



ESTHER LUTHERAN NEWSLETTER March 2023

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

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Measuring What Counts Makes A Difference . . .

Almost every morning I hop on the scale to get a snapshot of my weight at that moment in time. This morning it was down almost a pound from the previous day but almost twenty pounds above my goal weight from three and a half years ago. Since then, things have been going in the wrong direction.

Yet, at the point when I read the scale - there's nothing left for me to do that can change what the scale is telling me. In other words, either it's gone up or down or stayed the same - and most of the time I can't tell you exactly what I did that contributed to the result.

So, the scale is a lagging indicator. At the point where it flashes a number, there's nothing to be done. If the number is trending down, then I'm pleased. And if it's trending up, I'm disappointed or feel guilty. And like I mentioned before, often I don't know what I did in the previous 24 hours that resulted in my scale reading in the morning.

Over time, I've learned that I have a good chance at losing about a pound (over 24 hours) if I eat well. And for me, eating well includes: 1) oatmeal with cinnamon, nuts, flax, and chia seeds for breakfast, 2) minimizing the carbs and processed foods consumed that day (like potato chips and chips ahoy cookies), and 3) eating appetizers for dinner to include fresh broccoli, hummus, cheese and crackers, an apple, grapes, and a few olives.

In other words, if I eat well throughout the day, there's a good chance that I'll lose close to a pound of weight in 24 hours. So, eating well throughout the day today - is a good indicator of what the scale will say tomorrow morning when I hop on it.

What if I suggested to you that church attendance and offerings were like the scale (to measure weight) described above - would you agree or disagree?

And if I indicated that focusing on the church scale measuring attendance and offerings often leads to feelings of guilt, failure, and a sense of being stuck (or works against an ability to change) - would you agree or disagree?

In the story of the Good Samaritan, “Jesus said, ‘All you need to remember is to love God and love your neighbor as much as you love yourself.’ ‘But who is my neighbor?’ a teacher asked.

Jesus told a story to explain. ‘One day, a Jewish man was robbed and wounded and left lying in the road. A little while later, a priest walked by, but he pretended he didn't see the injured man. Soon, another man came by. He worked at the temple, but he didn't stop either.’

‘At last, a Samaritan came down the road. His people were enemies of the Jews. But the Samaritan stopped! He got off his donkey and gently bandaged the man's wounds. Then he put him on his donkey and walked beside him to the nearest inn. He put him to bed and took care of him.’

‘Now,’ asked Jesus, ‘which of these people was a good neighbor?’ ‘The Samaritan,’ replied the teacher. ‘That's right,’ said Jesus. ‘You are all part of the same family—God's family. God wants you to be like him, loving and kind to everyone—even your enemies.’” (Tutu, Archbishop Desmond. Children of God Storybook Bible (p. 81). Zonderkidz. Kindle Edition.).

What if the question, “Who is my neighbor?” was like a scale measuring weight - would you agree or disagree? And what if the Good Samaritan's actions in the story by Jesus were behaviors that can lead to the creation of neighbors - would you agree or disagree?

So, if eating well precedes what the scale will tell me in the morning, then it follows that binding the wounds of an “enemy” precedes what the “scale” (of discipleship) will say the next day about who is one's neighbor. In other words, what we measure when it comes to following Jesus (a.k.a. discipleship) matters.

Pr. Scott

Lord, hear our prayers...

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



March Birthdays

3/01 Thea Arvidson
3/01 Kristina Kreidler
3/01 Craig Pomerence
3/03 Ella Ness
3/03 Emma Timm
3/03 Nash Vik
3/05 Evalynn Grinager
3/08 Amanda Dobratz
3/08 Brody Lenzen
3/08 Sydney Lorine
3/10 Marcia Guenther
3/11 Isaiah Schlosser
3/12 Emma Arvidson
3/14 Larry Doll
3/14 Judy Thoennes
3/14 Kieda Wagner
3/15 Calie Schlosser
3/15 Michael Wunderlich
3/15 Kiley Peterson
3/18 Ty Lenzen
3/24 Lana Doll
3/25 Nancy Bunde
3/28 Anya Wagner
3/31 Garret Wehking

Serving in March

Pastor: Scott Hoecker



Organists: Marcia Guenther, Brad Lambrecht,

Altar Care: Deb Koep

Comm. Assistants: Steph Stueve, Amy Stanley

Lay reader: Megan Townsend, Nancy Bunde

Ushers: Steve Dobratz

Acolyte: Mar. 5 – Sydney Lorine

Mar. 12 – Laney Grinager

Mar. 19 – Colby Schlosser

Mar. 26 - NEED VOLUNTEER

Birthday Card Sender: Donna Pederson

Tech Team: Jewel Townsend

Birthday Sunday Server Families (March 19):

Judy Thoennes, Jeremy Arvidson & Missy Schlosser,
Bea Skoglund, Justin & Jaci Schlosser



Easter Flower Orders

Order forms are located on the narthex table and on our website. Please return the form and payment to the envelope on the narthex table by March 26. Checks should be made payable to Esther

WELCA with “Easter flowers” in the memo.



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!



You are welcome to drop off eyeglasses that you are no longer using, in the collection box in the narthex.



Caring Ministry will meet on Tuesday, March 7, 2:30 pm at Luella Thom’s home. If you are interested in helping to start up this ministry of Esther, please join us. If you have questions, please contact Luella Thom.



