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1509 King Street
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November/December, 2021



the *Voice* of english lutheran

ADVENT and CHRISTMAS

PASTOR'S ARTICLE

“Humble yourself therefore under the mighty hand of God so that He may exalt you in due time” 1 Peter 5:6-7

Why now? Why still? These have been my cries to God regarding the pandemic that’s engulfed us these last 20 months. As each wave of coronavirus washes over us, I have found myself frustrated to the point that when I wake up, my first thought is often not to God, nor the day before me, but to the virus and its progression (or regression). I suspect I’m not alone.

This pandemic has shown us the limits of science and modern living. No vaccine can overcome our very human tendency to shoot ourselves in the foot, individually and collectively. Rather, it’s restored us to the knowledge of the precipice we stand on every day, not knowing whether this day, or this breath, is our last.

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December 24

- 3:00 p.m.
Children and Family focused
- 5:00 p.m.
Traditional Christmas Eve
- 10:00 p.m.
Peaceful Lessons and Carols
format with a short message

December 25

- 9:30 a.m.
Traditional Christmas Day
(no 5:00 p.m. service)

December 26 and January 1

- No services

January 2

- 9:30 a.m. service

January 8 and 9

- Saturday 5:00 p.m.
- Sunday 8:30 and 10:45 a.m.
Regular service times
Sunday School resumes

IN CHRIST

We Welcome, Worship & Work

IN THE WORLD



Worship Times

Saturday 5:00 p.m.

Sunday 8:30 a.m. and 10:45.

New Piano



FOR THE SANCTUARY

The Worship Council is excited to announce we have gathered seed money to purchase a new piano for our sanctuary!

Nearly a year ago the Worship Council started the discussion of either refurbishing or replacing the sanctuary piano. The current Baldwin piano, which has served English Lutheran well for three decades, is due for an extensive refurbishment. The action, mostly the middle three octaves, is tired. When weighing financial cost of refurbishment as well as the reduction of sound output (repairing the hammers and action would greatly reduce the volume of the instrument) it was decided that the best direction would be to search for a new instrument.

Yamaha has proven to build quality instruments, especially when considering the CX series. This is classified as a “semi-concert” series, and is a fine instrument.

To learn more of the exact Yamaha that was selected, here is a direct path to the website:

<https://www.yamahamusiclondon.com/C6X-Grand-Piano/pidPC6XPE>

Starting in January 2022, there will be a formal fundraiser for the remainder of the purchase of the Yamaha C6X Grand Piano.

WE NEED YOU!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR WORSHIP!

With our return to three services, Coffee Hour, Sunday School and so much more, we need your help!

We need you to serve as ushers and lectors during the services and assist with serving coffee and cookies between services. Soon we will need communion servers, too.

We welcome additional worship coordinators, altar ministry participants, and healing ministers, too. The tech booth is also in need of volunteers and it’s not as hard as it looks!

You can sign up on our website; click on the “Volunteer” button at the bottom of the home page. You can then choose which ministry activity you wish to serve and the service and date you are available. You can also call the church office and we will sign you up.

If you have questions regarding what each of these volunteer positions does, please feel free to contact Carol in the church office at 784-9335, or carol@englishlutheran.org. If you have not served in the past, we would love to have you serve now and we’ll be happy to train you!

We need you so we can continue to offer the worship and fellowship that we all enjoy. Please consider sharing your talents with the rest of us.



Blessing of the Animals Service



Reopening Team Update

The Re-Opening Team met on September 21 and meets monthly.

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to be an exercise in patience with frustrations in some areas (ongoing high levels of disease locally) and cautious optimism about the future in others (declining disease rates in some areas of the country and potential vaccines for children coming soon).

Given the ongoing impact of COVID 19 in this area ELC will move forward with some re-opening plans but will need to pause on others. La Crosse County is experiencing the Delta surge that started in the southern US earlier this summer. According to CDC criteria, COVID transmission in our community remains high. Local hospital systems are being impacted considerably.

