



The

# Grapevine

March, 2024

My condolences and my joy to you dear Elim family,

## **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."*

You might be asking if your pastor has completely lost her mind. Well, I can tell you, there are days when I feel like it, but there is a sound reason why I have greeted you with condolences and with joy. You see, at the end of March is the Three Day Service. The Maunday Thursday, the Good Friday, and Easter Sunday services are actually one service.

One of my seminary professors, Dr. Dirk Lange, taught his students to never forget that the three days mentioned above were really one service and likely, the most important service in the church year. It is where we discern and experience Christ sharing his body and blood with us, forgiving us all our sins and the sins of all. If you remember the Words of Institution, Jesus says, "This is my blood, given and shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sins. Drink from this cup and remember me." He then goes out to pray, and is betrayed, denied, arrested, tried in some sort of mock trial that has been set up to trap him, and led to Golgotha, the hill of death.

Good Friday is the day in which Jesus carries his own heavy cross after he has been beaten and whipped. When he reaches the hill, Jesus and two others are nailed to crosses with spikes and he dies a slow and suffocating death. And he does this all for us. You see, this was God's plan when he saw his people, all people live their lives thanklessly and sinfully, forgetting who gave them everything and loved them with a love that was well-beyond what any human was capable of understanding. To see Jesus suffer like that, to know that he is on that cross because of me, brings me to my knees in shame, and brings tears to my eyes. Forgive me, Lord, for I know not what I do.

But joy comes on Sunday, early in the day. The tomb is empty! He has risen! He has risen indeed!!! Sin has been defeated and the sting of death is gone. Every word Jesus has spoken is true. Every promise God has made has been fulfilled – except for one.

Jesus has not yet returned, but one day, he will. He will come again and reunite the living and the dead. He will bring humanity together into the heavenly kingdom, for all humanity will have been forgiven so long ago, at that ugly cross. Suffering will be no more. Death will be no more. Only love and peace and praise and joy will survive. And we will be with the living God on that blessed day. Forever and ever. Amen.

*Pastor Caroline*



# LENT AND HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE



We will combine the Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services. The service will be held on Thursday, March 28th, on Maundy Thursday, at 5pm (note time change) with no service on Good Friday.

## February Council Meeting Sunday, February 11, 2024

Meeting was called to order by President Cindy Wolslegel at 11:05 a.m.

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

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

### Minutes:

Pastor Caroline moves to approve the minutes from January meeting. LouAnn Dutt seconds. Motion carries.

Annual Meeting Minutes – table annual meeting minutes until Office Report is corrected.

### Committee Reports:

#### Treasurer's Report

John Lindstrom reports over spent \$1,700 in January.

Correction to January, 2024, Treasurer's Report

Property taxes paid was \$1,535.66, not \$1,598.22

#### Learning Committee

No report

No discussion

#### Worship & Music Committee

No additions

Pastor Caroline will be using the "Lent in a Box" series for Lenten Services on Sunday mornings

Pastor Caroline said a reader will be needed for the Ash Wednesday Service

Jennifer Rheault will read for Ash Wednesday Service

#### Property Committee

Cindy reported that Brian Kounovsky showed the church to two different perspective clients this past Tuesday, February 6

Curt brought up that an oil tank is buried on the east side of Elim Church property

Cindy will talk to Brian Kounovsky about the oil tank and what to do about it

Curt suggested having separate donation from congregation for purchase of outdoor flowers for summer, 2024

#### Stewardship Committee

No report

No discussion

#### Service & Outreach and Mission Support Committees

No report

No discussion

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Mission Support Committee  
No report  
No discussion

Barb Rising moves to approve the Consent Agenda. Curt Meyer seconds. Motion carries.

**Pastor's Report**

- 5 visits in January
- 1 service at Evergreen
- 1 funeral at Elim – Dianne Clark  
1 funeral t Korsmo Funeral Home – resident from Evergreen

Barb Rising moves to approve Pastor's report. LouAnn Dutt seconds. Motion carries.