We are recognizing a member of Esther each month for their dedication to our congregation. This month we would like to recognize **Rodney Peterson** for the various ways he serves at Esther.

Rodney has served on Council multiple times and is currently again on Council, has served several years and continues to serve on the Building Committee, has just joined the Worship Committee, and has volunteered as an Usher for many years. Rodney is quick to respond to any building maintenance issues – whether it be birds in the furnace or storm cleanup! Rodney and his Farm Boys crew were very generous with their time and hard work in cleaning up, hauling away and filling in holes after we lost many of our trees in the storm this past spring. He also had his crew come out and repair all of the pews this past fall. Rodney had the beautiful cabinets made that are now in the new addition, and also has another set being built for the basement. Rodney has been a gracious host of Worship By The Water, as we all have enjoyed many years of this special summer worship, meal and fellowship at Rodney’s home. Rodney’s dedication to Esther shines through all he does at Esther and his ongoing commitment to our congregation.

THANK YOU, RODNEY! We greatly appreciate all you have done and continue to do here at Esther! ❤️

Financial Update as of Feb. 28, 2023

Financial Contributions

Actual	\$16,139.00
Budgeted	\$20,601.00
Shortfall	-\$4,462.00



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.



YOUTH LOCK IN 2023
Thank you to the all who attended the Annual Lock-In at Esther on February 19 & 20. Special thanks to our fearless leaders who chaperoned!



2023 Extreme Spoons Winner – Skylar!



Luther Crest Bible Camp
Sign-up your camper at www.luthercrest.org



ESTHER WELCA REPORT

We had 4 members present for the meeting on February 12. We did not have a treasurer report. We will update at the next meeting.

Spring Conference 8 meeting is April 27 th at First Lutheran in Kensington. Please sign up if you can attend. They will be doing their donations to Love, Inc. We will need to decide what to donate for the Spring meeting at our March meeting.

The Quilt Group started February 2nd; 9 quilts were made. (They are hanging on the railing in the Narthex). We still need queen size flannel sheets. If you see any or

have any, please get them to church. We need fabric and help getting squares cut so the ladies that do all the sewing can keep busy. Typically, the tops are squares cut 12 ½ inches. The ladies then do their magic by sewing them in some type of a pattern. The rest of us then lay out the flannel sheets that are used for the backs and add quilt batting and then tops that have been sewn. We tie them together, then the ladies who sew can sew around the entire quilt. If you would like to join the quilt group, just come. Even if you do not sew, which is most of us; you can help out and visit with everyone there. The next quilt day was scheduled for March 1 st . Unfortunately, because of snowstorms, the quilt group was unable to get together.

We discussed the ice cream social... do we keep the same date or move it since there will always be the State Girls Softball Tournament that weekend. In discussions with Mike Arvidson, the tournament will always be that weekend forever. He suggested leaving our ice cream social for that weekend as there may not always be teams from Parkers in the tournament. We have had numerous good comments on the use of the individual paper cups we put the ice cream in last year. It was so much easier to hand/dish out as people came through the line. Normally, we have had our guys help dish out the hard ice cream. Last year, many of the youth helped give out the ice cream, all the same size portions. The left over ice cream we had lasted and tasted great all the way to the end. Usually after a few weeks in the larger containers, it does not taste as good. Marcia organized the process for filling the individual cups as the ice cream was being made. She will document how it was done and give us pictures to follow the same process.

Next meeting March 12 th @ 8:30. Hope to see everyone.
Luella Thom
President

QUILTING MINISTRY

The quilters meet the first Wednesday of the month at 9 am to 3 pm. Join us for a day of fellowship and working together. All are welcome to join us again on Wednesday, April 5 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, March 8:

6 pm Soup & Sandwich Supper
7 pm Holden Evening Prayer
Skit: "Prayer"

Wed, March 15:

6 pm Soup & Sandwich Supper
7 pm Holden Evening Prayer
Skit: "Fasting"

Wed, March 22:

6 pm Soup & Sandwich Supper
7 pm Holden Evening Prayer
Skit: "Good Works"

Wed, March 29:

6 pm Soup & Sandwich Supper
7 pm Holden Evening Prayer
Skit: "Good Friday"



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 Service – Youth

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

March 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 All events cancelled	2	3	4
5 9 am Sunday School 9 am Acolyte Training 10 am Worship w/Communion Council following worship 11 am Coffee Fellowship 2 pm St. Williams CANCELLED	6	7 2:30 pm Caring Ministry meets at Luella Thom's	8 6 pm Soup & Sandwich Supper 7 pm Holden Evening Prayer Skit: Prayer	9	10	11
12 8:30am WELCA 9 am Sunday School 10 am Worship (Noisy Offering) 11 am Coffee Fellowship 2 pm St. Williams (Lee)	13	14	15 6 pm Soup & Sandwich Supper 7 pm Holden Evening Prayer Skit: Fasting	16	17	18 Synod Event Bemidji
19 9 am Sunday School 9:15 Birthday Fellowship 10 am Worship w/Communion 11am Coffee Fellowship 2 pm St. Williams (Brown)	20	21	22 6 pm Soup & Sandwich Supper 7 pm Holden Evening Prayer Skit: Good Works	23	24	25
26 Easter Flower orders due 9 am Sunday School 10 am Worship 11 am Coffee Fellowship 2 pm St. Williams (Bovendam)	27	28	29 9am Quilting 6 pm Soup & Sandwich Supper 7 pm Holden Evening Prayer Skit: Good Friday	30	31	April 1

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