this phase

The initial estimates confirmed the capital budget of \$400,000 will not be sufficient to complete all three aspects proposed in the campaign, as the initial project estimates from 2019 do not reflect current building costs. Therefore, the building committee is working on prioritizing the options and plan to present newly refined designs to the congregation in the near future. The committee is approaching the modified plan in a way to provision for future options, with minimal impact to the work that will be accomplished in this phase. As noted in the recent ministry appeal, the project will include repairs to the roof from the maintenance budget fund, with the additional \$50,000 in the deferred maintenance from the capital appeal.



Above: Reduced exterior entry concept as a way to maximize project funds

Moving forward, the building committee is planning to have future forums to discuss the construction proposal and options, beginning in February. Be sure to look for a confirmed date in the upcoming announcements, as this will give you an opportunity to take in the work that has been done and to share feedback on the project moving forward. With much anticipation, construction will most likely start in the Fall of 2022.

We, as a committee, appreciate your continued support, prayers and patience during this exciting process.

CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILY

2021 brought many changes to Elk River Lutheran church. Sadly, Lisa Sampson resigned her position as CYF Director and I, Jeremy, took over CYF as part of the Minister of Congregational Care and Discipleship duties in September of 2021. Lisa was able to create a wonderful program that adapted and changed with all of the uncertainties starting a ministry in pandemic life could bring. We are grateful for her time here at Elk River Lutheran.

The CYF board was a deep blessing throughout this time of transition and for all the work that they put into starting off 2021 on the right foot. A special thank you to Janelle Katzner, Kelli Horner, Ellie Hallquist, Jessica Sandvig for their hard work in creating a space where kids feel welcome and accepted. With the uncertainties of what Children's ministry could be like amidst covid, we adapted small changes to our program year.

LiFT!- Met outside for as long as the weather permitted with activities, lessons, snacks, and games during our outdoor parking lot services. We invited young people to participate in reading during the worship service. Taylor Quinn helped kids feel confident leading music and trying out new songs during worship as part of our celebrations together. Once we moved indoors for worship, we implemented a Kids Korner for crafts, snacks, and activities for kids to participate in during worship. This year we resumed our first communion classes and our Bible presentations at our outdoor services. We also explored our first Totally Hybrid Christmas pageant, and it was a great success! Thank you to all who helped make this a great Christmas program.

Club 456- had its first fun night of "Grog," pizza, and a celebration of time together. If you haven't heard of "Grog" before, ask a 456th grader!

Confirmation- On October 31st, our 9th-grade confirmation students confirmed their faith at our outdoor parking lot service. It was a fun celebration for friends and family to gather around our students as they moved forward in a significant milestone of



the church. Confirmation, Wednesday night programs resumed in person in October and have been going great with games, lessons, and a chance to reconnect after a hard year.,

Youth Group- Our High School Youth have been gathering in conjunction with our confirmation students on Wednesday nights. Our 7th-12th graders have been meeting on the 1st and 3rd Sunday nights of the month for our partnered youth group with Elk River United Methodist church to play games, talk about faith, and engage one another as part of this community.

Graduate Quilts- Thanks to the abundant generosity of our quilters, we were able to celebrate our students this year with a gift of a graduate quilt. Thank you to all who helped share their talents with our young people as a reminder of God's love and this communities support of them as they venture off on their own.

Summer Camps: Lisa took youth to Summer Festival Camp for a Middle School and High School Camp week. We also had families this year that attended LutherCrest Bible Camp in Alexandria.

Special Events- In February, Lisa led a group of people in an online painting event called Bob Ross in a Box, and it was a hit! This year we were able to host our Trunk-or-Treat event in downtown as an outdoor, masked event. We had hundreds of people from the community come and celebrate with us! Thank you to all who donated and supported this program and the outreach it has for this community! We are grateful for your generosity. We also created a family photo booth to use throughout our Christmas season.

As Elk River Lutheran moves into the future of youth and family programming, we continue to be reminded how grateful we are for your ongoing support. We continue to wrestle with the ever-changing landscape of covid and the desire to keep our young people safe. Thank you for joining us on this journey.



ENDOWMENT FUND COMMITTEE

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

As we work through COVID and the new normal it brings, we found 2021 was a quiet year for the Endowment Committee. We were able to award one disbursement for the year. We gifted \$1,000 to CAER at the end of 2021. We did not receive any applications for grants. We will be meeting on February 9th, 2022 to discuss other possible organizations to support and any possible applications that have been submitted.

