



The

# Grapevine

September, 2023



## **Elim's Mission Statement**

*"With faith in the Triune God, the family of Elim Lutheran Church proclaims the Gospel of Jesus Christ through word and sacraments. In our life together as a Christian congregation, we provide a center for members and community to worship and pray; to meet and learn; to be welcomed, nourished, and strengthened; to rest and be comforted; to serve; and to go forth and witness to the world through the prayerful stewardship of our resources."*



Greetings, Elim family,

Recently, I received the following letter from Luther Seminary President Robin J. Steinke. There is valuable information in this letter and I encourage you to read and absorb its content, which is applicable to our current situation.

~~~~~  
Dear Pastor Caroline,

We live in a time when institutional structures are changing rapidly. Despite the often-quoted admonition, "Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring troubles of its own" (Matthew 6:34), many of us still worry about what the future holds.

*What's going to happen to our congregation?*

*Will we be able to call another pastor next year?*

*Will my children and grandchildren know the love of Jesus?*

These are real questions without simple or obvious answers. But as followers of Christ, we are called to believe that God brings new life out of impossible places - the margins, the sick bed, the tomb. The church.

Here at Luther Seminary, we are leaning into a vision of the future characterized by possibility, if we are willing to embrace it. As the landscape of the church changes, new forms of Christian community are coming into being and longstanding faith practices are being renewed.

A concept that explains this shift is the "mixed ecology," which describes a blend of inherited and innovative forms of Christian community. In the mixed ecology, traditional Sunday morning services exist alongside emerging practices that connect with people where they live, work, and play.

The mixed ecology signals a paradigm shift from thinking of the church as an institution to the church as an ecosystem of thriving Christian communities. This model has taken root in the United Kingdom through the Fresh Expressions movement and is becoming more widespread in North America. (You can learn more about this movement in the recent article in Story magazine, ["Meeting Jesus at the Park."](#))

These "fresh expressions" of Christian community come in all shapes and sizes, reflecting the diversity of God's people and the places they seek meaning. Weeknight dinner meetups, "messy church" for young families, fitness and spirituality groups, and pioneering church plants meet people where they already are and invite them into deeper relationship with God and neighbor.

The more we lean into the idea of the mixed ecology, the more excited we become about the future into which the Holy Spirit is calling the church as a whole.

The mixed ecology is a radically inclusive model that, by design, provides a point of entry for people who otherwise may never set foot in church. It's a "both/and" perspective that affirms the rich inheritance of our Christian traditions while adapting to the vital questions, diverse contexts, and deep need for connection in our contemporary culture.

We are profoundly interested in what the future holds for those called to lead Christian communities. The mixed ecology model reflects a current reality - that many churches are already relying on lay leadership rather than professional clergy - but it doesn't stop there. It opens up the possibility of calling people out of the pews and into more active and engaged forms of discipleship, leadership, and ministry.

It's invigorating and humbling work to accompany thinkers and faithful pioneer who are at the forefront of this reimagination of church for our age. Sometimes scary, too. But, in fact, we're already living a version of the mixed ecology at Luther Seminary.

Our degree programs continue the vital work of equipping those whom God calls for professional leadership roles in the church. At the same time, our Faith+Lead initiative ([faithlead.org](http://faithlead.org)) is a center for innovation - part start-up, part research and development lab, part digital convening hub. It's a site of holy experimentation that informs how we deliver theological education and build community in the digital age, and vice versa.

We're witnessing this shifting landscape in real time. A poignant example: The congregation council of St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church in Sandusky, Ohio, is navigating the closure of their congregation and the use of church assets. Out of the grief surrounding the end of more than a century of ministry at St. Paul, the council looked to the future with hope, trust, and a desire to seek new ways of spreading the gospel in their community. They decided to make a legacy gift to Faith+Lead as an investment in the future of Christ's church.

Endings and new beginnings: We trust in the promise that God's love is deep and wide enough to encompass them both. As Christians, we are living not just through a period of significant change, but one of death and resurrection. We give thanks for the Holy Spirit's steadfast presence as we accompany the church and its leaders into this new era.

Thank you for your prayerful support of this exhilarating, challenging and deeply important work.

Peace,  
/s/ Robin J. Steinke  
President, Luther Seminary

~~~~~  
May each of you be filled with new vision as we move forward.

Always in Christ,

*Pastor Caroline*

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**August Council Meeting  
Sunday, August 13, 2023, 11:00 a.m.**

Meeting was called to order by President Cindy at 11:08 a.m.

**Present:** Cindy Wolslegel, John Lindstrom, Pastor Caroline, Barb Rising, LouAnn Dutt, Steven Scheer, Jennifer Rheault

**Absent:** Curt Meyer

**Guest:** Scott Strand, update on "The Future of Us"

**Call to Order:** Open Prayer and Devotion provided by Pastor Caroline.

**Minutes:**

Pastor Caroline moves to accept the minutes from August, 2023. Barb seconds. Motion carries.

