

# Monthly newsletter of Elk River Lutheran Church

## May 2018

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

### Pastor's Message

This month we celebrated my son Teddy's fourth birthday. My wife Annie and I are amazed at how fast the years have gone (even though many days and nights have seemed VERY long). This year he turned four, meaning next year he'll turn five (yes, I am pretty good at counting). Five years is pretty big milestone, because that's when it's time to get out of the house and head off to school. We're not even there yet, but Annie and I already feel a little nervous and excited for our little Teddy to be getting out of the house and starting this new stage of learning.

On May 19th, 2013 Elk River Lutheran Church held its first worship service in the remodeled bank building at 729 Main Street in downtown Elk River. This spring we are celebrating this 5th anniversary on Sunday, May 20th with a special emphasis in our regular worship services and a Downtown Block Party.

After five years kids get out of the house and go to school to focus on learning. Elk River Lutheran Church, it's been five years... it's time for us to get out of this house, engage in the community, and do some learning!

This is an exciting time to be a part of Elk River Lutheran Church! Throughout the last year we have worked at forming good relationships with our downtown businesses and the city. This has led to some wonderful opportunities for partnership on some magnificent events, which will get us "out of the house" and into the community. Here is some of what's happening this summer:

#### Month of May -- Elk River Lutheran CAER 729 Challenge

Sunday, May 20 -- 11:30am-1:00pm -- Downtown Block Party

Monday, June 4 -- 6:30pm-8:30pm -- Beer & Hymns at Pour Wine Bar and Bistro

Thursday, June 14 -- 3:00pm-7:00pm -- Kids' Days at the Farmer's Market

Saturday, July 7 -- 3:00pm-7:00pm -- Elk River Fest- ERLC hosting the Kids' Zone

Monday, July 9 -- 6:30pm-8:30pm -- Beer & Hymns at Pour Wine Bar and Bistro

Thursday, July 12 -- 3:00pm-7:00pm -- Kids' Days at the Farmer's Market

Saturday, July 21 -- 10:00am -- Sherburne County Fair Parade

Monday, August 6 -- 6:30pm-8:30pm -- Beer & Hymns at Pour Wine Bar and Bistro

Thursday, August 9 -- 3:00pm-7:00pm -- Kids' Days at the Farmer's Market

Thursday, September 13 -- 3:00pm-7:00pm -- Kids' Days at the Farmer's Market

### Contact Information

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This month we begin an official time of discernment at Elk River Lutheran Church, looking to answer the question, “*Who is Elk River Lutheran Church and who is God calling us to be?*” For the past several months our church staff and council leadership have been working with Jim LaDoux from Vibrant Faith Ministries. This work was mostly done in the background, but now we are ready to ask for your input in this visioning process (looking to the future).

We have formed a Vision Team, who will work with Jim and I in this visioning process; listening to the congregation and community, compiling the information we collect, and through prayerful discernment, letting the knowledge collected shape a shared vision of our congregation’s future. Vision Team members include: Sue Hales, John Auel, Cedric Olson, Cassidy Wolcenski, and Sarah Chur.

In the coming months we will ask you to take part in a Congregational Vitality Audit (an online survey about ERLC) and we will host a Congregational Forum (May 6th between services). Please take part in these opportunities, because we need your voice.

Tied into this time of discernment is a sermon series that will start April 15th and will serve as the theme for our LIFE Groups (small groups), also starting that week. Our theme is “What do we do as God’s Church?” and we will be invited to reflect on our life together as God’s Church: Gather, Go, Give, Grow.

