ERLC Council Meeting Minutes

Elk River Lutheran Church, Elk River, MN - ELCA

The ERLC Council held a regularly scheduled meeting on **Tuesday, April 21, 2026.**

Call to Order

President Jeff Schrock called the meeting to order at 6:31 pm. Devotion and prayer led by Conni Natwick.

Roll Call: Name Highlighted Indicates Present

Δ Jeff Schrock - President	Δ Kent Larson - VP	Δ Amy Anderson - Treasurer
Δ Pastor Nathan Mugaas	Δ Pastor Anne Schaefer	Δ Kelli Horner - Secretary
Δ Zoey Day	Δ Julie Marie Haugen	Δ Justin Howland
Δ Conni Natwick	Δ Dan Nelson	Δ Renee Thurmer

ERLC Congregation Member Comments and Council Listening Session

At this time visitors to the meeting are welcome to present information of interest. The members of the ERLC Council will receive such input without comment and will not discuss or act relative to any items brought forth at the meeting. The ERLC Council may direct consideration of presented information at subsequent meetings.

- Nothing presented at this time.

Action Items in BOLD

March Council meeting minutes review and approval (Kelli Horner)

Motion to approve the minutes of the March 17, 2026, ERLC Council meeting made by Dan Nelson and seconded by Justin Howland. Approved. Motion carried.

Pastoral Updates from Pastor Nathan and Pastor Anne

Pastor Nathan:

- Linda Nielsen went on medical leave in March and is recovering. Chuck Anderson is filling in for Linda, and it has been going well.
- Conversations with Council Officers and Michelle Hagberg. She hasn't been working full budgeted hours, but having her kids help her and she pays them on her own. Moving forward with hiring Owen and Grace as employees to get paid directly from the church. Budgeted hours and dollars will stay the same.
- Holy Week went well. Started with Palm Sunday with the kids' program. Friday evening Table to Tomb service was well received and attended. Easter morning went well despite some problems with flower delivery (all worked out). Easter Sunday attendance was down ~100 people without any clear explanation (e.g., weather, etc.), so will monitor going forward, but still think it makes sense to have three services.

- Synod Assembly is coming up at the beginning of May – Renee Thurmer and Conni Natwick will be representing the ERLC council. Pastor Nathan and Anne will be attending as well as Zoey as a youth representative. Zoey is on the ballot to be the youth representative on the Synod Council.
- Downtown parking construction is about to begin (where the Farmers Market is) with the goal of being done mid-June before the Farmers Market starts. The parking lot east of the church will also be worked on, but more minimal. Both projects will impact parking for people attending/visiting church. Communications will be sent shortly to let everyone know about the projects. In 2027, Main Street and sidewalks will be redone over 2 years that will also impact us.

<u>Pastor Anne:</u>

- Pastor Anne was attending a conference, so provided the following updates via email.
- Children's Ministries:
  - 15 students participated in the Palm Sunday Program; 11 students sang in the Kids Sing (song during Offering). 3 families created commercials. I've only received positive feedback from the families and from the congregation.
  - The Age-to-Age Leadership Team is close to beginning some new initiatives to better engage children at ERLC. The first initiative is a bingo card that kids fill out each week. The bingo card has squares that get them to engage in worship and build community. Each student that gets a bingo receives a sucker then gets entered into a drawing for a bigger prize. We've ordered a sign with a collection box that will live in the Fellowship Hall.
  - I picked a VBS theme, Road Trip. I chose this because the theology really meshes well with ERLC, and two other congregations that I know are using it and have agreed to share their supplies and decor with us which gives us more bang for our buck.
  - Last CYF Night of the year is Wednesday, April 22nd. We will learn about our theological call to care for God's Creation - especially in regard to water and watersheds. We have a professional educator, Heidi Ferris, coming to lead us - sponsored in part by the Endowment Team and a Thriven Action Team. This event was planned to help support our strategic plan item to lean into our identity as being a resident of the Mississippi River.
- High School Ministry:
  - I organized the service project for middle and high school students last week to Global Health Ministries. 5 high schoolers went, and 10 middle schoolers made it. (GHM collects medical supplies from the US (hospitals and clinics, as well as people) and ships them to under-resourced countries. Our students helped pack the crate being shipped).
  - Tried to take high school students to a community mental health event last week, but only one person was interested, so it got canceled.
- Social Justice Action Team (SJAT):
  - A Temple Talk is scheduled for SJAT, plus one each for two different organizations that they have worked with. One is an organization called Terebinth Refuge helps people heal from sex-trafficking, and the other is Open Doors which helps youth and young adults fight homelessness. Our congregation will be able to learn about these organizations through both a Temple Talk and an Adult Forum on each of those Sundays.
  - SJAT wants to host a 3-week drive to collect money to gift to Open Doors beginning June 7th (the day of Open Doors Temple Talk and Adult Forum) to support Open Doors for Youth opening a short-term housing location.

- SJAT is working to choose 4 Sundays this Fall to do a video-discussion series called "Made for These Times: Spiritual Leadership for a World in Crisis." The videos were hosted and produced by Convergence for an online event designed to empower faith leaders, activists, and organizers to lead with courage, compassion, and clarity. It features a total of 15 videos from prophetic voices addressing climate collapse, political extremism, and cultural fragmentation, providing tools for resilient leadership. SJAT and Pastor Anne would like to host a 4-week series on Sundays in October, in-between services (Adult Forum style), to watch one 20-minute video and host a short discussion on each one.

March 2026 Financials review and approval (Amy Anderson)

Motion to approve the March 2026 Financials as presented made by Julie Marie Haugen and seconded by Conni Natwick. Approved. Motion carried.

New & Continuing Business:

- ERLC Exterior Improvements Project Update (Jeff):
  - Reached out to a contractor to give us a sense if the current plan will be within or over budget. Initial indications will be the project could be under budget. However, there are always unexpected items that come up, so it is a good position to be in.
  - Council provided feedback on the plan:
    - Need to address signage as it is important to know our building is a church. Jeff will take this back to the building committee to explore ideas.
    - May want to add some lighting in the remaining tower(s)
  - A congregational review of the plan is scheduled for Sunday, April 26 between services.
  - A formal congregational vote on the plan / approval to use funds is tentatively targeted for May.
  - Construction is expected to start mid/late June and be finished mid/late August.

- ERLC By-laws and Constitution (Kent/Pastor Nathan):
  - Still waiting for the Synod.

Adjourn and Lord's Prayer

President Jeff Schrock adjourned the meeting at 7:20 pm and led the council in The Lord's Prayer.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, May 19, 2026, 6:30 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Kelli Horner, Secretary

Addendums – None