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May/June, 2024



the *Voices* of english lutheran

The SEASON of PENTECOST

EXPLORING ECCLESIASTES A Thought-Provoking Study Series

Join us this summer for a captivating study series titled "Exploring Ecclesiastes," set to take place on July 9, 16, 23, and 30 from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. This engaging series will be held both in person at the English Lutheran Church premises and virtually via Zoom, offering participants the flexibility to join from anywhere in the world.

Ecclesiastes, a profound and contemplative book of wisdom from the Old Testament, continues to resonate with individuals seeking deeper insights into life's meaning and purpose. Through this four-part study series, participants will embark on a journey of exploration into the timeless truths and philosophical reflections encapsulated within Ecclesiastes.

SCHEDULE OF SESSIONS

July 9

Introduction to Ecclesiastes:
Unveiling the Wisdom of the
Hebrew Bible

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The Sabbath

As summer approaches, amidst the excitement of warmer weather and vacations, I hope and pray that you, dear friends of English Lutheran Church, have the opportunity and time for Sabbath.



The concept of Sabbath originates from the biblical tradition, where it is regarded as a day of rest and reflection. The Sabbath is seen as a sacred time set aside for worship, rest, and renewal. It provides an opportunity for individuals and families and communities to reconnect with God, recharge their spirits, and deepen their faith.

During the summer, when schedules may be less structured and commitments may vary, it's easy to let the observance of Sabbath slip away. However, prioritizing Sabbath during this time can offer unique benefits. With longer days and warmer weather, there are abundant opportunities to connect with nature and experience the beauty of God's creation. Whether it's taking a leisurely walk in the park, spending time in a garden, or enjoying a picnic with loved ones, these moments of communion with nature can be deeply enriching to one's spiritual life.

The summer months often provide opportunities for travel and exploration, relaxation and enjoyment, spiritual growth and reflection. Visiting

continued on page 3

IN CHRIST

We Welcome, Worship & Work

IN THE WORLD



Summer Worship

Saturday 5:00 p.m.

Sunday 9:30 a.m.

*Summer Worship Services,
see article below.*

Summer Worship Time

Beginning May 26 (Memorial Day Weekend) our Sunday Worship times change to one service on Sundays at 9:30. We will continue with one service on Sunday through the summer. The last day for this time will be August 18.

The Saturday 5:00 p.m. service will remain through the summer.

Copeland Park Service

On August 25 there will not be a service in the sanctuary. Instead, we will meet at 10:45 at Copeland Park for the annual River Service.

Riverside Park Service

On June 9, 10:00, we will have worship at Riverside Park as a part of the annual Synod Assembly. There will not be a service in our sanctuary that day.

Fall Worship Times

On September 1 (Labor Day Weekend) the services will resume to the three service model. Saturday 5:00 p.m., Sunday 8:30 and 10:45 a.m..

LIGHTING THE PASCHAL CANDLE

During the Vigil of Easter worship service, we experience again the heart of God's baptismal promise and the center of our faith: we are claimed and cleansed, renewed in the death and resurrection of Christ. We bless and light a NEW Paschal candle to remind us of this promise. This new candle, usually placed near the baptismal font, will be used throughout the year and will be lit every Sunday during the season of Easter, and throughout the year for baptisms and funerals.

The "old" Paschal candle will be added to our collection of "retired" Paschal candles (as shown below) that we display on the Vigil of Easter and Easter Sunday to help remind us of those who have come before us.



Sabbath continued from front page

new places, experiencing different cultures, and encountering diverse perspectives can broaden one's understanding of God's presence in the world and deepen their appreciation for the diversity of creation.

In addition to these outward expressions of Sabbath observance, summer can also be a time for inner renewal and reflection. With more free time available, individuals can engage in practices such as prayer, meditation, and scripture study to nourish their souls and deepen their relationship with God.

Ultimately, the importance of Sabbath during the summer months lies in its ability to nurture spiritual well-being and foster a deeper connection with God and one another. I pray that you have joy-filled times of rest and peace this summer!

Soli Deo Gloria! (To God alone the Glory),
Pastor Mark Kvale

THE SEEKERS 25TH ANNIVERSARY

You know how sometimes you just happen to be in the right place at the right time with the right people and something wonderful happens and it isn't until later that you realize how all the pieces suddenly fell into place and there you are, blessed beyond blessed? Blessed to be a blessing?

Twenty-five years ago one of these something-wonderfuls happened here at English Lutheran Church. A few people hungering for regular weekly Bible study approached a new-to-English pastor about a weekly lay-led Bible study who said, "Go for it!"