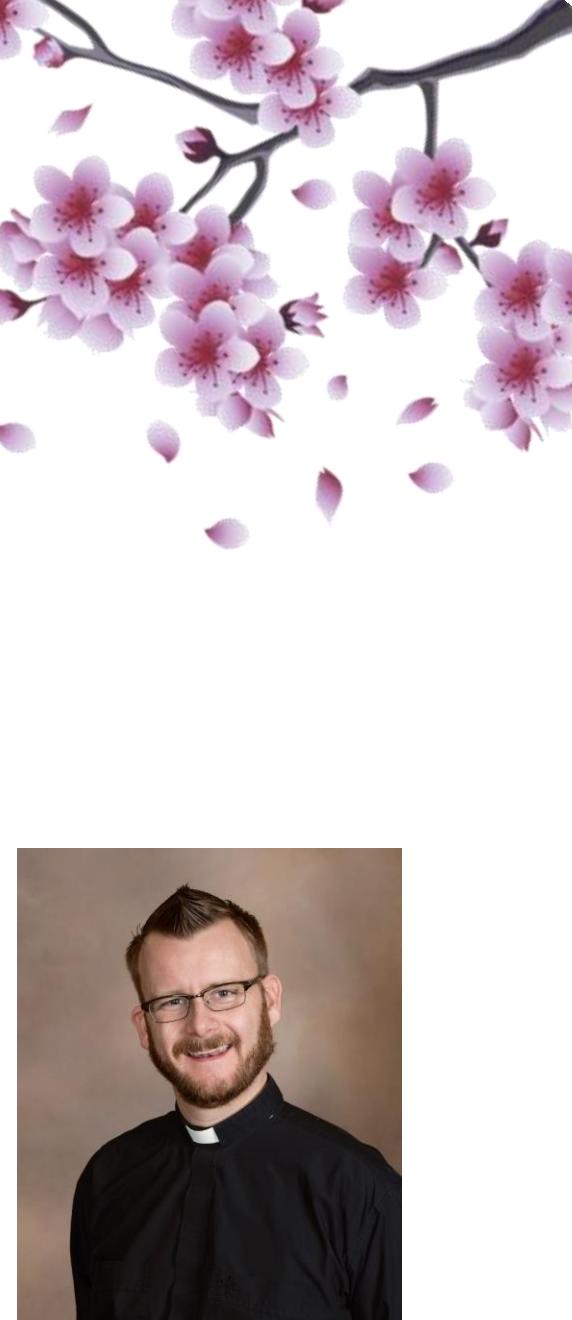
After this month’s long time of discernment, we plan to create an ERLC Roadmap for the Future; a document that identifies our shared core values and lays out a strategic plan for our future. This is exciting and important work, so please pray for our congregation during this time and take advantage of times to make your voice heard.

Peace,  
Pastor Nathan Mugaas



## Minneapolis Area Synod of the ELCA

The Minneapolis Area Synod Assembly is the annual business meeting of the synod, where all the congregations in our synod review and plan for how we are Church together in this area. Elk River Lutheran Church will be represented this year by Pastor Nathan Mugaas, Kari Christianson, and Jennifer Wornson. One of the most exciting pieces of this year's assembly will be the election of the bishop. Bishop Ann Svennungsen (our current bishop) is completing her first six-year term as bishop and is eligible to run again. Watch for a report on the happenings of synod assembly after the event.



## President's Message

**ERLC Mission Statement: *Trusting in God's Grace, an Accepting Joyful Community, Serving God and Neighbor***

Every Council meeting begins with a focus on our mission statement, sometimes in devotions, but always our focal point as we move through the agenda. It's the same with the Umbrella meetings.

On April 29<sup>th</sup> twenty members from the Council, Teams and Staff met to review the calendar and plan activities within our congregation and into our community for the next 12 months. These gatherings, scheduled three times a year, are called Umbrella Meetings. Everyone involved in our ministry and mission together has the opportunity to share their planning and events – and to see how all these aspects serve the mission of Elk River Lutheran. And just let me share right now that ERLC has a fun-filled and mission-filled calendar for the next 12 months!

The April Council meeting focused on time with our ERLC congregational coach Jim LaDoux from Vibrant Faith. We had an opportunity to go through the Leadership Manual that the Vision Team members are using with Jim. Members of the Vision Team are: Sue Hales, Cedric Olson, John Auel, Sarah Chur, Cassidy Wolcenski and Pastor Nathan. We will all have the opportunity to hear about this process and what has been learned so far about our congregation at a Congregational Forum on Sunday, May 6<sup>th</sup> from 9:20 am – 10:20 am. This is an opportunity to provide your feedback, too!

Finally, and happily, the Council joins with all our members in welcoming Jia Starr Brown as our Interim Visitation Minister. Prayers for Jia and her ministry with us.