The financials are as follows:

	2021	2020	2019
Endowment Fund Principle	\$211,941.90	\$192,048.00	\$179,182.00
Cash for Grant Disbursements	\$ 3,770.72	\$ 6,406.00	\$ 3,372.00
Total Fund Assets	\$215,717.62	\$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



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, Garnet Novotny and Barb Overbye. Our team is supported by faithful volunteers who generously assist with funeral luncheons.

The Hospitality Team began serving coffee outdoors before and during outdoor worship in the spring and then in July we started to serve coffee and doughnuts for Coffee Fellowship Hour in the Cafe.

We did have our annual Pie Sunday which was a huge success and also in December we hosted a "Christmas Goodie Sunday".

We have served three member funerals. As of now, we are not hosting Dare Funeral Luncheons due to Covid 19.



INTERNSHIP COMMITTEE

From Sept 2020-Sept 2021, the Elk River Lutheran Church Internship Committee gathered virtually to work with Luther Seminary's Internship Candidate, Jeremy Hallquist. The goal of the ERLC Internship Committee, as defined by Luther Seminary, was to "support the intern in developing into a faithful and innovative leader discerning the activity and action of God in our midst". The Internship Committee experience was an opportunity for the group of ERLC Members to be intentional partners in the Holy and Sacred work of Jeremy's pastoral identity formation and his ministry skill development.



September 13, 2020 – Intern Installation

During our monthly meetings the committee members shared perspectives on the intern's presence, ministry, and leadership. In addition, the conversations focused on offering feedback and encouragement on Jeremy's sermons, worship leadership, personal learning goals, service project, and small group ministries. The sessions were open and honest while at the same time guided by love, care, and a helping hand; providing ideas and support to Jeremy as he followed the path to successfully preparing himself for Pastoral Candidacy. The ERLC Internship Committee Members all value this experience, were grateful to work closely with Jeremy and highly recommended him for Pastoral Ministry in the ELCA.

Trusting in God's Grace,

ERLC Internship Committee Members:

Pam Black

Myron Grams

Jann Lundquist

Connie Natwick

Emily Rotz

Brad Tesdahl, Chair

INTERN REPORT

I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

~ Philippians 1:3-6

Thank You. While we spent most of 2021 discovering how to be church together amidst pandemic uncertainty, there were seasons of discovery for me as your Pastoral Intern. I began my internship in September of 2019 and completed that internship in September of 2020. With the help and guidance of my Internship Committee, the staff at Elk River Lutheran, and Pastor Nathan, I was able to find my voice and gifts as a Pastoral leader in the ELCA. Thank You.

Realizing that we needed to find ways to create community when many of us felt isolated, we worked to develop a Community Care team that reached out to members. We continued our online presence and outdoor presence throughout the pandemic, learning skills that I never knew a pastor might need to have! With the critiques and wisdom of my Internship Committee, I was able to develop skills around preaching, video editing, pastoral care, and leadership. You, as a congregation, helped me feel confident in my abilities to lead worship, coordinate events, and to think creatively about the future of the church. I am grateful for the ways that each of you has shaped and guided me in this journey over the last four years and for the ways you continue to live out your mission as a congregation.

While my future is unclear, I do know that there will be a point in time when I will leave Elk River Lutheran. I have been assigned to the Southwestern Minnesota Synod for first call and am exploring what congregations can use my leadership as their pastor. My family and I will deeply grieve and yet cherish our time here and the ways you have cared for us. I am grateful for the chance to have been your intern, your CYF Director, and your Minister of Congregational Care.

I know that the future of Elk River Lutheran is incredibly bright. I am filled with a deep hope that this community will continue to live out its mission in the Elk River Community as a place of welcome, joy, love, acceptance, and grace. Thank you for raising up leaders for the future and for equipping me to be the leader God has called me to be.

~Jeremy Hallquist



MUSIC MINISTRY

From one service completely online to two services fully in-person, the music ministry has gone through a lot this year, included a brand-new way of functioning.