**Prior Business**

Curt reported it will cost \$1,100 to put phone in elevator  
Calls made from phone go to Otis Elevator Company  
There will be a service fee if phone is used  
There is no monthly fee

**New Business**

Installation of Council members, members elected on Committees, and members who will represent Elim Church, will be held during the Sunday, February 18, Sunday Worship Service  
Discussion was held and all positions on the Council will stay the same for 2024

Barb Rising moves to adjourn. Pastor Caroline seconds. Motion carries. Meeting adjourned at 12:53 p.m.

**Next Council Meeting:** Sunday, March 10, 2024, at 11:00 a.m.  
Devotions-Barb Rising

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer Rheault

**Treasurer's Report  
January, 2024**

John Lindstrom

**Balance Sheet**

- ⇒ The checking acct balance is -\$1,314.80. The balance at the beginning of the year was \$3,413.87.  
General Acct Fund balance after January is -\$1,738.67.

**Income and Expense (1/12 or 8.3% through the year)**

- ⇒ Monthly pledge income was over budget (budget \$5,834.00 vs. \$6,235.00).  
⇒ Monthly total income was over budget (budget \$7,938.00 vs. \$8,306.00).  
⇒ YTD pledge income is 8.91% of the budget \$70,000 (actual \$6,235.00). Recognized \$3,000 in prepaid pledges as income.  
⇒ YTD total income is 8.72% of the budget \$95,200.00 (actual \$8,306.00).  
⇒ Monthly expenses were over budget (budget \$9,659.00 vs. \$10,044.67).  
⇒ YTD expenses are 8.68% of the budget \$115,724.00 (actual \$10,044.67)  
⇒ The utility bill was \$1,598.23. Paid the property taxes of \$1,598.23.

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**Special Elim Council Meeting  
Sunday, February 18, 2024, 11:10 a.m.**

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Meeting called to order by President Cindy Wolslegel.

Members present: Cindy Wolslegel, Curt Meyer, Steve Scheer, John Lindstrom, LouAnn Dutt, Barb Rising, and Pastor Caroline

Absent: Jennifer Rheault

Guest: Brian Kounovsky, real estate agent

Brian presented the Council with a Letter of Intent to Purchase from Latter Rain Ministries. Brian stated this letter of intent is a non-binding document until both parties are in agreement to the terms.

Discussion regarding this document and the buyer's purchase price of \$1.15M. A motion to change the purchase price to \$1.4M was made by Pastor Caroline, seconded by Steve Scheer. Motion carried.

A motion to authorize President Cindy to sign the Letter of Intent and to redline portions of the letter with Brian was made by Pastor Caroline, seconded by Barb Rising. Motion carried.

Discussion was held regarding our old oil tank on our property. Brian will investigate how best to handle this and report back to the Council.

Meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Barb Rising, Vice-President

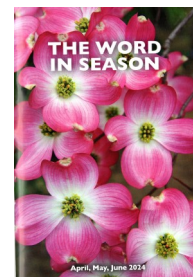


### Service Group Change

When the "Women of Elim" met on Thursday, February 15, we discussed the need to reorganize our service groups. We are in agreement to combine groups 1 and 2 into 1 large group with our 3 callers remaining: LouAnn Dutt, LaVonne Black, and Barb

Rising. A sign-up sheet will be posted each month in the kitchen with an opportunity for all to sign up for a Sunday of their choice to serve Sunday morning coffee. This can be 1 or 2 people, if desired, on any given Sunday. Thank you for your cooperation. If you have any questions, please refer them to callers LouAnn, LaVonne, or Barb.

The April, May, June, 2024, issue of your quarterly devotional, *The Word in Season*, is now available either in the Narthex or the church office. If you would like one mailed out to you, please contact the office at 701-232-2574, or by e-mail. Thank you.



We are looking for donations for outdoor flowers around the church. If you would like to donate to this fund, please indicate on your check or envelope that it's for flowers. If you have any questions, please contact Curt at 701-793-6799. Thank you.