**Committee Reports:**

**Treasurer's Report:**

John reported that every month we are borrowing money from the memorial fund to cover general fund expenses.

**Learning Committee**

Pastor Caroline shared that Bible Study will start in the fall.

**Worship & Music Committee**

Committee will be meeting on Sunday, August 27, at 9:15, prior to Worship

**Property Committee**

Have Curt get estimate for kitchen ceiling repair work from retired individual  
Bat Guy found several places on the church roof where bats may be coming in. Will ask Curt to get estimate to do repairs.

**Stewardship Committee**

Committee will be meeting August 18 to discuss the Stewardship Drive

**Service & Outreach and Mission Support Committees**

Committee will be visiting about service project for God's Work. Our hands day on Sunday, September 10

**Mission Support Committee**

No report

Barb moves to approve the Consent Agenda. LouAnn seconds. Motion carries.

**Pastor's Report**

- When there is an urgent message for Council members, a phone call will be made instead of an e-mail
- Pastor had 7 visits in July and 1 service at Evergreen  
Pastor will not be in person for the October Council meeting. Instead, she will call in for the meeting.

Jennifer moves to approve Pastor's report. LouAnn seconds. Motion carries.

**Prior Business**

No count will be kept from ballots returned for Information Survey

**New Business**

Devotions for Council meetings through December were figured and a list was sent to Connie. September-Barb Rising; October-Cindy Wolslegel; November-Jennifer Rheault; December-LouAnn Dutt

Informational Congregation Forums will be held monthly during coffee time this fall.

First meeting will be September 17 to discuss The Future of Us

The Future of Us Update

Scott discussed the list of key tasks to be done, that include:

Engage a realtor to list church property and to look for places to rent/lease for

Elim congregation

Engage an attorney

Perform an inventory of the Church's physical property and inventory of archive items

Get appraisal for organ

Barb moves to adjourn at 12:40. Cindy seconds. Motion carries.