When we started 2021, the music selections for the services were mixed: a couple of traditional hymns and a couple of contemporary songs. We didn't use full liturgical settings i.e. ELW Setting #3 until we started indoor services later in the year. All of the songs were mostly familiar to the wider congregation, whether they were from the traditional or contemporary style. When we switched to two services in July, each service contained full sets of their respective style: hymns with the 8:30 service and contemporary songs with the 10:30 service. As we progressed through the summer, the contemporary service goers learned a handful of new songs as they worshipped outdoors. Songs introduced were "God of Science", "Magnificent, Marvelous, Matchless Love", "Impossible Things", "You Say", "Jesus Loves Me Mashup", "Good Good Father", "God Is For Us", "I Am a Helping Hand", "Creator of the Universe" (VBS), "Who You Say I Am", "O Give Thanks", and "Emmanuel". The routine of music selections never changed when we transitioned into the Fall. The only thing that changed was we started worshipping indoors for the 10:30 service in November. It just got too cold to hold services outdoors anymore.

Beer & Hymns followed a similar route until the weather got colder in the latter part of the year. From January to March, B&H stayed online, but when the weather became warm enough in April, we hosted outside in the lower parking lot.

Throughout the summer we hovered around a dozen people at each of the events, enjoying being together by the gazebo and under the back deck.

When things got colder in the Fall, Beer and Hymns turned back to online. That was in November. In December B&H changed to C&C: Carols and Cocktails.



There wasn't much for the choir to do at the beginning of 2021 with just a couple of simple music videos of congregation songs and specials. Things got revved up for the choir in the spring when they decided to meet once a month for Monday lunches. Every month the choir met for an outdoor meal together, some were at the park in Otsego, others were at choir members' homes. They would sing hymns together at those lunches but didn't get into the full

swing of things until the Fall. Once September started they met in the church, social-distanced and masked. Rehearsals were an hour long with a 10- to 15-minute break in the middle. This served as a chance to talk business but also leave the rehearsal room to let the air circulate through. This rehearsal schedule allowed the choir to sing roughly once a month, focusing on songs for festival Sundays and some in between. Also with this schedule, it allowed more singers to join. They gained a handful of singers in 2021 because of the revised rehearsal schedule.



The Riverside Ringers had a similar year. There was nothing they could do in the beginning of 2021 but once they were able to get indoors to rehearse, they were able to see each other and ring together again. They too had monthly dinners together on the deck of the church. After their dinners, they would go indoors for about 30 minutes to enjoy playing a song or two. When the Fall started they too maintained a similar schedule as the choir, with the break in the middle of rehearsal. Once a month they played, and have also gained a few more ringers since the start of the fall program.



Our third "official" ensemble, the Worship Band, also followed a similar path as the Choir and Riverside Ringers. While they didn't meet for monthly meals, they were able to play a few times during the summer. The Fall was when they officially started routinely rehearsing and playing together. They led once a month in September, October, November, and December. Their membership stayed consistent and steady throughout the year with Chuck Anderson, Justin Howland, Aziley Welton, Katie Carlson, and Kara Hennig.





The special music side of the music ministry had some moments throughout 2021. The staff led music for Camp Sunday. Gabe Livingston played a postlude in February. In June we enjoyed Rachel Kurtz at the morning worship service and at her afternoon concert. Several musicians played at our “Joyful” Sunday in September: Grace Livingston, Kerry Livingston, Audrey Horner, Clara Anderson, Ron Sass, and Hallquist family. We danced along with the Katzner and Horner families to “Creator of the Universe” in October, and that same month enjoyed Alex Howland play his tenor sax. His grandmother Vicki played an arrangement of “Blessed Assurance” with Val Behling in November, and ERLC premiered their first “Treble” choir on the first Sunday of Advent. And Christmas Eve saw full of family bands: Andersons, Hallquists, Rotzes, and Howland/Granroses.



We did experience one significant change of staff in late summer. After being the pianist for ERLC since its beginning and providing unwavering musical leadership for our traditional services, Bea Bastyr resigned from her staff pianist position to focus on her work at Holy Trinity Episcopal. To fill her big shoes, we hired Lisa Griffin in the Fall. She started playing for the traditional service and rehearsing with the choir in September.



2021 was a great chance to experience some new things with the music ministry: new songs, new service orders, new rehearsal schedules, and new musicians. The pandemic forced us to reimagine a new way of doing things and the hope is to grow more from it.

