

ESTHER LUTHERAN NEWSLETTER

February 2023

“Knowing Christ – Making Christ Known Through Faith, Hope and Love.”

11019 625th Ave – Parkers Prairie, MN 56361 • 218-338-2171

Website: www.estherlutheran.com Email: secretary@estherlutheran.net

Pastor Scott Hoecker Email: prscott@estherlutheran.net Cell: (218) 355-0187

What is the Jeremiah 29 Project?

First, Jeremiah 29 refers to the time when God’s people were in exile (in the country of Babylon) and God essentially told them to care for the neighborhood where you’ve been sent - for in the neighborhood’s welfare you (the people of God) will find your welfare.

Many believe that the church today is in a similar situation to those who were in exile in Babylon. In other words, since the 1960s and 70s there’s been a gradual decline in attendance experienced by all mainline churches in this country as more and more (three in ten adults) do not affiliate with a religion at all - they consider themselves atheistic, agnostic, or “nothing in particular.” (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Decline_of_Christianity_in_the_Western_world and <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2021/12/14/about-three-in-ten-u-s-adults-are-now-religiously-unaffiliated/>, accessed Feb 1, 2023).

This secularization of society has occurred fairly quickly when it’s been only 500 years since the reformation - and that was a time when no one could imagine a world without God in it. Yet, today (500 years later) many folks have a hard time imagining God as a part of daily life.

Charles Taylor wrote an entire book that looks at how things changed from a time when the world was God-infused and enchanted (500 years ago) to today - where it’s hard to imagine God as part of daily life for many - the book he wrote is called, “A Secular Age.”

I suspect this secularization of society has contributed to the 3 in 10 who no longer identify with a particular religion noted above.

So, what about the folks who still identify with a religion but attend worship less and less? How are we to make sense of that?

One possible explanation might be that when families were less mobile (horse and buggy) they tended to homestead a piece of land and stay there while the next generation took over the farm (or land) and so on and so on.

However, as folks became more mobile in the United States, folks change locations more than in Europe. For example, in a person’s lifetime here, they will change residences an average of 11 times (compared to 4 times in Europe). This makes me wonder if, as a society, we’re less connected to our neighborhoods today than we were in the past.

In other words, congregations that used to be central to the life of the community (or neighborhood) are less connected than in the past. Hence, the similarity to the Babylonian exile.

So, Jeremiah 29 is a three year experiment where a congregation engages with a faith practice such as dwelling in the word that conceivably alters the collective perspective to God’s perspective. A perspective that seeks the welfare of the neighborhood. And in caring for our neighbors, God promises a future for God’s people.

The second and third years of the Jeremiah 29 project involve engaging entrepreneurial practices in the neighborhood for the good of our neighbors. In short, we’ll experiment to see what works and what doesn’t work. The things that don’t work will be an opportunity to learn from and we continue to try things and see what happens - trusting that in caring for our neighbors - God’s promise for a future filled with hope will come to fruition.

Pr. Scott

O Lord, hear our prayers...

In Our Prayers

Joan Arvidson
Megan Blomgren
Colleen Burquest
Kristy Fyhrie
Marcia Guenther
Trent Hagen
Ernie & Georgia Hart
Mike Heiser
Cindy Skoglund
Bill Wagner
Marsha Clow – sister of Linda Arvidson
Wes Hoyhtya – friend of Thoms
Bruce Miller -father of Karin Wagner
Cindy Rachuy - sister of Dawn Kreidler
Doug Tvedt – brother of Joan Burquest
Family and Friends of Audrey Arvidson, Caleb Rokes, Wilbur Burquest, James Velde, Jim Hosmer



February Birthdays

2/02 Clara Pogose
2/04 Lois Rosenquist
2/05 Dustin Pomeranz
2/05 Sarah Pomeranz
2/06 Michael Grinager
2/06 Peyton Skoglund
2/08 Tom Burquest
2/11 Sherri Rupert
2/12 Karsyn Lorine
2/20 Michael Lorine
2/21 Mike Townsend
2/22 Cody Rupert
2/23 Amelia Arvidson
2/24 Lisa Arvidson
2/27 David Arvidson
2/28 Gloria Rosenquist

Serving in February

Pastor: Scott Hoecker



Organists: Marcia Guenther, Brad Lambrecht,

Altar Care: Donna Pederson

Communion Assistant: Larry Doll

Lay reader: Karin Wagner

Ushers: Scott Hart, Mark Wehking

Acolyte: Elora Wagner

Birthday Card Sender: Marcia Guenther

Tech Team: Mandy Arvidson, Mike Lage, Jewel T.

