

# *English Lutheran News*

**OUR CHURCH IN OUR COMMUNITIES**



**Evangelical Lutheran  
Church in America**

*God's work. Our hands.*

**September 2023**



## **English Lutheran**

210 Water Street—Box 515  
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## **Upcoming Events**

**Sun, Sept 10:** Medina Fall Festival  
Ecumenical services @ Legion Hall—  
10:30. (No services at English)

**Sun, Sept 17:** Coffee hour begins again  
at 10 am. All are welcome!

**Sun, Sept 17:** Sunday School begins at  
10 am.

**Sun, Sept 17:** Crochet Basics class @  
5:30 pm

**Fri-Sun, Sept 22-24:** Youth Castaway  
Retreat



## **Our Mission:**

**Called to be shepherds, doing God's work, daily.**

## Hospitality

In the spirit of still getting to know the new pastor, my letter this month centers around two key lessons I have learned during the young adult years of my faith journey...

Throughout June, our Sunday gospel came from chapters nine and ten in Matthew's gospel, that tell of Jesus healing people, calling his disciples, teaching them, and then sending them out. The highlighted text from chapter ten makes me wonder: *Are we a community that would house and care for the disciples as they came through town, or would they be clearing our dust off their shoes as they quickly left our space?*

When we live in small, insular areas, it is very easy to rest on our laurels when it comes to both hospitality and innovation. Many congregations in areas like ours adopt a certain mindset that sounds like this: 'Well, the same people have lived here for generations, and we like the way we do things, so why do we need to make extra effort to practice welcoming strangers?' I still do not know you well, so you will have to decide for yourself whether or not that sounds like your congregation and community. What I can offer is some of the experiences in my life that have enhanced my understanding of hospitality, and taught me how to build better community.

I am from Texas. To understand me, you have to understand that Southerners are known for our hospitality. In fact, when I worked for my synod's church camp, one piece of our staff training was literally a workshop titled "Radical Hospitality and Niceness". In this workshop, our directors coached what was and was not both appropriate and expected for our interactions with the campers, their adults, and each other. For example, we always wore a clean camp staff shirt, with khaki shorts, our name tags, and our hair out of our face, on Sunday and Friday. Why? Because those were the drop-off and pick-up days, and we wanted to put our best foot forward. The staff was coached and practiced specifically how to greet and interact with parents. I will never forget: "Please and Thank you!" \*pause\* \*smile\*.

"Please park here. Thank you!" \*pause\* \*smile\*

"Remember to walk on the path, please. Thank you!" \*pause\* \*smile\*

Doing that felt so fake and contrived at first, because it was not how we young adults were used to interacting with new people, and we felt awkward. After some practice, however, this exchange began to feel natural and comfortable.

Did the camp directors take time to teach us these things because we were particularly nasty heathen? Or because the parents were especially difficult? No. Was it so the parents and pastors would think we were perfect angels and donate more money to the camp? The camp certainly would not turn down donations, but also, no. So why put in this effort to teach the staff how to be nice and hospitable?

One reason is to teach us a life skill that would benefit us, not only that summer, but the rest of our lives. Another, is that treating the parents and kids with kindness and hospitality helped build trust. The parents felt more comfortable leaving their children with us, because we showed them that we were caring and professional. The kids felt more at ease because their adults

were calm and we were approachable and interested in them. Y'all, this training was twenty years ago, and it had such a big impact on my life that I'm still talking about it today!

That training taught me that the tiny decisions we make in any given interaction, have a huge impact on how we are perceived. Yes, the camp staff was specifically taught these Niceness and Hospitality skills to interact well with other adults and campers, but we practiced with one another too. And wouldn't you know it that over the course of the summer the practice became an unconscious habit ingrained in all our interactions? Practicing these skills with one another also brought us closer together as a staff, helped us build trust, and deepen the group bond.

What might your congregation and community look like if you started practicing radical hospitality and niceness with each other? Now, this is a small town. Maybe your congregation doesn't have new visitors every week or have very many new people move to town. Yet, "a few" is still more than zero. What might happen if you practiced taking a genuine interest in each person who walks through your door, whether they are a visitor or come through every week? Can you have an extended sharing of the peace, so that everyone can shake hands with and greet everyone? How about greeting more than just your friends before or after service, or sitting next to someone different during coffee hour? What about reaching out to some folks whose faces have disappeared from the pews in recent years? Might a check-in phone call make a positive difference in their life? Not a call to shame because they don't come to Sunday service, but one to extend love because their church family notices their absence.