**Blessings,  
Kari Christianson  
ERLC Council President**

## Treasurer's Report

March Total Expenses:	\$36,333.82
March Total Income:	\$45,812.70

Building Fund Balance: \$101,149.65  
Dedicated Fund Balance \$47,057.47

Year to Date Expenses: \$105,518.31  
Year to Date Income: \$110,227.73

Jennifer Wornson  
ERLC Council Treasurer  
[Counciltreasurer.erlc@gmail.com](mailto:Counciltreasurer.erlc@gmail.com)

## **ERLC May Devotion:**

**What do I want to be known for? How do I want to be remembered? I've been thinking a lot about that lately.**

**"One sentence" themes of our lives can be found on business cards, on headstones, and on our profile headlines. Some of these short statements are ones that others attach to their memory or testament to us.**

**Psalm 112:6 says that "the righteous will be remembered forever." (NASB) Just the other day, in a conversation with my children, I heard myself say that if we are awesome, we shouldn't have to tell people; they will tell that story for us.**

**I don't know about you, but from time to time, I need to stop and "check in" with myself. There are many times when I notice that I am a far cry from where my sentence says that I am. There are other times when I do not believe what I have written for myself - OR what God has written for me.**

**I tell myself to keep working toward a sentence that epitomizes who I hope to be in the world, and who I am in Jesus Christ.**

**Have you checked in lately? What sentence are you building toward? Does it align with the one that others experience - or the one that God has planned for you?**

**We are all a "sentence in progress." Do not stop writing! Keep working!**

**Jia Starr Brown  
Interim Visitation Minister**



# Downtown Block Party

Sunday, May 20 11:30am-1:00pm

Elk River Lutheran Church  
729 Main Street - Elk River



Free Food  
Kids' Activities  
Live Music  
Bounce House  
Prize Giveaways  
Exotic Animal Show



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





#### **Varty's Youth Fundraiser**

Join the ERLC Youth, Sunday, May 6<sup>th</sup> from 5-7pm at Varty's Greenhouse for a fun fundraiser to help fill your flower pots and gardens. Jill Varty, a member of ERLC, opens her greenhouse to all ERLC members and friends for special hours. The Youth from ERLC will assist you in carrying and loading flowers and plants you have purchased. A portion of the proceeds will go to the ERLC Youth to help get them to Houston, TX this summer for the National Youth Gathering.

#### **Senior Sunday June 3rd**

We will be celebrating with our graduating High School Seniors Sunday Morning, June 3rd. We are inviting seniors to be

present and recognized at the end of the first service and beginning of the second service, as well as a reception during the coffee hour.

#### **National Youth**

**Gathering Send off**  
Join us in Worship, Sunday, June 24<sup>th</sup> as we say a special blessing and pray for the safe travels of our youth attending the National Youth Gathering in Houston June 26<sup>th</sup>-July 2<sup>nd</sup>.

We would like to extend a sincere and heartfelt thanks to the congregation or Elk River Lutheran Church for their support of us in this past year in our fundraising endeavors to raise money for the National Youth Gathering in Houston. Whether you purchased clothing, pizza, pancakes, stock, plants

or just prayed for us, we are grateful for the love and care you have shown us! As the departure date gets closer, we are more excited about the life changing experiences we will have. We will be proud to show everyone in Houston what a gift it is to be a part of the ERLC Community!! In Christ's love, Gabe, Michael, Brianna, Charlotte, Sonja, Jake & Cassidy.

Confirmation students and Senior High Youth Group will be visiting Open Doors for Youth from 6:15-7:45pm on Wednesday, May 9<sup>th</sup>. Please meet at Open Doors. The following week (May 16<sup>th</sup>), they will be celebrating the end of the program year beginning at 6:30pm.

# Hospitality



The Hospitality Committee is enjoying seeing all the snowbirds back and enjoying coffee fellowship hour. We also see fresh faces every week. It is such a joyful time of sharing with one another.