## March Services Volunteers



### USHERS/GREETERS

March 3  
March 10  
March 17  
March 24  
March 31

### FLOWERS

March 3  
March 10  
March 17  
March 24  
March 31

### LAYREADERS

March 3 Jennifer Rheault  
March 10 Betty Lindstrom  
March 17  
March 24  
March 31 Barb Rising

### MISSIONARY SUPPORT

March 3  
March 10  
March 17  
March 24  
March 31

### 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.

*Birthdays of the Month*

Meya Savanh	03/05
LouAnn Dutt	03/13
Adeline Geist	03/20
Glenn Paulson	03/27
Royce Black	03/27
Betty Christianson	03/29

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.





In memory of Dianne Clark  
Undesignated

Wade & Kim Hesch  
Curt Meyer  
Duane & Becky Slusher  
Orville & Shirley Slusher  
Elim Women  
Betty Lindstrom  
Don & Laurine Kounovsky  
Cindy Wolslegel  
Lou Foley  
Robyn Vinje  
John & Marie Lindstrom  
Dan & Barb Rising

General Fund

In memory of Nils & Rose Petersson  
Undesignated

the Petersson family

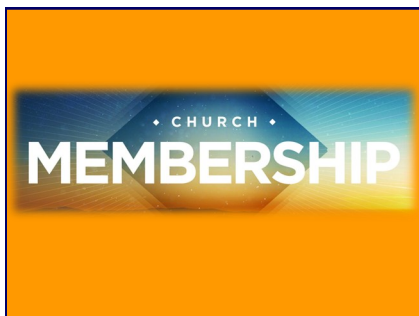


### Rules to keep one's self miserable and make others miserable:

- Feel sorry for yourself.
- Worry. Focus on things that might happen but won't.
- Complain. Find fault with everything.
- Insist on having things your own way.
- Ridicule. Make someone else miserable as yourself.
- Overreact. Make a mountain out of a molehill.
- Be self-centered.
- Ignore the moral teachings of the Church. Adopt the principle "I'll do it my way."
- Deny! Convince yourself that you are self-sufficient; not needing compassion, forgiveness and understanding. Prayer and church are mere incidentals.

There are nine rules to become miserable. With Christ, there is one rule for happiness and fulfillment: "Love one another as I have loved you."

### *February Baptisms, Funerals, Membership Transfers In, and Transfers Out*



**Baptisms:** None

**Funerals:** None

**Membership Transfers Out of Elim:** None

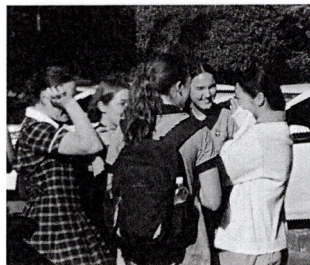
**Membership Transfers In to Elim:** None

**Deaths:** None

**Greetings in the name of Christ.** God is good. God gives health and well-being. Life's ups and downs are common everywhere (including Japan), but we know that God will be with us in whatever times come and go.

**Japan moves on.** As of June 2023, Japan was one of the last developed countries to officially downgrade the Corona virus to the same as the influenza virus. Masks are not officially requested, but over half of our students still wear them. When someone comes back to school after having been sick, it is still expected that you will be masked for a few days. If a class has more than 1/4 of the students with either Corona or influenza, the class is "closed" and they all go home for a few days. Japan has changed and, even though people don't talk about it nearly as much, students are given "official absences" for hospital documents that say they had COVID-19 or the Influenza virus. Life will never be the same, but Japan is moving on, after four years.