I may be preaching to the choir, and in that case, "Good on you! Keep up the excellent work!" On the off chance that what I suggest is different from how you are used to going about things, and it feels like it might be uncomfortable, I'll say this: Yes, radical hospitality is uncomfortable at first. It does take practice, and you'll likely feel foolish along the way. Everything worth doing in this life is difficult at first, but the end result is worth pushing through that awkwardness. Practicing niceness and hospitality are worthy pursuits, and ones that frankly work towards fulfilling our baptismal promise to live and learn in Christian community.

In a similar vein, complacency is far too easy. Complacent communities not only do not grow, but are quicker to self-destruct. Of course, it is easier and more comfortable to continue along with what has already been established in an attitude of, "if it ain't broke, don't fix it!", yet the oldest, most comfortable way does not equate with the best and most effective way to do things.

I grew up in a congregation that became complacent with my childhood pastor at the helm for twenty-five years, and that congregation has been struggling for the past fifteen years since he moved on, because their entire identity was wrapped up in him and his way of bringing the church together. Was his way bad? Not at all! It just happened to be a style that fell apart without his strong "out in front" kind of leadership. His leaving happened to correspond with my finishing college and moving away to begin my career as a high school teacher.

My home pastor and congregation were all I had ever known, and I loved my home church, so every new congregation I visited was measured against what I was used to. I had gone to church with my friends in high school and college, but most of them went to Non-denominational congregations, and the contemporary music with a short message never really felt like “real” church to me who was used to the ELCA liturgical style. Kinsmen, the Lutheran church in my new Houston neighborhood where I was teaching, was really the first ELCA congregation I’d spent much time with apart from my home church. They had a traditional service that felt a lot like what I was used to, but I was most intrigued by their Blended service. That service had enough of the same liturgical elements to feel familiar, but all of the music was led by a praise team that played the same songs I loved from our local Christian radio station. To me, it was perfect! The Praise Team had space for me to sing back-up, and I worshiped there until I went to seminary in 2016. I never quit loving setting three with the organ and only ELW hymns, yet suddenly, I had a new way to worship that spoke to my spirit in a new way that felt more relevant at that time in my life.

In the five years while I was teaching in Houston, I visited other Lutheran churches in the area that were even more different than that blended service. My new congregation’s mission start, Celebration Church, structured their service very similarly to the non-denoms my college friends loved, and yet Celebration’s service was still centered around the Lutheran theology I’d grown up with. It was still familiar, and was still very much church. Kindred was another Lutheran mission across town that was even more different than my normal, because they met on Sunday evening for Dinner Church, which is just like it sounds. There are no pews, but instead everyone sits around tables, and there is a church service, including communion, in conjunction with an evening meal. It’s glorious! On the other end of the spectrum, Christ the King Lutheran in Rice Village was even more traditional than my home congregation and had very deep German roots- to the extent that their pastor at the time occasionally led services in German, and they had a Bach Chorale that practiced there because of their incredible organ. All of these expressions of Lutheran worship served to expand my understanding of the many ways in which we can worship God, and this expansion of my understanding eventually led me to follow God’s call to rostered ministry.

Do I think that our local ND congregations need to form praise teams and start having dinner church in order to remain relevant? Absolutely not. Those might be things you choose to try, but they are by no means the limit. What I hope you hear from my journey is that trying new things can be life giving, and sometimes even life changing, if we are only willing to give them a chance. For example, your congregation does not have to change everything about its worship style to keep it fresh. Try one small adjustment at a time, and choose to see it as an adventure. Maybe try a new liturgy setting for a month, have a picnic outside and invite the community, sing some of the songs from other countries that are in the hymnal, or whatever step sounds like a bit of a stretch. The change does not have to be forever, but it might change your heart along the way. Feel free to reach out, if you want guidance imagining what might be

best for your congregation. I have plenty of ideas to share!

Grace and Peace,            Pastor Stephanie Gossett

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### **WELCA & “Angels Among Us” Altar Guild**

We met on August 6th to get back in touch. Our next meeting will be October 1st.

