

We are Servants Together

I was filled with anticipation and excitement as I waited to hear what the outcome of your vote would be. When council president Jessica Franck called me to let me know that you had voted YES, my heart was filled with joy. The next morning trucks, trailers, and many helping hands came to move my belongings out of storage and into the parsonage. It was a day of organized chaos and when it ended all of my possessions were in Eleva. I offer my sincere gratitude to the members of the call committee for their diligence, your church council for their leadership, all the folks that prepared the parsonage, the moving crew, and everyone who has been offering prayers.

I know this has been a difficult year with many changes that have pushed us away from the normal way of doing things. As Easter people we know that Jesus emerged from the tomb giving us new life. It is my belief that even before we completely emerge from the COVID tomb the Holy Spirit is breathing new life into this community; energizing and equipping us to do God's work now and in the future.

When I was serving as a missionary in Uganda, I was supported by a wise woman who signed her correspondence "Servants Together". When I asked her about it, she told me that it was a good reminder that we are not alone in the ministry that God puts before us. We travel together, support and encourage each other as we journey. We travel knowing that the Triune God is with us guiding and empowering us along the way. Now we find our paths along the journey have merged and we begin traveling together, building on the ministry foundation you have built over time and discerning how God will transform our ministry for the future. My mind is racing as I imagine the possibilities that lay ahead for our ministry together.

I am looking forward with joy and gratitude to serving God's people in this place and walking alongside you.

Servants Together,

Pastor Karen Ressel



Farewell Message from Pastor Tom and Pastor Bob

Dear Friends,

We thank you all for the wonderful welcome and support you have given us over the past year. It has been an honor to serve as interim pastors at Eleva Lutheran Church while you searched for a new pastor to lead you into the future. Now that Pastor Karen Ressel has been called our mission here is coming to an end. Even though it has been an unusual year that has limited our ability to get to know many of you, still we are thankful for the many new friends we have made among you and will miss the fellowship that we have shared together. During our time here we have seen a renewed energy and spirit to seek what God is calling you to do in Eleva.

We will continue to hold you in our prayers. We pray for you to have a future like that spoken of in Jeremiah 29: 11. *For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a good future and a hope.* Our hope for you is to have a wonderful future in ministry here in Eleva. Our hope is that under Pastor Karen you find new ways to connect with the neighborhood and invite more people to worship with you Sunday morning. Our hope is that you extend your reach in service so that more people will know God's love through you. We hope that you will share the wide-open welcome that is part of the DNA of this congregation so that people who are seeking a new spiritual home might experience God's love through you. We hope that you will continue to BE who you ARE -- the beloved and loving people of God -- all of your days.

We close with the phrase that we say to our children when they come forward for a blessing during the communion service, "Remember you are a child of God and God loves you."

Blessing to you all,

Pastor Bob Schoenknecht

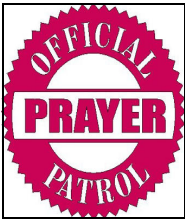
Pastor Tom Bryan

WELCOME PASTOR KAREN!

At the congregational meeting on Sunday, March 21st the congregation voted 62 to 0 in favor of calling Pastor Karen Ressel as the next pastor at Eleva Lutheran. With a great team of volunteers, Pastor Karen moved into the parsonage and is getting settled. We look forward to seeing/hearing her on Easter Sunday at both the sunrise and recorded services. We pray that God will bless Pastor Karen's ministry. **May we put our faith and trust in God as our church moves forward.**

Thank you Pastor Bob and Pastor Tom

We cannot thank you enough! Your presence and leadership this past year has been uplifting and rejuvenating. A breath of fresh air. We are truly blessed to have had you both with us at Eleva Lutheran. We wish you many blessings and some well-earned relaxation!



If you would like to put yourself, a family member, or friend on the prayer chain, please call Vonnie Olson at 715-287-4223. The Eleva Lutheran Prayer Chain is available for anyone that would like to have a prayer said in strong faith with our Eleva Women. Prayer is a powerful thing and these ladies have been serving Eleva Lutheran for many years with thousands of prayers. Keep the Prayer Patrol working for our families! Our prayer patrol is there for you whenever you need them.

Dear Friends In Christ-

The Lord has blessed us this past year with Pastor Bob and Pastor Tom and now with Pastor Karen! Hopefully we will begin worshipping in person and resume our other activities in the near future.