Birthday Sunday Servers (February 19):

Dobratz, Fyhrie, Nordlund, and Mark & Jakki Wehking families

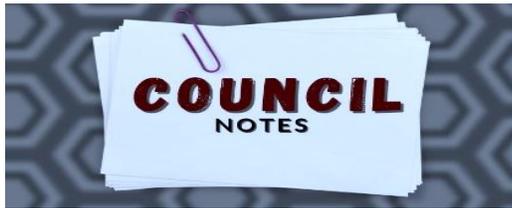
THANK YOU!

THANK YOU to everyone who has helped serve as an acolyte, lay reader, usher, communion assistant, altar care, birthday fellowship, birthday card sender, tech team, or served on a committee this past year. Your time, talent and dedication is greatly appreciated by all of us here at Esther. We welcome you to sign up for the coming year to volunteer either as an individual, share a month with a friend, or serve together as a family. This is an opportunity for those who have served in these roles for many years to invite a newer member or youth to mentor by sharing a few weeks or a month together. We are also looking for people to join committees - this is a great chance to share your skills, time and passion for the various ministries of Esther and an opportunity to work with others who share your same vision for the future of Esther. **Sign-up sheets are on the narthex table.**



Save the Date: Esther VBS will be June 18-22, 2023. Luther Crest Bible Camp counselors will be

coming to lead our VBS children with their excitement for God's word!



We are recognizing a member of Esther each month for their dedication to our congregation. This month we would like to recognize **Joan Burquest** for the many years of filling the role of Treasurer for Esther. We greatly appreciate her time, talent and dedication to provide this service – making sure the bills are paid, the books are balanced, the staff is paid, reports are generated and given to the council each month, as well as all state and federal reporting that needs to be completed.

We also want to commend Joan for all that she does in leading our Youth Group. She has a way of connecting with our Youth and has consistently provided so many opportunities for faith-building over the years. She has planned fun events, trips, service opportunities and so much more for our Youth. Due to Joan’s passion and dedication, she has impacted many lives through her Youth Ministry and she continues her legacy by connecting with and mentoring those who will be the future leaders of our congregation, our community and our world. **THANK YOU, JOAN!** We greatly appreciate all you do for all of us here at Esther! ❤️

The Council met on Feb. 1. Our new Council President is Mike Lage, and our new Vice-President is Becky Arvidson. We welcome our new Council Member, Lana Doll. Secretary is Kathryn McDaniel and Financial Secretary is Jewel Townsend.

Financial Update as of Jan. 31, 2023

Financial Contributions

Actual	\$11,287.00
Budgeted	\$10,300.50
Surplus	986.50



**Luther Crest Bible Camp
Early-Bird Registration now open
through February 14!
Sign-up yourcamper at
www.luthercrest.org**



Camp and Spiritual Growth Fund

The Camp and Spiritual Growth Fund has been established at Esther to help pay for camp for our youth. Scholarship applications can be found on Esther’s website www.estherlutheran.com under the “Faith Formation Resources” tab and on the narthex table.

Confirmation Class meets on Wednesday evenings. We will be having a meal at 6 pm, followed by class from 6:30 - 8 pm. On the first Wednesday of the month class ends at 7:30 p.m.



February Serving Schedule

- February 1: Mentor Potluck & Dinner Worship
- February 8: Emma Arvidson family
- February 15: Taya Arvidson family
- February 22: Ash Wednesday
- March 1: Lent 1



ESTHER WELCA REPORT

Esther Women of the ELCA met on Wednesday January 11, 2023, for our Christmas Gathering. There were 7 ladies in attendance. We had a short meeting to update everyone from the end of the year 2022. We enjoyed a lovely evening of appetizers, visiting and a gift exchange. Bev Arvidson reported there is \$2,128.41 in the checking account and \$7,946.43 in the Memorial/Savings Account. There is money from Wilbur Burquest’s funeral to be deposited as well as expenses to be paid.

Information was read from Luther Crest Bible Camp, and their On-Line Auction fundraiser will be held on September 20, 2023. More details will be put on the bulletin board for everyone to see. This is for crafts also. Margaret Wehking had talked with Inez Haase and she was in MN over Christmas, but got sick and not able to visit as she had wanted.