Members of Hospitality and some others cleaned the kitchen downstairs this month and it looks much better. We had intended to clean the Cafe' also but that area was in use that day. Once again there have been an accumulation of items that may have been left after serving an event or they simply just are not needed at the church. These items will be put out on a table downstairs. Please look to see if your item might be there and take it home with you. What is left will be donated.

The dishwasher in the lower level kitchen has quit working. Research is being done as to the cost of replacement. In the meantime, we will be using all paper products for all events held downstairs.

Those of you who assist with Sunday Morning Coffee Hour, remember to check the list posted in the Cafe. You will also either receive an email or a schedule in the mail. If unable to serve that Sunday, please find a substitute. We know some people have agreed to bring treats and are not able to work which is just fine. We appreciate all. If this is something you would like to be involved in, please contact one of our committee members. Toby Moe, Barb Overbye, Sue Hecker, Karen Acers, Sandy Krumwiede, Barb Burandt, Peg Davies, or Garnet Novotny.

## Church Cancellations

### Sunday Worship Cancellation on April 15

On Sunday, April 15, we made the difficult decision to cancel worship services due to dangerous weather. While I am confident we made the right decision, we also learned that we need to have a better plan and process for making emergency announcements or cancellations. This includes having credentials on file with local media outlets (we learned the hard way that you can only announce cancellations on TV and radio if you have these credentials already on file), collecting and maintaining more current Email contact information from members and visitors, and making sure that I (and/or others involved in deciding to cancel) have access and instructions for how to update our outgoing phone message and website.

I apologize if you came to worship on April 15 and did not receive the message about worship being canceled. I am confident that with the new "ERLC Emergency Announcement and Cancellation Process" being created, we will be better prepared in the future.

Thank you, Pastor Nathan



# Music Ministry Monthly

## March & April Celebrations

For March and April, let's celebrate the gifts of music given to us through these generous individuals:

**Accompanist:** Bea Basty

**ERLC Choir:** Michele Smith, Lorie Schulsted-Werk, Carol Roden, Patty Herbert, Carol Vikstrom, Kelly Otto, Chris Wornson, Jim Acer, Hans Dubois, Sharon Emerick, Becca Weber, Diana Schansberg, Peg Curtis, Kate Woodfill, Marv Ziner, Rich Swanson, John Natwick, Dale Ziner, and Ron Stricker

**Worship Band:** Donna Heaston, Kara Hennig, Jeremy Hallquist (new member), Ellie Hallquist (new member), Ron Sass, Mike Wadzink, Tom Hels, Joyce Hels, Dan Johnson, Kari Osmek, and Amy Kippen

**Instrumental Ensemble** from Easter: Alana Budish (trumpet), Audrey Horner (flute), Hunter Wolcenski (trombone), Vicki Granros (Alto Saxophone), Jim Acer (Mellophone), and Lori Sundman (flute and ERLC's bookkeeper).

**Special Music Participants:** ERLC Choir, Donna Heaston, Kara Hennig, Jeremy Hallquist, Lori Sundman, Jim Acer, Vicki Granros, Amy Kippen, Alana Budish, Aria Budish, Dale Ziner, LiFT, Emily Rotz, Grace Weber, Ron Sass, Tom Hels, Mike Wadzink, Dan Johnson, Vicki Simpson, Patty Herbert, Michele Smith, Liam Weber, and Becca Weber.

That's a total of 36 musicians who joyously gave their time, energy, and love to share the beauty of music. I am so pleased to have so many willing musicians who absolutely love sharing music with our church. I am also pleased to have a congregation who graciously receives the gift of music. Music helps us attach meaning to our faith, and it means a lot that we ALL are participating in the musical life of ERLC; whether it be singing the "Hallelujah" Chorus together for Easter or playing "Classical Dance" during Offertory. Let us all find joy and gratitude in depth of our music ministry.

## May Highlights

- Beer & Hymns, May 1<sup>st</sup>; with a collection taken for ERLC's Good Samaritan Fund
- Continuing from April, our church theme-song: "The Church Song (We are the Church)" by Jay Beech
- Alana Budish & Amy Kippen sing a duet, May 6th
- Mother's Day Music: "A Mother's Prayer" featuring the Choir, LiFT shares "The Lord's Prayer"
- We celebrate the end of our program year on May 20th. During the service the choir will sing a prayer from St. Francis of Assisi, and LiFT will sing a blessing for everyone.
- Also, May 20th, we celebrate our 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in downtown ER with a Block Party! Participants of the music ministry will provide live music: Choir, Worship Band, River's Edge Quartet, ANF, and others.
- For May 27<sup>th</sup> the Offertory will be in honor of Memorial Day.