**Next Council Meeting:** Sunday, September 10, 2023, at 11:00 a.m.  
Devotions-Barb Rising

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer Rheault

~~~~~

**Treasurer's Report**

July, 2023

John Lindstrom

**Balance Sheet**

- ◆ The checking acct balance is \$1,573.35. The balance at the beginning of the year was \$9,372.02. General Acct Fund balance after June is -\$27,037.72.

**Income and Expense (7/12 or 58.3% through the year)**

- ◆ Monthly pledge income was under budget (budget \$6,667.00 vs. \$4,355.00).
- ◆ Monthly total income was under budget (budget \$8,970.00 vs. \$6,300.25).
- ◆ YTD pledge income is 58.6% of the budget \$80,000 (actual \$46,879.00).
- ◆ YTD total income is 57.29% of the budget \$107,600.00 (actual \$61,647.56).
- ◆ Monthly expenses were under budget (budget \$12,500.00 vs. \$10,713.02).
- ◆ YTD expenses are 59.12% of the budget \$150,004.00 (actual \$88,685.28)
- ◆ The utility bill was \$795.24. Borrowed \$5,000 from the memorial fund to cover General Fund expenses.

## September Services Volunteers



### USHERS/GREETERS

September 3 Barb Rising  
 September 10 Cindy Wolslegel  
 September 17  
 September 24

### FLOWERS

September 3  
 September 10  
 September 17  
 September 24

### LAYREADERS

September 3  
 September 10  
 September 17  
 September 24

### MISSIONARY SUPPORT

September 3  
 September 10  
 September 17  
 September 24

### COMMUNION ASSISTANTS

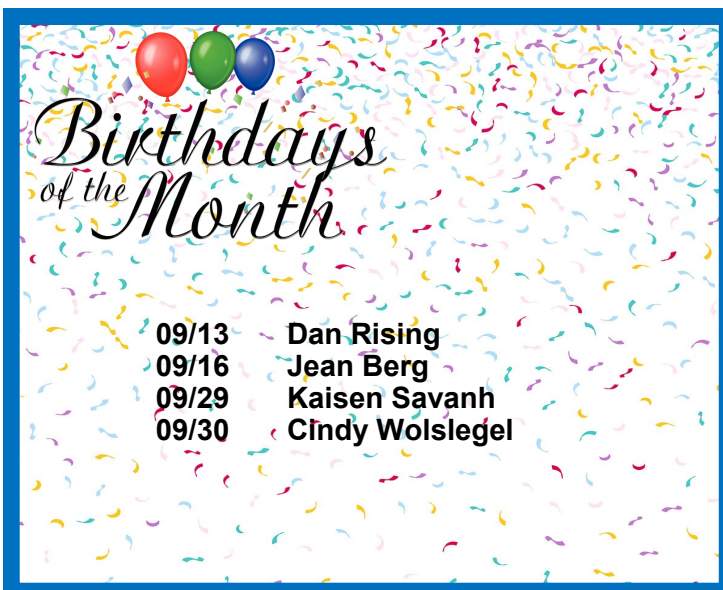
None needed until further notice

### FUNERAL ASSISTANT

No one needed until further notice.

Please call **Jennifer Rheault, 701-566-3949** if you would like to sign up to be an Usher, Lay Reader, or Communion Assistant.

Every Sunday is open for **Missionary Support**, which is \$25.00 and can be given in honor of or in memory of a loved one. If you would like to help with this ministry, please contact the Elim office. Thank you.



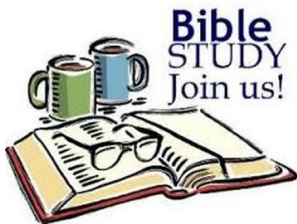
If your birthday should be on this list and isn't, please contact the Elim office. I apologize for the oversight.

Dalbol Flowers has had a change in their procedure for ordering Altar flowers. In the past, the Church could order for the individual, with the person being invoiced; but in the future, the individual needs to call and order flowers themselves, with directions that the flowers be delivered the Saturday prior to the Service. With this, be sure you call Connie in the office at 232-2574, to let her know which Sunday you would like them for, so it may be noted in that Sunday's bulletin. The usual cost for Altar flowers is around \$26.00 for 2 vases, plus tax and delivery charges. If you wish to take the flowers home with you following worship, please let Connie know.

Thank you.

Please refer to the August Council minutes for updates. Thank you.

**An Informational Forum** in regard to the future status of the church will be held on Sunday, September 17, during fellowship. This meeting will be facilitated by Cindy Wolslegel and Scott Strand.



**2023 - 2024 WEDNESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY**  
**Beginning Wednesday, September 13, 10:00 a.m.**

This school year, I'd like to try something different for our Bible study. There will be three different shorter studies, taking a week or two break between each of the studies. The first will be on Girzone's book on the Holy Trinity. This book may not be able to fully explain to us who the Holy Trinity is and how three can be one. But hopefully, it will help us to better understand what the Trinity is.

The second study is *The Importance of Why*. When we ask why, we learn. That is a given. And this study will give us a deeper understanding of why and how why is such an important concept. For example, why Jesus? This is one example of some of the whys we will be looking at.

The third Bible study has not been 100% decided upon yet but will likely be the connection between the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, and the Apostles' Creed.

I am certainly looking forward to this fall and learning with all of you. Please contact either the office or me with your intent to participate.

*Pastor Caroline*

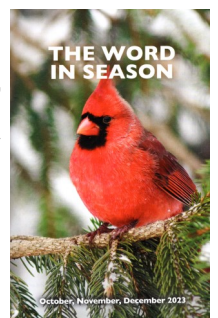
We have a LOT of used Altar candles that we have no use for. If anyone would like some, they will be set out in the Narthex on Sunday, September 10, for people to take any and all they want. Please bring your own bags. Thank you.





None in August

The October, November, December, 2023, edition of your quarterly devotional is currently available, either in the Narthex or in the office. If you would like a copy mailed to you, please contact the office. Thank you.



*August Baptisms, Funerals, Membership Transfers In, and Transfers Out*

**Church  
Membership**

**Baptisms:** None

**Funerals:** None

**Membership Transfers Out of Elim:** None

**Membership Transfers In to Elim:** None

**Deaths:** None





Choir will resume on September 17 with a rehearsal at 9:15 and singing at the worship service at 10:00. We will plan to sing once a month as we have in the past.  
Thanks, Scott Strand

## Church Council Meeting

Will be held Sunday, September 3, following Worship in the Small Fellowship Hall. ANY AND ALL ARE INVITED TO ATTEND.



## Serving Groups

**Sept. 3      Group 1**  
**Sept. 10     Group 2**  
**Sept. 17     Group 1**  
**Sept. 24     Group 2**

**Did you know.....**that Bethany Retirement Living is now offering ASSISTED LIVING SHORT STAYS? The warm environment and services we offer make Bethany a great option for seniors who want to give their normal caregivers a break, need to recover after surgery or another medical issue, or who want to test the waters of senior living. Our assisted living communities offer freedom from daily chores like cooking, laundry and housekeeping. Your assisted living services can be customized to meet your unique needs. Both all-inclusive and individually customized service options are available. For information about short-stay Assisted Living, contact Bethany Towers at 701.239.3439 or visit the website at <https://www.bethanynd.org/assisted-living-short-stay-suites/>.



### Lines of Communication

If anyone has any questions or concerns regarding church operations, please contact the appropriate person below for correct information. Thank you.