They had no idea what they were getting into. No idea how the Scriptures, the Word of God, would pull them in, invade their spirits, touch their souls. How a community of Seekers would grow within the community of believers called English Lutheran. How many people would come, some faithfully and steadily, week after week, month after month, year after year. How others would come when they could depending upon work schedules, family commitments, health issues, the ordinary and sometimes extraordinary flux and flow of life. How seekers from other faiths, other churches and some with no church home would come and find a place with them.

They had no idea how terrifying it would be to be a discussion leader preparing for hours and when the time came, feeling like they were stepping off a cliff, having to trust,

trust that the net would be there. And it was. It always was.

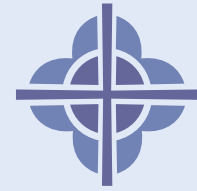
They learned, also, that they needed help at times, so they reached out to theologians, scholars and artists of various disciplines who came because they believed in the importance of studying Scripture and discussing the broader questions Scripture raises; such as the power of evil, the wonder of prayer and the peace of forgiveness. They came, sharing their knowledge, their wisdom, their faith and increasing ours.

You know, too, how when there's a special occasion in your life, like a 'golden' birthday, or a 40th or 75th? Or a 25th or 40th wedding anniversary that you want to celebrate? You invite your family and friends and the people who are and have been a special part of your life to celebrate this special occasion with you.

Well, you are those people. You, who are part of this special, supportive community of English Lutheran, are invited to join us at our **25th Anniversary Celebration on Sunday, May 19 at the 8:30 a.m. service**, and enjoy special refreshments with us during the fellowship time following.

We look forward to having you with us.

The Seekers of English Lutheran Church



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YOUTH GROUPS

Last Day of Confirmation

May 1: Come and enjoy a devotional and some yard games

Graduation Senior Class Recognition

May 4 and 5: The Graduating Senior Class of 2024, will be recognized at the Saturday and Sunday services. There will be a Senior Breakfast between services for all to enjoy.

ELCA Youth Gathering

July 16-20: See article at right.

Jared Kronback,
Director of
Faith Formation



Fellowship for All Ages at Loggers Game

June 23: Play Ball!

Come on out to enjoy a night of fellowship at Copeland Park for a Loggers Game! First pitch is at 5:05 p.m. and sign-ups will be out soon, so be on the lookout for that! Questions, contact Jared Kronback.



SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday School

Last day of Sunday School will be May 19. Sunday School students will enjoy pancakes served by those going to the Youth Gathering this summer and will then meet in their Sunday School rooms before going outside to play a few games. Large group gathering will happen at the end of Sunday School time that day.

CREATED

TO BE

ELCA Youth Gathering

July 16-20

It has been 6 years since the last ELCA Youth Gathering (Houston,) and our youth have navigated so many different challenging events in this ever changing world. Our group of eight kids and three adult leaders are excited to be challenged even further to BE BRAVE, BE AUTHENTIC, BE FREE, BE DISRUPTIVE and to BE DISCIPLES.

We have been blessed to work alongside and traveling with youth from First Lutheran (Onalaska) and Mindoro-Lewis Valley. Once a month we come together and explore the daily themes, introduce the host city and the Gathering, engage youth in Scripture and create space for them to respond. The questions and discussions that we have processed through have been enlightening and encouraging.

Our planning started in January and fundraising began in February with a goal of \$8,000. Thanks to many generous members at ELC we are over half-way to our goal. While eating pancakes, enjoying Parents Night Out, SCRIP, praying for us or contributing through 'The Wall of Envelopes', our church family has demonstrated how much support we have.

We continue to ask for your support in whatever way possible. In three short months, we will embark on an adventure that will take us across the country to experience, explore and discover new things about ourselves and learn what God has planned for us.

-Emily Farmer

SENSORY BINS

Sensory Bins are now available. Each bin contains several different fidgets for those who concentrate better by having something to keep their hands occupied.



There are three bins in the church building:

- The Welcome Center
- The Conference Room
- Room 118 in the Sunday School wing

These fidgets are available for all. We ask that each person take only one fidget at a time and that the fidget is returned to the bin before leaving the building.

Fidgets will be wiped down weekly. There are also disinfectant wipes available by each bin. Please feel free to wipe down the fidget of your choice before use.

We hope these fidgets will help promote better focus for those who need it and hope everyone will work as a community to keep these sensory bin items in our church building.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

River of Life is the theme for this year's VBS. This program was put out by ELCA World Hunger.

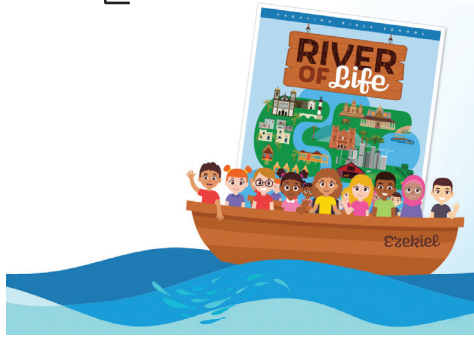
June 10 – 13

5:00 – 7:30 p.m.