Sue Ellwanger brought up the possibility of having an AED installed here at Esther. The ambulance service is very good, but Esther is just too far away for the ambulance to get here in a quick fashion. It is proven that if help is available in the first few minutes, survival rate goes way up. Sue Ellwanger made a motion to give up to \$1,000.00 towards the purchase of an AED and have it at Esther. This was added to the Annual Meeting agenda and was handed back to the WELCA to get a unit. Many have expressed interest in helping donate the rest of the funds needed. We will get a unit purchased and get training lined up for anyone who wishes to learn how to use it.

Quilting

Jacey Hoecker volunteered to be in charge of the quilting. Our first date will be February 1st. We hope to be there from about 9:00 – 3:00. If anyone has 12" x 12" blocks... we will take them. If you have other fabric.... We will take that too. We usually put queen size flannel sheets as the back of the quilts. We are really in need of them if you can find any of these. It is getting harder to purchase just the flat sheets.

Please put on your calendar the Conference 8 Spring Meeting ... this will be held at First Lutheran in Kensington on April 28th .

Luella Thom, President

QUILTING MINISTRY

The quilters met for the first time this year on February 1, 9 am to 3 pm. It was a good day of fellowship and working together. All are welcome to join us again on Wednesday, March 1 at 9 am. Bring a lunch and come and go as your time allows throughout the day. If you don't quilt and just want to stop in to check out what's going on and visit with us – you are welcome! If you have any questions please contact Jacy Hoecker.



We invite you to join us each week of Lent. Soup and sandwich suppers will be at 6:00pm and worship service at 7:00pm. We will be using the Holden Evening Prayer for our Wednesday evening service each week. Please join us as we

gather to hear the Word from our confirmation students through their skits during each service. Christy Hart has volunteered to coordinate our Soup and Sandwich Suppers, so watch for more info in the weeks to come.

Wed, Feb 22:

7 pm Ash Wednesday Worship
w/Imposition of Ashes and Holy Communion

Wed, March 1:

6 pm Soup & Sandwich Supper
7 pm Lenten Worship "The Season"

Wed, March 8:

6 pm Soup & Sandwich Supper
7 pm Lenten Worship "Prayer"

Wed, March 15:

6 pm Soup & Sandwich Supper
7 pm Lenten Worship "Fasting"

Wed, March 22:

6 pm Soup & Sandwich Supper
7 pm Lenten Worship "Good Works"

Wed, March 29:

6 pm Soup & Sandwich Supper
7 pm Lenten Worship



Sun, April 2:

10 am Palm Sunday Worship w/Holy Communion

Thu, April 6:

7 pm Maundy Thursday Worship w/First Communion

Fri, April 7:

7 pm Good Friday Worship

Sun, April 9:

7 am Easter Sunrise Worship w/Holy Communion
8 am Breakfast served by Youth Group
10 am Easter Worship w/Holy Communion

February 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 9 am Quilting 6 pm Confirmation Mentor Potluck and Dinner Church 7:30 pm Council	2	3	4
5 9 am Sunday School 10 am Worship w/Communion 11 am Coffee Fellowship 2 pm St. Williams	6	7	8 Confirmation 6 pm Supper hosted by Emma Arvidson family 6:30-8 pm - Class	9	10	11
12 8:30am WELCA 9 am Sunday School 10 am Worship (Noisy Offering) 11 am Coffee Fellowship 2 pm St. Williams	13	14	15 Confirmation 6 pm Supper hosted by Taya Arvidson family 6:30-8 pm - Class	16	17	18
19 9 am Sunday School 9:15 Birthday Fellowship 10 am Worship w/Communion 11am Coffee Fellowship 2 pm St. Williams Youth Group Lock-In	20	21	22 Ash Wednesday 7 pm Worship w/Imposition of Ashes and Communion	23	24	25
26 9 am Sunday School 10 am Worship 11 am Coffee Fellowship 2 pm St. Williams	27	28	March 1 Lent Week 1 9am Quilting 6 pm Soup & Sandwich Supper 7 pm Worship	2	3	4

“Knowing Christ-Making Christ Known through Faith, Hope and Love”

Esther Lutheran Church
11019 625th Ave.
Parkers Prairie, MN 56361