~ Taylor Quinn

QUILTING TEAM

As part of our outreach, the ERLC quilters of 2021 made 104 quilts that were delivered to Lutheran World Relief to be sent around the world. These quilts are not only sent overseas, but also stateside when needed. They make a real difference in the lives of those who receive them. On October 24th, Elk River Lutheran had it's Quilt Blessing at both it's indoor and outdoor worship services. These 104 Quilts as well as 61 School Kits/Backpacks have been made this past year and were blessed at these services. The quilters then took care of getting these items delivered to Lutheran World Relief. We want to thank all those who have donated fabric and school supplies so that these projects may be completed.

In August a Quilting Ironing Board Cover was constructed and created with memorial funds in memory of Delphine Dietz. The quilting ironing board cover allows for ironing long seams and large pieces of fabric so much easier now.

On November 28th, with the donations of Christmas fabric, the quilting team made items that were available before Christmas for donations. The money donated went to quilting supplies for Lutheran World Relief.

The Quilting Team can always use fabric and sheets, new or gently used. New participants are always welcome to quilting. You don't have to be a seamstress to join us. We sew, we tie knots and a variety of other things. We meet every Tuesday at 9am until around 11am. Come check us out in the Lower Level of the church!



QUILTING IRONING BOARD COVER
Constructed by Lee Davis, quilting group covered it. Funded by a memorial to quilting fund
IN MEMORY OF DELPHINE DIETZ



 LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF



SCHOOL KITS



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 has again been a year of unknowns. As participants received vaccines, the possibilities for indoor worship seemed good, then a delta variant hit putting some plans on hold. Trying to balance safety, meaningful worship experiences in person and online has been our challenge. On July 4, 90 people attended the first indoor worship service since March of 2020.



The 10:30 Contemporary service has been outdoors, moving to the lower parking lot in July. This service moved indoors November 7th. The 10:30 service is available online and the goal is to be able to provide both services online. Steps are being taken to hire a person to enable this outcome. There are many for whom the online offering has been a tremendous value.

The staff has worked tirelessly to provide meaningful worship experiences and keep participants engaged and connected. The team continues to enhance the worship experience with visuals.



The team has been focusing on plans for the remodel of the sanctuary. They are in the process of figuring out how best to get the stain glass window repaired and ready for the new sanctuary. They have also been working on storage for communion needs, paraments, and seasonal items used in worship. They met with the building committee and communicated the need for adequate storage, acoustics and visuals.

Our team has seen a few changes. Delphine Dietz, who helped with getting items ready for baptisms passed away and has been greatly missed. Bea Bastyr, our pianist, had decided to concentrate her work at her home church Holy Trinity. A new pianist, Lisa Griffin, has been

hired. Pam Black, who coordinated the worship volunteers, stepped down from that role. It



has been a journey to duplicate this task. The committee helped update the volunteer list and the staff has taken over the role of coordination.

We continue to work toward a safe indoor worship experience for everyone.

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



STATISTICAL REPORT 2021

	2020	2021
TOTAL MEMBERS (AS OF DECEMBER 31)	689	680
BAPTIZED	616	609
CONFIRMED	512	502

ACCESSIONS	2020	2020
Received by Baptism	2	5
Confirmed	14	6
Received by Transfer	4	11
Total	20	22

Losses	2020	2020
By Death	8	9
By Transfer	10	4
Inactive	6	11
Total	18	24

Net Gain/Loss		
	20/18	22/24

AVERAGE WORSHIP ATTENDANCE	2020	2021
In Person	184	108
Online Average**	527	395

EDUCATION ENROLLMENT	2020	2021
Sunday School (LIFT!)	91	70
Confirmation	24	22

PASTORAL ACTS	2020	2021
Baptisms	2	5
Confirmations	14	6
Funerals	5	11
Weddings	0	2

**Per ELCA "Tracking Online Worship Attendance"

TREASURER'S REPORT

First, I would just like to thank you all for your generous support. This year was very difficult to predict and with your generous giving, we made it through another year under the pandemic. We ended the year with a positive balance of \$643.82.

Some of the highlights of 2021 were

- the money spent on a new stage for outdoor church.
- the purchase of new iPads to enhance the live stream.