We understand that the Broiler Fest is being planned again so we'll have to find out if we will be able to have our Pie and Ice cream stand and the rules involved and take it from there.

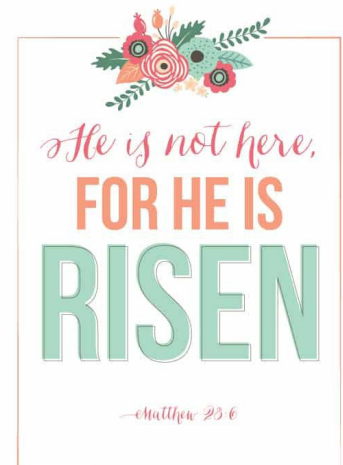
I hope you all have had your Covid vaccination and with no adverse reactions and still practicing masking and social distancing.

May you be blessed this Easter Season and always with God's Gift of GRACE - "GOD'S RICHES AT CHRIST'S EXPENCE"

Your servant in Him-

~ Vonnie ~

Eleva ELCW President
715-287-4223



Thank you to those who have designated Eleva Lutheran as your charitable organization through AmazonSmile. If you do any shopping on Amazon, please consider switching to AmazonSmile. It is a website operated by Amazon with the same products, prices, and shopping features as Amazon.com. The difference is that when you shop on AmazonSmile, the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products to the charitable organization of your choice.

So far we have 13 people who have designated Eleva Lutheran as their charitable organization. We received \$26.83 in February and the next donation will be sent in May.

<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/39-1305521>



Easter Sunrise Service

Sunday, April 4th at 7am

At the Eleva Historical Museum

Bring a lawn chair and dress for the weather as we will be outside.

Masks and social distancing will be required.

Donuts, coffee, and hot chocolate will be served.

~MEMORIALS AND OTHER SPECIAL GIFTS~

To Eleva Lutheran in loving memory of **Brandon Semingson**, who passed away 7 years ago March 7, from Grandma & Grandpa Semingson.

In memory of **E LaVonne Johnson** from Don & Julie Christ.

In memory of **Dale Olson** to Local Missions from Andrea and Mark Nyseth.

To Local Missions in memory of **Doug Loomis** from Andrea and Mark Nyseth.

To the Partner's In Praise Church Choir in memory of **LaVonee Johnson, Jeffrey Olson, Trent Thompson** (Guy & Nancy Hansen's son-in-law), **Donna Barneson**, and **Dale Olson** (our brother-in-law) from Bill & Chris Smith.

In the memory of **Rev. Clifford Pedersen** to the Local Missions fund from Connie Pedersen.

In memory of **Mike Tryggestad** from Dave and Sue Rotvold to the Elevator Fund.

In memory of **Vic Wenaas** to Eleva Lutheran from Karen Hanson.

In memory of **John Skogstad** to Eleva Lutheran from Gary and Karen Barneson.



REGISTER EARLY FOR LUTHER PARK!

Have you taken time to look at the summer camp programs offered at Luther Park and Luther Woods? While June and July may seem a long way away, the staff at Luther Park is already gearing up for another exciting summer filled with fun and faith. Whether you are a first-time camper or a veteran senior high, there is something for everyone at Luther Park! If you register and pay in full before May 1st you will receive the Early Bird Discount. To sign up for camp, pick up a brochure and send in your registration today or visit www.lutherpark.org to register online. If you have any questions, please contact the Luther Park office at info@lutherpark.org or (715) 859-2215.

Volunteer opportunity ~ Sunday school superintendent

Some responsibilities are: working with the education committee to choose curriculum, plan Sunday school events, and determine the calendar. Other responsibilities include finding teachers and sending out communication/mailings to families. Please submit a letter of interest to the Education Committee by April 15th. You can mail them to the church at PO Box 147, Eleva WI 54738, or you can email it to Denise at office@elevatorc.org.

Call Committee

Thank you to the Call Committee for all of your hard work and dedication. This was no small task. The outcome definitely reflects that hard work. The congregation is so grateful for this new season you have navigated us to.

Reopening

As Covid cases continue to decrease, we will begin to plan reopening! Watch for further details as we move forward. Included in that planning will be 1st Communion and Confirmation services.