Sharon and Kendra will serve the month of September.

Thank you for all you do!! Julie

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### **If You Have Wondered.....**

Our Lutheran Church year is divided into 6 seasons. We are in the season of Epiphany, that is why you see the green paraments up on the Altar.

This season we celebrate Christ the Light of the World.

Green is a sign of growth, it represents our growth in the Christian way of Life and Thoughts.

God Bless!

# Baptism

**July 30, 2023**

# Renlee Renae Schultz

daughter of Rusty & Renae Schultz

Sponsors: Abigail Heinle  
Liza Klettke



**August 13, 2023**

# Hallie Joy Perleberg

daughter of Zach & Morgan  
(Irlmeier) Perleberg

Sponsors: Alex Irlmeier  
Chris Perleberg  
Tammy Perleberg



God's Blessings to you All!

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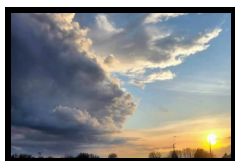
**August 20, 2023 @ English**

## Blessing of Backpacks

**Madison  
Hofmann**

# Season of Creation 2023

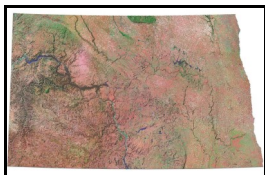
The Christians in Action Ministry Partnership and friends are thrilled to once again celebrate the season of Creation from September 17 through October 8! This year our celebrations will center around Humanity, Sky, Earth, and Mountains. Each week, worship at every congregation will be led by one of the clergy or lay ministers in the CIA Partnership. While they will not be presented in the same order at every congregation, each will experience all four services.



*"In the seasons of Advent, Epiphany, Lent and Easter we celebrate the life of Christ. In the season of Pentecost we celebrate the Holy Spirit. Now, in the season of Creation, we have an opportunity to celebrate God, the Creator.*



*For four Sundays..., we join in celebrating with Christ the wonders of creation. In the liturgy, we follow the lead of the psalm writers and celebrate with creation — with the forests, the rivers and the fields, which praise the Creator in their own way. Bible readings focus especially on the story of Earth, which complements the story of God and the story of humanity in the Scriptures. We commit ourselves to a ministry of healing Earth, with Christ and creation as our partners. ([www.seasonofcreation.com](http://www.seasonofcreation.com))"*



If you were around last year, you know to expect services to be slightly different from the norm, but very meaningful. Pastors Lucinda Lind and Stephanie Gossett have spearheaded worship preparations this year. They have strived to maintain enough of the regular structure to be comfortable, while also weaving in language and music that may be less familiar, but full of meaning and purpose.

*\*Unapproved minutes and are subject to change.*

## **English Lutheran Church Council Meeting Minutes – August 2, 2023 –**

**\*Members Present:** Phillip Hofmann, Becky Greer, Ceph Dockter, Taylor Dockter, Pastor Stephanie and Pastor Erik.

**Members Absent:** Kurt Hayes

### **Pastor Report**

Pastor Erik led with devotion.

Had a baptism this last weekend and there's another one coming up in 2 weekends.

Have Sunday school coming up and getting ready for that.

Had a wonderful trip to the Holy Land.

### **Past Minutes**

- June meeting minutes were read.

- Ceph moved to approve the minutes. Becky seconded. Motion carried.

### **Treasure's Report**

-June and July's Reports were reviewed and discussed.

-Furnace replacement bill will be coming through yet.

- Becky moved to approve the Treasurer's Report. Ceph seconded. Motion carried.

### **Old Business**

- Parsonage – still waiting for garage door to be repaired and work on list of minor fixes.

- Looking at a different option through Jamestown Garage doors, they will either be out this week or next week.

- Still planned for Mike Moser will do lights in parsonage.

- Will check with Bill and Renae will work on grant for AED.

- Youth Director – have events set up, working on how communication is going to work. Will be scheduled 8-10 hours per month between 3 different churches including English Lutheran.

- Pews that are in the front right. Will put announcement in bulletin. No one has been opposed so far. Working on getting rid of the rest of these, looking at getting rid of 10-12. May put out in rummage sale or post for sale on Facebook, donations would be accepted for these.

- VBS went well!