**International Exchange Revival.** As a part of moving on at Luther, there has been a massive revival of our international exchange programs with our sister school in Adelaide, Australia. Double the amount of students who did these programs pre-COVID have participated in the 2023-2024 school year. Nine students from each school did the three-month program. Three students from



each school did the one-year program. And over 40 students from each country participated in a 2-week study tour. We are excited about the ways that Australians can be inspired by Japanese culture, and Japanese can be forever changed by visiting an



Australian school. It was always common place to see tears at airports when groups said goodbye, but now we see tears when students reunite while welcoming their friends to their country! We continue to pray for health and

economic stability that will help students to experience God amazing world! We are also working with Oak Grove Lutheran School in Fargo, ND to create new programs for more students. (Pic right: the 3 from Luther, and 2 from Immanuel College on the 3 month program before departing together to Australia. Pic left: tears as old friends reunite as Luther welcomes the Immanuel College study tour in October.)

**New International Programs at Luther.** TSMC (a computer chip manufacturing company from



Taiwan) has moved a very large factory to Kumamoto. This has created a new necessity for international schools and programs for English-speaking students in Kumamoto. Luther Gakuin has been asked to start a few new things. One of them is a hybrid program with a Tokyo international school called AOBA Japan International School. High school students, like Irene (pictured left doing her own science experiment as a part of her AOBA Biology inquiry assessment), join Luther students in their Japanese classes for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> hour classes. Then, they

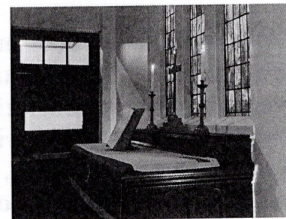
get online from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> hour and do online classes with the AOBA International Baccalaureate curriculum. Then, after school, they join Luther students in their afterschool sports and cultural extracurricular activities. It is a growing program, and a great challenge! I am teaching these mostly non-Christian students the required Bible class. Another thing that was requested of Luther is to start an international elementary school. It will open in April 2024! They are currently doing entrance exams to admit 20 students for each class. They recruited very "internationally-looking children" for the website and the pamphlet. You can check out the website where Jun and Haru are pictured (homepage pictured right: <https://ps.kluther-gakuin.jp/en/>), even though they will not attend the school, at least not next year. I am



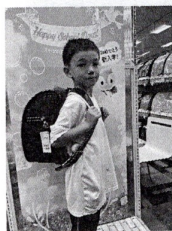


not officially assigned or working with this department on campus, but I support it with as much prayer as possible. Prayer warriors are “a must” when you are starting a new school! Please pray for them as they make crucial decisions! That means Luther will have a kindergarten, elementary school, middle school, high school, and 4-year college on our small campus!! ☺

**Picking up the slack.** Another challenge these past six months has been the lack of a chaplain at Luther Gakuin. The chaplain for the middle school and high school quit before summer vacation. I was on the religious committee and had been supporting him, but when he left all of the activities fell to the committee. Besides many of the Christmas activities, I have also become in charge of daily morning worship. I put together a calendar of speakers of teachers and area pastors including English teachers, coordinate the student musicians, student acolytes and student leaders for liturgy, and run the sound board during the worship. I sit in a small room at the front of the sanctuary during the worship. On most days, there are 300 students sitting in our chapel, with the rest of the 1000 students listening to the worship service over the broadcasting system. (Pic right: My view from the sound board in the back) It has been exhausting, but I am praying for the new chaplain who will come to Luther in April. We don't know who that will be yet, but God does. I pray for that person and the strength that they will need to lead the mostly-non-Christian student body in worship every day.



**Family life / Jun and Haru!** Haru will be a first grader in April! As every mother says, time has flown! In Japan, 1<sup>st</sup> graders get a special backpack that they use for 6 years. It is called a “randoseru.” Haru chose a slightly brighter blue instead of the common black or navy, because he wants to be “famous”. (Pic left.) We went shopping in January, but it was too late for the season and we had to order to it. Most up-coming 1<sup>st</sup> graders get their randoseru almost a



year in advance during the summer months the previous year!! Jun will start 5<sup>th</sup> grade in April. He has homework every night, and special homework even during the longer winter and summer vacations. He is currently working on remembering all of the 47 prefectures in Japan. (Map from his textbook on the right.) Not only does he have to remember where each prefecture is, but he has to remember how to read it and the Chinese characters for each one. (At least he doesn't have to remember the capital of each State like I remember doing in elementary school!) They are both excited about coming to the US in the summer, but they will both be missing classes in Japan and their summer vacation with friends. We will find things for them to do and find new friends, I hope!