Crosses We Don't Choose¹

Then Jesus told them, "... take up their cross and follow me." Matthew 16:24b

Dear Members and Friends of the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin,

My friend Julie's mom had dementia. Julie picked up that cross and carried it as her beloved mother faded away. Paul was in second grade when he was diagnosed with diabetes. It was a cross he would carry for the rest of his life. Erica's drug addiction was a cross she and her family carried for years until she found sobriety. They were all crosses they didn't choose.

Jesus carried his cross on the road to his crucifixion. Along the way he falls, and a man named Simon of Cyrene² is forced to pick up Jesus' cross and carry it the rest of the way to Calvary. Simon was most likely a reluctant cross bearer. Most of us are reluctant cross bearers. We don't choose the pain or suffering we've been dealt, and yet we carry the load. We don't choose to carry another person's cross when they are too weak to carry it themselves, but we are at times compelled by love to do so.

This month marks the one year anniversary of the pandemic. It is a cross that we've all carried to one degree or another. For some it has been an inconvenience and for others a heavy burden of suffering and profound grief. Theologically there is no way to put a positive spin on the coronavirus or 2020. It has been a cross we didn't choose. The strain of carrying this cross is evident in our country and congregations. We are all weary of it.

On Palm/Passion Sunday and Good Friday we are drawn into the story of Jesus' arrest, trial, and death. We walk alongside him in the crowd as he carries his cross, our cross, compelled by love. We walk with a suffering Jesus straining under the weight of this cross, stumbling, falling, getting back up and finally letting go, letting another carry it. Jesus knew pain in his human body, and so Jesus knows our every weakness. Jesus himself was beaten, knew suffering and was unable to carry the weight this cross. He falls to the ground under the weight of his love for us.

As a church we invite others to walk in the way of Jesus knowing that they are carrying crosses they didn't choose for themselves. We invite others to walk in the way of Jesus because as a community of faith we shoulder the burden and carry it all together. We help another carry their cross out of love. We are Simon of Cyrene.

Maybe that is what this past year has taught us; that we need each other; we aren't alone. We've been isolated, quarantined, but not alone. We can't take our congregations for granted. We need our faith communities and the relationships with other believers because we can't carry our own crosses. We follow the way of Jesus together bearing our neighbor's crosses out of love.

It is in the cross that Jesus carried and on which he was crucified that we can know the love of God and salvation. This is Luther's Theology of the Cross. It is in the crosses that we as a community of faith carry together as we follow in the way of Jesus that we too see and know the love God.

Dear friends of the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin, I am grateful for you, that during the pandemic, we were able to walk in the way of Jesus together. May you each know the joy of Easter! Christ is Risen. He is risen indeed.

Bishop Laurie Skow-Anderson

¹ Inspired by an article titled Crosses we don't choose in March 10, 2021 Christian Century by Debie Thomas

² Simon of Cyrene Matthew 27:32

Council 2021-2022

PRESIDENT- Jessica Franck
VICE PRESIDENT- Heather Nicolet
SECRETARY- Kim Flaherty
TREASURER- JoAnne Adams

Bill Smith
Cory Peterson
Kirsten Jaskowski
Jennifer Rombalski
Adam Zwiefelhofer
Mary Berg
Martha Peterson
Tony Tollefson

Nominating Committees

Dave Franck
Brad Barneson

Education Committee

Lindsey Zahara
Jennifer Larson
Brianna Zwiefelhofer
Kandi Weltzien
Cheryl Olson
Jessica Franson
(Heather Nicolet council liaison)

Trust Fund Committee

Brett Semingson
Adam Zwiefelhofer
Linda Wenaas
Jessica Franson
Kris Monson

Building & Grounds Committee

Stacy Belmore
Dick Evenson
Rick Engen
(Mary Berg council liaison)

Local Missions

Natalie Evenson
Jamie Ludwigson
Debbie Wright
Kandi Weltzien
Tony Tollefson
Bill Smith

Synod Convention Delegates

Jon and Tami Zander

Audit Committee

Don Christ
Jon Zander
Dave Rotvold

FINANCIAL REPORT

February

General account:

- Deposits: \$11,015.46
- Expenses: (-) \$11,208.53

Balances of accounts on 2/28/2021:

- General Fund: \$1,752.34
- Building Fund: \$2,373.01
- Local Missions Fund: \$2,610.74
- Seminary Fund: \$98.57
- Memorial Fund: \$2,548.34
- Altar Guild Fund: \$334.46
- Men's Group: \$2,558.89
- Elevator Replacement: \$4,443.81
- Genesis Youth: \$8,946.19
- Music: \$2,028.00
- Missions & Benevolences: \$2,262.97
- Parsonage Fund: \$1,173.17

**The next Church Council
Meeting is Monday, April 12th
at 6:30**

April 21st is Secretary's Day! A very special thank you to Denise for all of her hard work every day to keep our church running!