A meal provided beginning at 5:00 p.m. each evening.

Open to all ages.

We encourage the young and young at heart to attend.



Tuesday will be held at Myrick Park with a guided tour of the marsh being led by Gabby Arnold from the Nature Place.

Everyone will meet at the park and be picked up from the park. A picnic meal will be provided.

In the case of rain, everyone will meet at church and Gabby will lead a presentation here at English Lutheran.

Thursday will end with a worship service beginning at 7:00 p.m., in which the entire congregation is invited to participate.

DAILY THEMES

Monday - God Creates

Genesis 1:1- 2:1

Tuesday - God Provides

Exodus 17:1-6

Wednesday - God Protects

Mark 4:35-41

Thursday - God Loves, We Love

John 13:3-15, 33-35



Calling instrument players

all types, ages and abilities!

Do you play an instrument? Would you like to play with a group? Have you not had your instrument out in a while?

A "Just for Fun" playing time will be taking place, June 10, 12, and 13 from 4:15 - 5:00 p.m.

These dates coincide with Vacation Bible School at English Lutheran.

Instruments will not meet on Tuesday, June 11 as the VBS kids will be gathering at Myrick Park that day.

Let's get together and see what kind of music we can make and how much fun we can have together while playing!

This is a trial run. If there is a lot of interest, we can find time to do this more during the summer!

Ann Kvale,
Children's Ministry



Ecclesiastes cont'd from front page

July 16

Themes of Vanity and Purpose:
Navigating Life's Transience

July 23

The Pursuit of Wisdom and
Pleasure: Lessons from
Ecclesiastes

July 30

Embracing Life's Seasons:
Finding Meaning in Ecclesiastes

To register for the series or for more information, please contact Pastor Mark Kvale at pastormark@englishlutheran.org.

GIFTS, MEMORIALS AND PASTORAL ACTS

UNDESIGNATED

In Honor of: Wesley Sprague's baptism by Trevor and Anna Sprague

QUILTERS

In Memory of: Larry and Sharon Norris by the Norris family

SEEKERS

In Memory of: DeLaney Gilster by Allan and Dee Schilling and Gary and Susan Link

DEATHS

03/18 Marjorie Renner

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Cody and Brittany Freymiller and son Theodore; Kaycie McCracken and daughter, Maelyn; Barbara Rockwell; Tim and Trudy Smith; Jean Marie Walsh

FIRST COMMUNION

Micah Farmer, Lydia Hansen, Pippa Jackson, Finlee Johnson, Zachary Johnson, Henry Lorenz, Claire Olson, Matthew Olson, Keagan Ortiz and Eli Stammeyer

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

May/June

PENTECOST

OUR VISION

BY THE GRACE OF GOD,
ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH
SHALL BE A HEALTHY,
MISSION-FOCUSED
CONGREGATION *full of life*

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40th ANNIVERSARY

English Ringers Bell Choir celebrated their 40th anniversary and premiered a new piece of music April 14 entitled "Saints, Come Join the Dance of Trinity." Written for five octaves of bells, it also includes trumpet, keyboard and singing. The composer is Paul McKlveen.

The first director in 1984 was Nancy Matchett and the three-octave bell set was donated by Mary Meyer and Marge Wheeler in memory of their parents, and the Tomalka family in memory of their sister, Jean. Kris Knutson directed from 1995-96. Marla Engbloom directed from 1996-2013.

The group has played for weddings, at Chamber Chorale concerts, at First Lutheran, rang for Dale Warland at the Beethoven Festival in Winona, and at the Norskedalen Christmas event featured on PBS!

Current ringers of the now five-octave choir include Barb Bjornstad, Nancy Erickson, Sarah Herath, Ann Kvale, Linda Lebakken, Sara Olson, Dawn Ortiz, Gail Quarberg, Sue Retzlaff, Peggy Sannerud, Carol Solyst, Beth Twiton, and Director Jim Knutson.



Marla Engbloom, Nancy Matchett, Jim Knutson

Thank you to English Lutheran's Memorial Committee for providing funds to have this special piece commissioned for our bell choir!



Welcome Statement

The faith community of English Lutheran Church is rooted in Christ and committed to living life generously.

We celebrate diversity of sexual orientation, gender identity, race, ethnicity, age, economic status, marital status, physical or mental ability.

We are united in the Holy Spirit as we embrace our differences. We welcome all as we strive to be a community equipped for God's mission in the world.

We invite you to join us as we seek to promote racial equity, social and economic justice, and care for our environment. Wherever you are on your faith journey, there is a place for you here.