- Given this, ELC will continue to require face masks at worship services and all group activities.
- Social distancing between individuals is recommended. Families do not need to social distance.
- Individuals with fever or cold symptoms (cough, runny nose, etc) are asked to stay home and participate in worship virtually.

Please remember these recommendations are meant to protect everyone, especially those with weaker immune systems or those not yet eligible to be vaccinated.

HVAC and ventilation work continues and once completed will enhance air quality and safety from respiratory viruses for all. Temporary ventilation enhancements have been added to the education rooms.

Sunday school programming has begun and with that a return to the usual worship schedule with one service on Saturday at 5:00 p.m. and two on Sunday at 8:30 and 10:45 a.m. Sunday morning fellowship hour returns at the usual time of 9:30-10:45 a.m.

With the return of cold weather fellowship hour will return to the fellowship hall. All are asked to maintain social distancing and face masks unless eating or drinking. Wednesday night meals and youth breakfasts will be postponed until a later date.

Our most difficult decision was to postpone the Bethlehem Event planned for December. Given current trends we anticipate high levels of disease in the community for several more months at least and it would not be safe or prudent to bring very large numbers of people into the building for this event at this time. In addition, the construction process would force other ELC activities such as the fellowship hour into a much smaller space (the narthex) for several months during the worst of the Delta surge. The Bethlehem Event team will be considering options for rescheduling.

Once again, thank you for your patience and understanding.

STEWARDSHIP FALL 2021

Have you heard about “All for Justice and Justice for All?” What is “All for Justice and Justice for All” about? It’s our annual stewardship campaign and it’s a chance to showcase how English Lutheran is addressing justice issues.

Each Saturday and Sunday since October 17 (with two weeks off for Confirmation and All Saints’ Sundays), you have seen and heard members and staff talking about what English Lutheran is doing to further justice in our community. These

talks have been inspiring, and are encouraging every ELC member to participate in a cause for justice, either the ones mentioned below or others of their own choosing.

We have shared about our community’s hunger issues. We have shared about Hope Restores, a program to help La Crosse area African Americans. We will share about becoming a “Reconciling in Christ” congregation, a commitment to being even more

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CALL COMMITTEE

Our process has been moving forward at a steady pace.

The Committee has received names of the candidates and are currently arranging the first interviews. Any additional information will be released at the appropriate time.

Pete Bemis

GIFTS, MEMORIALS AND PASTORAL ACTS

UNDESIGNATED

In Memory of: Terry Griffel by Jim Sill and Karen Guptill

In Memory of: Ruth Anderson by Mark and Carol Solyst, Ruth Olson, Ruth Kuntz, Kent and Mary Sween, Bill and Karen Newburg, and family and friends.

In Memory of: Jerry Ruff by

Vivian Storm and family and friends

In Memory of: Carol Ebner by Jim Sill

LIBRARY

In Memory of: Jerry Ruff by Vivian Storm

WORLD HUNGER

In Memory of: Gloria Patterson by John and Ardu Cleveland

PIANO

In Honor of: Tom Sahlstrom's retirement by Chuck and Carmen Gustafson

DEATHS

01/05Gloria Patterson,
funeral held 08/16

08/09Ruth Anderson,
funeral held 08/21

09/02Anthony "Tony" Jefson,
funeral held 09/09

09/08Carol Ebner
funeral held 09/14

09/01Ron McKelvey
funeral held 10/09

pastor's from front page

Life is uncertain, life is dangerous, no matter how much we choose to ignore that fact. This pandemic is humbling. A tiny particle, 4,000,000ths of an inch, brought humanity low. We are stymied, embittered and discouraged.

God understands. God is more. If we are overworked to point of exhaustion, God understands. If we are isolated to the point of despair, God understands. Is our impotence humility? Not really. Humility begins when we accept where we are and understand that, as powerful as we can be, we cannot change some fundamental facts of life. We are not all-powerful, we are not God.

When we really let go, really let God work in us, then change begins. I've a start on that, but I'm not there yet, or so this pandemic's taught me. I pray you are there or will be soon. Let's pray for each other. Perhaps someday we can let God in all the way.