Eleva Lutheran Church Council

Meeting Minutes

Date of Meeting:	Sunday, February 7, 2021	Time:	11:50 a.m.
Minutes Prepared By:	Kim Flaherty	Location:	Eleva Lutheran Church and via Zoom
Present:	President Jessica Franck, VP Heather Nicolet, and Secretary Kim Flaherty		
Council Members:	Bill Smith, Cory Peterson, Adam Zwiefelhofer, Kirsten Jaskowski, Jennifer Rombalski, Tony Tollefson, Mary Berg		
Treasurer:	JoAnn Adams		
ELCW President:	Vonnie Olson		
Office Administrator:	Denise Clark		
Pastors:	Bob Schoenknecht & Tom Bryan		

Call to Order: The February 2, 2021, meeting of the Eleva Lutheran Church Council was called to order at 11:45 a.m. by President Jessica Franck.

The first meeting of the New Council of 2021 met to determine executive positions.

Jessica Franck was nominated to continue her service as President by Bill Smith. Tony Tollefson seconded the motion. Heather Nicolet was nominated to continue her service as Vice President, and Kim Flaherty was nominated to continue her service as Secretary by Jessica Franck. The unanimous ballot motion was seconded by Mary Berg. The motions passed.

Dick Evenson gave an update on the progress of the Parsonage, as they are finished with their work for this winter. Dick said that the project for the fireplace was now finished, and the entire project came in under the \$10,500 budget. He suggested that the Council support the purchase of a new refrigerator to match the other appliances in the kitchen. Adam Zwiefelhofer made a motion to approve the purchase a new white refrigerator with an icemaker for the Parsonage, motion seconded by Bill Smith. Motion carried.

Adam Zwiefelhofer reminded Council members that our Constitution calls for a Council member to be on each of the committees to serve as a liaison between the committee membership and the Council. Heather Nicolet will serve on the Audit Committee, Mary Berg on Building and Grounds committee, Adam Zwiefelhofer on the Trust Fund Committee, and Tony Tollefson and Bill Smith on the Local Missions Committee. Jessica Franck then discussed Kelly Tollefson-Oium's resignation as Sunday School Superintendent. The Council plans to send her something as a thank you gift, and the Education Committee will be responsible for finding the next Superintendent.

Jessica Franck then asked the Council to review the financial statements for January. Mary Berg expressed concern at the giving amounts for January, as they are down a bit more than hoped for. Jen Rombaski suggested we keep a watch on this to see if this trend continues. Cory Peterson made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report, Mary Berg seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Pastor Bob inquired if the Statement of Intent has been submitted to the Synod, and Denise Clark said that it had been submitted. Pastor Tom brought up the fact that the Audit Committee does not require a Council member to be on that committee; therefore Heather Nicolet will not need to be a member of that committee as it may be a conflict of interest. Heather Nicolet will instead be a part of the Education Committee.

Next Council Meeting: The next meeting will be held on Monday, March 8th, 2021, at 6:30 p.m.

A motion was made by Kim Flaherty to close the meeting. The motion was seconded by Kirsten Jaskowski. Motion carried to adjourn at 12:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Flaherty

Kim Flaherty, Church Council Secretary

Eleva Lutheran Church
PO BOX 147
Eleva, WI 54738
Address Service Requested

Please call the Church Office if you have
moved or your telephone number has
changed



CROSS ROADS



NEWSLETTER

April 2021

ELEVA LUTHERAN CHURCH

www.elevalc.org

Office: 715-287-4231 Email: elevalc@triwest.net

Dial-up Worship Sundays at 9 and 10 715-287-4137

Interim Pastors:

Pastor Tom Bryan
715-829-2624
prtwb@hotmail.com

Pastor Bob Schoenknecht
715-797-3424
rschoenk@luthersem.edu