### **New Business**

- Printer – old printer is out of service and unable to be fixed. Reviewed quotes, and options for leasing used or new through central business systems. Motion by Taylor to do Option 2 with a leasing a used printer, this would be the cheapest option. Ceph seconded, it would be nice to keep this ability in house. Motion carried.

- Possible scholarships for youth going to Castaway Scholarships (this is open for 6<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> grade). This will be held in September 2023. Becky motioned to have a \$50 per youth participant at Castaway. Ceph seconded. Motion carried.

- Youth gathering for 2024 will be open to 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade who are in those grades for the 2023 – 2024 school year.

- Creative worship series will start the weekend after Fall Festival.

- Pastor Erik has been nominated and accepted on a Leadership development cohort for the state of North Dakota. More to come on this.

- Float for Fall Festival parade. Will make an announcement in church if anyone is interested in helping with this.

Next meeting Sept 6<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 P.M. Meeting adjourned after the Lord's Prayer.

Submitted by Taylor Dockter



## **ELC WELCA meeting—August 13, 2023**

- \* Present: Julie Opp, Ethel Heinle, Renae Olson and Jennifer Hayes
- \* Read aloud the purpose and vision statements for WELCA.
- \* Renae presented information regarding the Triennial Convention to group:
  - \* Asking for gift cards to Walmart as in-kind-donations to four groups selected by National WELCA group
  - \* Purchasing 2 - \$25 gift cards to give at convention
  - \* 1st Corinthians 13:8 (Love Never Fails) is the theme at convention
  - \* 2 voting members to turn in receipts for non-covered expenses to ELC WELCA treasurer for reimbursement - any funds remaining will be set aside for future delegates to use.
- \* The Eastern North Dakota WELCA group will have a new website - [www.eandwelca.gobilly.net](http://www.eandwelca.gobilly.net)
- \* Discussion on providing support for youth who have helped at various events to have part of cost for retreat paid by our WELCA group - list of workers has been kept
  - \* tabled for later on how much to provide for service given
- \* Continuing to ask for in-kind-donations of yarn from community members
- \* Eastern North Dakota Synodical Women's Organization convention scheduled for Saturday, September 30, 2023 at Messiah Lutheran Church in Fargo, ND.
- \* Fall Festival - Saturday activities
- \* Sell pies, rolls, bars & coffee/pop - need shifts covered (9-11, 11-1 & 1-3)
- \* Bingo - sell remaining items from earlier in day plus more ( 2 people to serve)
- \* keep prices similar to last year for items
- \* ask for donation if unable to bring a pie or bar from congregation
- \* ask Becky G if she would call Bingo again this year
- \* Set up Friday at 7:30 pm to get area ready for Saturday
  - \* Pies/Rolls/Bars from congregation - drop off at church by 7:30 pm on Friday or at Legion Hall after 9:00 am Saturday
  - \* Jenn to create flyer for Bingo during Fall Festival
- \* Sunday School starting 3rd Sunday in September
- \* Starting coffee hour back up at the same time as Sunday School
- \* will have 2 members assigned to work coffee hour and clean up
- \* Jumpstart this coffee hour by WELCA hosting the 2 Sundays in September
- ◆ having donuts, muffins, fruit and coffee

Respectfully submitted by WELCA Secretary, Jennifer Hayes

## **Synod News – Jamestown Conference**

For generations before 1870, the Yanktonai and Ochethi Sakowin peoples and others knew this land as home. As more people arrived to love this land, care for it, and call it home, churches were organized to give thanks to God and to call on God in times of need. Many of those who sang hymns and prayed did so in the languages of their parents and grandparents. If there was only one book in the home, it was often a Bible.

On August 3, 2023, the Jamestown Conference of the Eastern North Dakota Synod gave thanks for the people who organized churches and for the people who trusted in God to sustain their faith even when no congregation was present in their community. In particular, we gave thanks for the people who organized the Lutheran Church in Eldridge and those who started and maintain the cemetery north of Eldridge. We also gave thanks for other congregations that have faithfully served those who lived in the counties we now call Barnes, Dickey, Lamoure, Logan, and Stutsman.

Their siblings in Christ continue gathering in 197 ELCA Lutheran congregations within 100 miles of Eldridge.