Pastor Glen Bickford



TACKLE HUNGER

The Packers vs the Vikings
Food Drive Challenge

November 20 and 21
January 1 and 2

Bring your cans and bags of food
to church on these weekends
and see how we

TACKLE HUNGER
in our community and test
how loyal our football fans are.

All donations go to

WAFER
FOOD PANTRY

Seekers Bible Study

Meets every Thursday

9:39 to 11:00 a.m.

Room 106 or via Zoom as required

NOVEMBER: The Problem of Evil

- *November 4* - The Philosophy of Evil
- presenter, Prof. Eric Kraemer, retired
Professor of Philosophy University of
Wisconsin-La Crosse
- *November 11* - The Theology of Evil
- presenter, Rev. Mark Jolivet, retired
ELCA pastor and Navy Chaplain
- *November 18* - A Contemporary
Perspective of Evil - presenter, Prof.
Richard Kyte, Director of the D. B.
Reinhart Institute for Ethics in Leader
ship and Endowed Professor of Ethics
at Viterbo University

DECEMBER: Old World Spirituality,
Hanukkah and Nativity

- *December 2* - Old World Spirituality
- presenter, Rabbi Brian Serle,
Congregation Sons of Abraham
- *December 9* - Hanukkah - presenter,
Rabbi Brian Serle, Congregation Sons
of Abraham
- *December 16* - The Nativity
from *The Chosen* with discussion.
Christmas refreshments.

We hope to see you at church, or on the
screen!

Janet Melby



P.A.C.K.

4th, 5th and 6th GRADES

Our Friday night fellowship is going strong! Join us for these upcoming events!

GRATEFUL GAMES

• Friday, Nov. 12 from 6:30-8:30 p.m.

CRAZY CHRISTMAS

• Friday, Dec. 10 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Youth Nights

These are high energy, impactful nights that re-focus on lives towards God and help us to build relationships and have fun together! Come check it out!

High School

6:00 p.m., Sunday, Nov. 7 and Dec 5

7th and 8th Grade

5:30 p.m., Sunday, Nov 14 and Dec 12.



2022 ELCA Youth Gathering July 24-28 2022 Minneapolis, MN



Calling all 8th-12th graders!

The Gathering is **FOR YOU!**

Every three-ish years youth from **ALL** over the country come together in one place to worship, serve together and learn all about what it means to be children of a Boundless God!

Talk to Kristen for more information.

Registration form and \$100 deposit is due by November 15.



Sunday School Schedule

November 7, 14, 21

Classes 9:45-10:30 a.m.

November 28

No Class; Holiday Weekend

December 5, 12

Classes 9:45 -10:30 a.m.

December 19

Christmas Program Weekend

December 26 and January 2

No Class, Holiday Weekends

Rite of Confirmation October 31

Nine students were confirmed.

Nathaniel Beier, Lucas Go, Aaliyah Hamilton, Cooper Johnson, Aidenn Markos, Wyatt Moe, Lydia Rislow, Isaac Trohkimoinen, Gavin Wappler

save the date | Advent Fellowship & Christmas Program



December 19
Watch for more details.



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

November/December

ADVENT and CHRISTMAS

OUR VISION

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

full of life

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SCHOOL KIT PROJECT

Thanks to your work and generosity, we were able to deliver 828 school kits to Lutheran World Relief. We know some of our kits were already shipped to Honduras where kids will make good use of them.



Stewardship from page 3

open to minorities in our community, including minorities of different sexual orientation. Tim Jacobson will talk about our soon-to-conclude English Lutheran “Habitat for Humanity Faith Build” project. These talks represent our hopes and dreams for justice in our world as well as some aspirations already fulfilled by English Lutheran’s work.

Our stewardship campaign will conclude Consecration Weekend, November 20-21, with guest preacher Pastor Paul Sannerud, who always gives an inspiring sermon! This is the chance to help English Lutheran fulfill its mission of making a difference in La Crosse and beyond! Bring your Estimate of Giving cards and pray about how you can be involved and make a difference, too! God’s work, our hands, our money.