**Pastor Caroline** - Services / Worship  
 Prayers  
 Personal concerns  
 Visitation Schedule

**Curt Meyer** - Church building / property cleaning  
 Event set-up

**Jennifer Rheault, Robyn Vinje, or Scott Strand** -  
 Services / Worship  
 Music

**Barb Rising** - Kitchen / Altar

### *Elim Church Council Members*

Pastor Caroline Strand, Pastor  
 cstrand@elim-lutheran.org  
 701.232.2574 - - 507.398.3166 (after office hours cell)  
 Cindy Wolslegel, President  
 Barb Rising, Vice President  
 (Mission Support-temporary, Service/Outreach)  
 Jennifer Rheault, Secretary  
 (Learning, Worship/Music)  
 John Lindstrom, Treasurer  
 Curt Meyer (Property)  
 LouAnn Dutt, (Stewardship)  
 Steve Scheer

### **Elim Office Hours**

|           |                               |
|-----------|-------------------------------|
| Monday    | All Church offices are closed |
| Tuesday   | 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.        |
| Wednesday | 8:00 a.m. to Noon             |
| Thursday: | 8:00 a.m. to Noon             |
| Friday:   | All Church offices are closed |

As Council Committee heads, you are asked to submit your written Committee Report to the office 1 week prior to the month's Council meeting. This report will then be included in the individual Council packets for each meeting. If you do not have a written report for that month, please let the office know that, as well. Thank you.





On September 10, Elim will participate in a "God's Work. Our Hands" project. This year, we wish to focus on those in need of personal care items. Your donated items will be delivered to the Emergency Food Pantry. Here is a list of suggested items: toothpaste, toothbrushes, shampoo, conditioner, deodorant (men's and women's) shaving supplies (razor, cream, after shave), personal feminine items, body wash, and combs. Totes will be provided in the Narthex to put your donations in. The need continues to be great. We thank you for your contributions to this worthwhile cause.

In addition to this project, we are encouraging all members to take a few minutes to create a card for our shut-ins. Supplies will be provided. A greeting from our members means a lot. We will gather after Worship on September 10th to complete our cards as we use our hands for "God's Work!"

Sincerely, LouAnn Dutt and Barb Rising



The Women of Elim will resume meeting on September 21, at 10 a.m. at the Sons of Norway Viking Room. Please bring your *Gather* magazine. If we haven't received our September issue, please prepare Session 3, "Salvation Now," in the August issue. If you have any questions, please call Barb Rising at 237-4364.



# Elim Lutheran Church

## September, 2023

| Sun                                                                                                                                  | Mon                                                                                    | Tue                 | Wed                             | Thu                                            | Fri | Sat |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|-----|-----|
|                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                        |                     |                                 |                                                | 1   | 2   |
| 3<br><u>Worship w/ Communion- 10:00</u>                                                                                              | 4<br> | 5<br>AA Group-noon  | 6                               | 7                                              | 8   | 9   |
| 10<br><u>Worship w/ Communion- 10:00</u><br><br><u>God's Work. Our Hands Sunday</u><br><br><u>Council meeting, following Worship</u> | 11                                                                                     | 12<br>AA Group-noon | 13<br><u>Bible Study- 10:00</u> | 14                                             | 15  | 16  |
| 17<br><u>Choir Rehearsal-9:15</u><br><br><u>Worship- 10:00</u><br><br><u>Congregation Informational meeting following Worship</u>    | 18                                                                                     | 19<br>AA Group-noon | 20<br><u>Bible Study- 10:00</u> | 21<br><u>Elim Women- 10:00, Sons of Norway</u> | 22  | 23  |
| 24<br><u>Worship- 10:00</u>                                                                                                          | 25                                                                                     | 26<br>AA Group-noon | 27<br><u>Bible Study- 10:00</u> | 28                                             | 29  | 30  |
|                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                        |                     |                                 |                                                |     |     |

Elim Lutheran Church  
321 9th Street North  
Fargo, ND 58102

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



# The Grapevine



321 Ninth Street North  
Fargo, ND 58102  
(701) 232-2574

[www.elim-lutheran.org](http://www.elim-lutheran.org)

*"Built on a Triangle with Faith in the Triune"*

|                              |                      |
|------------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Pastor:</b>               | Caroline Strand      |
| <b>Office Administrator:</b> | Connie Rawls         |
| <b>Maintenance:</b>          | Curt Meyer           |
| <b>Music Staff:</b>          | Robyn Vinje          |
| <b>Organist</b>              | Scott Strand         |
| <b>Choir Director</b>        | Katie Narum Miyamoto |
| <b>Missionary</b>            |                      |

**Monthly Newsletter**  
**September, 2023**