With those purchases, we were able to find ways to safely keep you a part of the ERLC community. The other major highlight was the \$64,600 we were able to give back to our other ministries. Groups such as CAER, Lutheran World Relief, Minneapolis Synod, and other Non-Profits in the area. We were also able to grow the Building Fund by \$115,000 in twelve months to total \$392,000 to help with having money in our account while our building committee gets ready to start with some of the improvements.

In the 2022 budget, we are going to try an increase of 2% to help cover the cost of a new position of an ordained pastor to fill some of the positions that are becoming open with Jeremy moving on to the Southwest Synod. With this increase, we are going to be able to continue all the programs we are currently doing and still have the flexibility to add something if it looks like something will enhance the ERLC experience.

~ John Auel, Treasurer

Financial Report and Budget

	2021 Budget	2021 Actual	2022 Budget
General Income	\$ 479,000.00	\$ 490,713.26	\$ 501,255.00
General Expenses:			
Office/Admin	\$ 35,850.00	\$ 30,370.13	\$ 33,460.00
Worship	\$ 7,954.00	\$ 12,411.68	\$ 11,150.00
Hospitality	\$ 6,300.00	\$ 1,894.21	\$ 6,300.00
Music	\$ 5,300.00	\$ 4,873.03	\$ 6,950.00
CYF	\$ 6,600.00	\$ 5,049.53	\$ 6,350.00
Adult Faith	\$ 1,910.00	\$ 210.90	\$ 1,475.00
Facilities/Building	\$ 41,950.00	\$ 37,594.91	\$ 41,450.00
Staff	\$ 318,590.00	\$ 332,987.19	\$ 347,319.33
New Ministry Initiatives	\$ 7,700.00	\$ -	
Benevolence	\$ 46,800.00	\$ 64,677.86	\$ 46,800.00
Total Expense	\$ 478,954.00	\$ 490,069.44	\$ 501,254.33
Profit/Loss	\$ 46.00	\$ 643.82	\$ 0.67

Balance Sheet

Account Balances	2020 Year End	2021 Year End
General Checking	\$ 133,970.76	\$ 83,690.48
Building Fund	\$ 248,276.84	\$ 392,107.53
Reserve Savings	\$ 15,057.60	\$ 34,181.41
MIF Account	\$ 5,536.16	\$ 5,564.30
ERLC Endowment	\$ 201,597.31	\$ 215,717.62
Dedicated Accounts:		
Deferred Maintenance Rsv Fund (prev. Capital Improv.)	\$ 41,495.87	\$ 42,068.82
CYF	\$ 5,675.22	\$ 5,675.22
Memorial	\$ 11,090.45	\$ 13,459.60
Comm Outreach	\$ 2,165.22	\$ 8,125.14
Good Samaritan	\$ 638.19	\$ 1,610.90
Quilting	\$ 567.01	\$ 739.81
Hospitality	\$ 3,450.76	\$ 3,450.76
Total Dedicated Accounts	\$ 65,082.72	\$ 75,130.25
Total Account Balances	\$ 669,521.39	806,391.59
Liabilities		
MIF Loan Payable	\$ 1,269,977.33	\$ 1,220,743.73
Paycheck Protection Program Forgivable Loan	\$ 43,600.00	\$ -

COUNCIL BALLOT 2022

Terms for Current Council Members:

Kari Christianson (2023)
Sue Hales (2023)
Ron Stricker (2023)
Dave Katzner (2024)
Jennifer Stanley (2024)
Mark Johnson (2024)

Outgoing Council Members

Sarah Chur (2021)
John Auel (2021)
Ruth Lemke (2021)
Michele Smith (2021)

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

- ☐ Matt Glasoe
- ☐ Julie Haugen
- ☐ Conni Natwick
- ☐ Tom Werk

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

- ☐ President – David Katzner
- ☐ VP – Jennifer Stanley
- ☐ Treasurer – Ron Stricker
- ☐ Secretary – Sue Hales

NOMINATING COMMITTEE BALLOT 2022

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)

- ☐ Amy Anderson
 - ☐ John Auel
 - ☐ Diana Schansberg
-

Mission Endowment Fund Committee Ballot 2022

Current Mission Endowment Fund Committee Members

Steve Boese (2022)
Adam Horner (2023)
Debby Pouliot (2023)
Kerry Livingston (2024)
Brad Tesdahl (2024)

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

(Vote for 1)

- ☐ John Campbell (2025)



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

729 Main St NW, Elk River, MN 55330

www.elkriverlutheran.org