**Life in Kumamoto .** I have been told to expect higher prices in the US this summer with inflation. Japan has not had to deal with so much inflation as of yet, but many things have always been expensive. The current exchange rate is 150yen to \$1USD. So, this packet of three strawberries is 580yen, which is \$8.70USD. And with the 10% sales tax it is \$9.57 for THREE strawberries. We need fruit, but I try to shop at fresh markets and avoid supermarket produce...



#### Please pray for:

- Peace in the region of Asia and around the world.
- Those suffering from the 7.5 magnitude Noto earthquake in Ishikawa Prefecture on New Years Day, Jan. 1, 2024.
- The new chaplain for Luther junior high and high school who will arrive in April.
- The new students from Taiwan in the hybrid program with AOBA International School.
- The first group of students in the Luther International Elementary School.
- The 300 current first year Luther High School students as they travel around Tokyo this week on their school trip

Christ's Peace&Prayers,

Katie S. Narum Miyamoto

\*\*This newsletter contains pictures. I have gotten permission as much as possible from the people (and parents in the cases of minors) to use them. However, I am also sending them to churches, friends and families with the understanding that they will not be passed on in any way, shape or form and not be desecrated in any way. Please do not forward this message. If you know someone who you think would like to receive this letter via email, please let me know and I will send it to them directly. I am also attaching the letter as an attachment so that it can be printed easily. Feel free to print the letter in bulletins, but please do not post the photos on internet or send them in digital newsletters. Thank you. Peace, KSNM





Choir will rehearse on March 17, 24, and 31 at 9:15 and will sing for the Easter Sunday service on March 31.



## Serving Group

Be sure to sign up for a Sunday of your choice to serve Sunday morning coffee in March. Thank you.

## Church Council Meeting

Will be held Sunday, March 10, following Worship in the Small Fellowship Hall.  
**ANY AND ALL ARE INVITED TO ATTEND.**

**Did you know.....** nearly two dozen worship services are conducted at Bethany Retirement Living each month? Bethany's Chaplain, Pastor Brian Hansen, leads worship at both campuses on Sundays, a monthly Communion Service at each campus and Hymn Sing the second Wednesday. Additionally, he offers worship on Thursday mornings for residents in the Memory Care Unit. Catholic worship is celebrated each Friday at Bethany on University and every other Tuesday at Bethany on 42<sup>nd</sup>. Several churches conduct worship in the Mavis Whiting Chapel at Bethany on University for their members and others who reside at Bethany. To find out more or to assist with worship, contact Bethany at 701.239.3234.



**Bethany**  
retirement living

### 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:	All Church offices are closed
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.**



# Elim Lutheran Church

## March, 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3 <u>Worship w/ Communion-10:00</u>	4	5 AA-noon	6 <u>Bible Study-10:00</u>	7	8	9
10 <u>Worship w/ Communion-10:00</u>  <u>Council meeting following Worship</u> 	11	12 <u>Evergreen-10 to 11</u>  AA-noon	13 <u>Bible Study-10:00</u>	14	15	16
17  <u>Choir rehearsal-9:15</u>  <u>Worship-10:00</u>	18	19 AA-noon  	20 <u>Bible Study-10:00</u>	21 <u>Elim Women-10:00, Sons of Norway</u>	22	23
24  <u>Choir rehearsal-9:15</u>  <u>Worship-10:00</u>	25	26 <u>Evergreen-10 to 11</u>  AA-noon	27 <u>Bible Study-10:00</u>	28 <u>Maundy Thursday/ Good Friday Combined Worship-5:00</u>	29 	30
31  <u>Choir rehearsal-9:15</u>  <u>Worship w/ choir-10:00</u>  <u>No fellowship following Worship</u>						

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**  
**March, 2024**