Bibles were brought from many of the congregations in the Jamestown Conference. Five boxes contained deteriorating Bibles that were respectfully buried at the Eldridge cemetery. Some were written in German, Norwegian, Swedish, and many in English.

Two boxes of Bibles that were able to be read were donated to Orphan Grain Train and to other local congregations who asked for Bibles that could be shared with people who wanted to read them.

With gratitude, we honor our ancestors in faith who taught us to love God and neighbor and who faithfully read these Bibles and shared the good news of Jesus Christ.

Psalm 119:105

*Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.*

## **Christians in Action**

In September, the Christians in Action Partnership celebrates one year of working together in new ways. Looking back at the goals we set for our congregations, we can see much that has been accomplished and new opportunities that lie ahead.

Looking ahead, each congregation is invited to reflect on the past year and to identify one goal for their congregation for 2024 that the partnership can help support.

A progress report is available for each congregation to distribute. The full report includes information about each of the Goal areas:

### **Core Personnel Recruiting and Equipping Lay Leaders Marketing Administration and Support Expand Area Outreach Sharing Resources**

#### **Some of the highlights of the first year include:**

##### **Goal: Core Personnel**

St. John's and English called Pastor Stephanie Gossett to join Pastor Erik Weber in serving both congregations as well as support the partnership.

On behalf of the partnership, Trinity called Deacon Tara Ulrich to serve the youth and families of all eight congregations.

Trinity, Emmanuel (Gackle), and Montpelier are preparing to welcome an intern pastor who will live in Gackle and serve the 3 congregations as well as support the partnership.

##### **Goal: Sharing Resources**

Worship resources such as for Lent and for the Season of Creation are available in the Treasure Chest located within the shared Google Workspace account.

St. John's developed a list of items available to be shared with other congregations. The remaining partner congregations are asked to add to this list.

English borrowed Vacation Bible School resources from Trinity. Atonement, St. John's and Trinity welcomed staff from Red Willow Bible Camp to lead Vacation Bible School.

Sunday School resources from Sparkhouse (1517 Media) were available for some congregations in 2022-23. For the 2023-24 school year, this access will be available to all 8 congregations.

Congregations participating in Christians in Action:

Atonement, Jamestown Christ the King, Ellendale Emmanuel, Gackle English, Medina Montpelier, Montpelier St. John's, Jamestown Trinity, Jamestown Zion, Kulm

# BIRTHDAYS

## September

Mabel Cowell	Sept 3
Aubree Lachenmeier	Sept 4
Ava Hofmann	Sept 4
Taylor Dockter	Sept 5
Ron Koble	Sept 5
Ryker Liebold	Sept 5
Kenasyn Dockter	Sept 6
Jim Cowell	Sept 18
Brittney Dockter	Sept 20
Sherry Everding	Sept 23
Bence Yunck	Sept 25

## October

Olive Lytle	Oct 1
Jayden Opp	Oct 2
Becky Greer	Oct 4
Charlee Jo Gefroh	Oct 6
Rikki Della Andres	Oct 7
Isaac Olson	Oct 11
Ron Otto	Oct 13
Destiny Opp	Oct 13
Dave Kooker	Oct 17
Leona Morlock	Oct 18
Kane Schmidt	Oct 20
Oliver Hofmann	Oct 20
Ashley Opp	Oct 20
Leila Mae Harr	Oct 20
Daniel Juelfs	Oct 22
Nick Andres	Oct 22
Gene Guthmiller	Oct 25
Lucas Lytle	Oct 25
Erica Olson	Oct 26
Maynard Dockter	Oct 27
Kurt Hayes	Oct 28
Jeremy Ford	Oct 28
Xander Hayes	Oct 28
Jessica Dong	Oct 29
Mike Schleske	Oct 29
Carrie Kapp	Oct 30
Bruce Liebold	Oct 30

## **Celebrating September/October Anniversaries**

Bruce & Jaranah Liebold	Sept 1, 2012
Jacob & Bonnie Hofmann	Sept 8, 2012
Maynard & Darlene Dockter	Sept 23, 1962
Gene & Brenda Guthmiller	Sept 24, 1971
Xuejun & Chunyan Dong	Sept 29, 1994
Dwight & Janine Hofmann	Oct 7, 1978
Ceph & Brittany Dockter	Oct 12, 2019
Wayne & Sue Reardon	Oct 18, 1975