## How to Get Involved

- The **ERLC Choir** provides music for Offertory and leadership for congregational singing. They rehearse every Wednesday from 6:30pm to 8:15pm. They sing in services at least once a month and sing anything from Chris Tomlin to Mozart. They currently have 20 members and welcome everyone with open arms.
- The **Worship Band** provides leadership for service music every Sunday, accompaniment for special musicians, and special music for Offertories. The roster is different every Sunday, based on musician's availability. Rehearsals are Thursdays from 6:00pm to 8:00pm.
- **Special Musicians:** I'm always looking for musicians to share their talents during our Offertories. Any musician with any level of musical skill is welcome to participate. Rehearsals are dependent upon your availability.
- **Handbell Ensemble:** I am planning to start a handbell ensemble this Fall. Weekly rehearsals (starting in October) will be decided based on your availability. All I need to know is if you are interested.

If you're interested in participating in any of the above, contact me. I'd love to help you share your talents with our faith community.

See you Sunday,  
Taylor



Join us at ERLC...

Monday, May 14th at 6:30pm

# THANKS! DESSERTS!

As we say Thanks to the Prayer Warriors, Prayer Shawl  
knitters, Bible Study Group and others who want to learn  
more about the power of prayer



## ERLC Congregational Forum Sunday, May 6 9:20am-10:20am

The Elk River Lutheran Church Council and Vision Team invite you to join us on May 6th for a Congregational Forum led by Jim LaDoux, our congregational coach. Jim has been working in the background with our congregation for about six months now. At this forum he will be sharing some about what that work has entailed and eliciting feedback from you. The agenda includes:

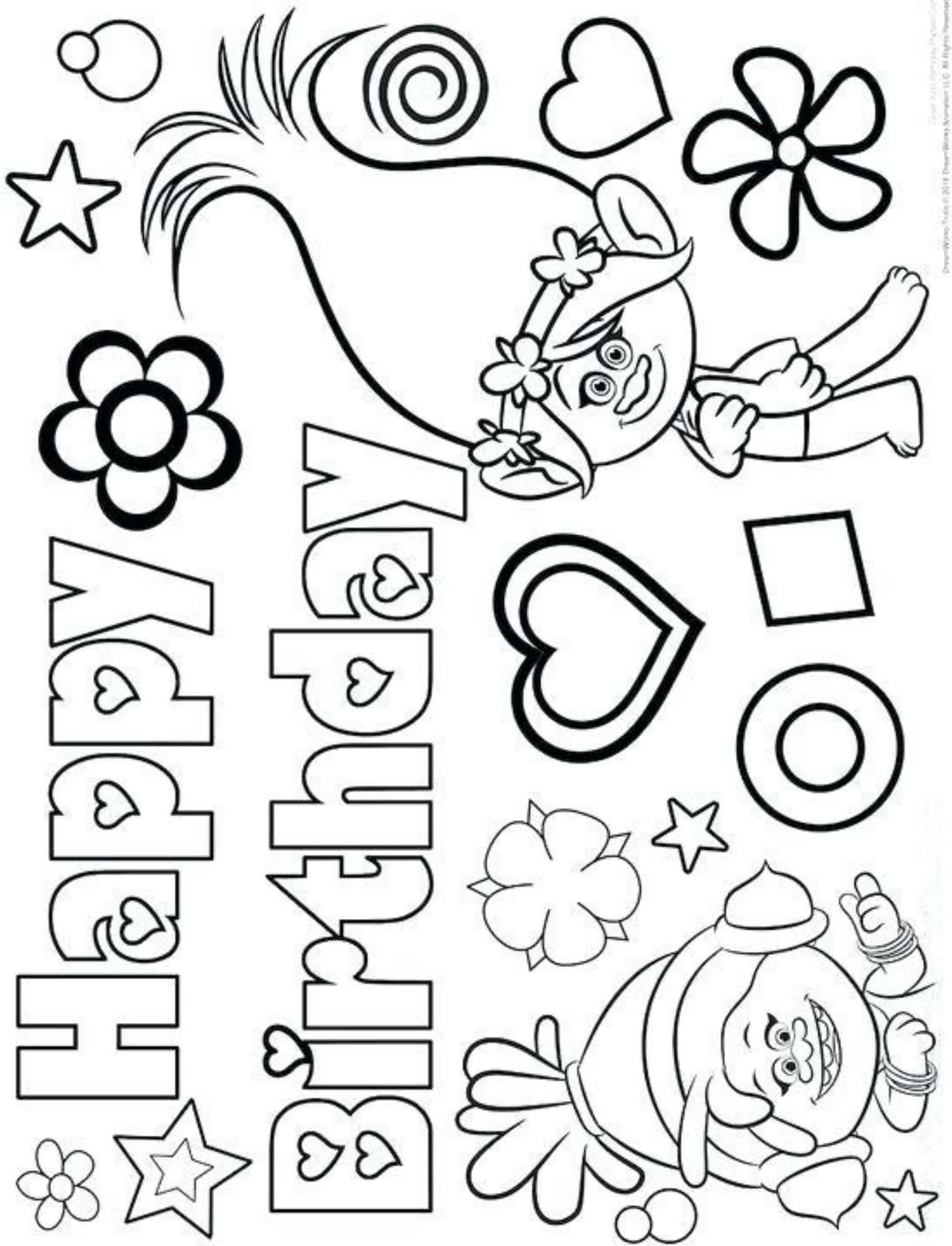
- Reviewing and highlighting results of the Congregation Vitality Survey that we took in May 2017
- Explore what is different in our congregation since May 2017
- Discuss how we welcome visitors and new members
- Look at next steps with Jim LaDoux

## Children's Grade K – 5<sup>th</sup> grade Coloring Contest

Children from Kindergarten through 5th Grade are invited to participate in ERLC's Coloring Contest. Color the image on the next page and submit the finished product, with your name, contact info and age/grade, to Erin in the Church office prior to May 15<sup>th</sup>.

Winners will be announced at the Downtown Block Party on May 20<sup>th</sup>!

Copies can be picked up in the Church office



**UPCOMING**

# EVENTS

## Elk River Farmers Market

Buy Fresh - Buy Local



Hosted by:  
Elk River  
Parks and  
Recreation

Never miss a post! Click "Like" and "Get Notifications"

### Kids' Day at the Farmers' Market

3:00pm-7:00pm June 14, July 12, August 9, and  
September 13

The City of Elk River has invited Elk River Lutheran to participate in "Kids' Days at the Farmers' Market," a program taking place the second Thursday of each month. The city runs a program called "Power of Produce," where kids are given tokens for purchasing produce at the market. For our part we will host the Kids' Zone- setting up or bounce house, handing out water and snacks, and potentially hosting other special guests who the city schedules. Our goal is simply to be a blessing to our neighbors, but we will also hand out information about Elk River Lutheran to those who attend. We will need volunteers to help with these events, so I hope you will consider helping out!

## VARTY'S GREENHOUSE

AND ELK RIVER LUTHERAN YOUTH

# *Varty's Annual Youth Fundraiser*

MAKE HER FEEL SPECIAL THIS  
MOTHER'S DAY AND HELP OUR  
YOUTH GO TO HOUSTON!

13192 192ND AVE NW, ELK RIVER  
MAY 6 . 5-7 PM

We're celebrating **five years** in our downtown location at 729 Main Street by focusing on how we can be of service to our neighbors.

As a part of this focus we've created the

### ***Elk River Lutheran CAER 729 Challenge.***

We're challenging members of ERLC to donate **729 pounds** of food for CAER (Community Aid of Elk River- our local food-shelf) during the month of May. If this goal is met the ERLC staff will dye their hair

**ERLC blue!**

So please bring your non-perishable food donations to ERLC (drop off in the front of the sanctuary) all during the month of May and help us meet this goal.



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