



**ESTHER LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELCA**  
**May 2026 Newsletter**

***“Knowing Christ – Making Christ Known Through Faith, Hope and Love.”***

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May is a busy and meaningful month in our faith community as we prepare for the close of the school year and look ahead to summer. It is a season of both endings and beginnings. We celebrate our children completing another year of school—some even graduating and stepping into an exciting new chapter of life. At the same time, we witness creation coming alive around us as trees bud and plants push through the soil, proclaiming the end of a long winter and the welcome arrival of spring.

This month also marks the conclusion of our Confirmation classes for the summer. I will truly miss our midweek gatherings—not only for the lessons we shared, but for the fellowship and the opportunity to grow alongside our young people as they deepen their faith. Recently, we enjoyed a wonderful evening together that filled the church with life. Eight women worked on graduation blankets, while 24 people—confirmation students, parents, family members, recent confirmands, and council members—gathered for a meal. We shared our highs and lows before heading out in teams to clean ditches in the neighborhood. When we returned, we closed with prayer, offering heartfelt thanks for the time spent together caring for God’s creation.

As we wrap up the year for both Confirmation and Sunday School, we also look ahead to many exciting moments at Esther. On Sunday, May 10, we will honor our mothers. On May 17, we will celebrate our graduating seniors, followed by a time to remember the saints as we lay flowers on their graves. On May 24, we will celebrate Pentecost, with Pastor Birgitte from Peoples Church in Bemidji leading worship and sharing about her ministry. On May 31, worship will be led by Megan Townsend, who has completed her first year at Wartburg Theological Seminary.

In our scripture readings this month, we return to the Gospel of John and Jesus’ farewell discourse to his disciples. As he prepares to leave them, he reassures them that the Holy Spirit will remain with them as they go out to share the Good News. As we conclude the 50 days of Easter on Pentecost Sunday, we turn toward the beginning of the early church and Christ’s call to his followers:

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations... and remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”  
(Matthew 28:19–20)

This message feels especially fitting as we begin our focus on the “Behold, the New Has Come” project. Together, we will explore what it means to live out our baptismal promises as disciples of Jesus in our daily lives. We are currently seeking a few more individuals to join the Vision Team—if you feel called, I encourage you to reach out. I will be attending the “Behold Summit” on May 1–2 and look forward to sharing more good news in the weeks ahead.

Peace, Jewel

**MAY BIRTHDAYS**

Kyle Grinager	05/01
Daniel Townsend	05/01
Mandy Arvidson	05/02
Robert Hoppe	05/04
Dennis Rosenquist	05/05
Jennifer Higgs	05/05
Kelly McPhail	05/05
Christopher Skoglund	05/05
Mark Ratajesak	05/07
Douglas Skoglund	05/07
Kolton Wunderlich	05/07
Anna Hagen	05/08
Tyler Arvidson	05/10
Kevin Bunde	05/12
Camryn Schlosser	05/12
Liam Arvidson	05/13
Luella Thom	05/17
Logan Arvidson	05/19
Kylie Velde	05/20
Larry Skoglund	05/21
Andrew Sansness	05/22
Lance Klimek	05/23
Tanner Wambeke	05/24
Bree Sansness	05/26
Avery Stueve	05/26
Grayson Timm	05/27
Lisa Wunderlich	05/28
Mary Robinson	05/29
Reid Gardner	05/30
Trevor Sanvik	05/30

**IN OUR PRAYERS**

Jerry Anderson Kristy Fyhrie  
 Larry Sather Joan Burquest  
 Dennis Rosenquist Lois Rosenquist  
 Ricky Hart Sara Skoglund  
 Leroy Olson – father of Becky Arvidson  
 Cheryl Farber – mother of Melissa Schlosser  
 Rev. Bruce Miller- father of Karin Wagner  
 Barb Peterson -friend of the Thoms  
 Dale Flemming – father of Laurie Ratajesak  
 Gary Borst – friend of the Andersons  
 Shirley Nesges – friend of the Thoms  
 Bev Lorine – mother of Mandy Arvidson  
 Joyce Muyres – friend of the Thoms  
 Bev Guse-Ohlrech – friend of the Pedersons  
 Allison Dotzler – friend of Kathy Mittag  
 Cadence Smith – friend of Mandy Arvidson  
 Becky Yttrie – friend of the Townsends  
 Kim Casavan – friend of Mandy Arvidson  
 Kathy Wilkins – friend of the Thoms  
 Connie Pesta – sister of Dick Thom  
 Karen Schlosser – mother of Justin Schlosser  
 Family and Friends of: Sarah Pomeranz, David  
 Anderson, Katie Jahnke, Colleen Burquest, Doug  
 Tvedt, Alma Robinson, Jerry Pogose, Terry Burns,  
 Wayne Lund, Bruce Carter, and Inez Nelson

**SERVING IN MAY**

**Pastor:** May 3- SAM Jewel Townsend, May 10 – Pr.  
 Ken Bowman, May 17- Pr. Dennis Preston, May 24  
 – Pr. Brigitte, May 31- Megan Townsend  
**Organists:** Marcia Guenther, Brad Lambrecht  
**Altar Care:** Donna Pederson  
**Usher:** Brady Arvidson  
**Acolyte:** NEED VOLUNTEER  
**Lay Reader:** Terri Grinager  
**Communion Assistant:** NEED VOLUNTEER  
**Birthday Card Sender:** Linda Arvidson



**PASTORAL CARE – If you or someone you know  
 would like a visit and for emergency pastoral care,  
 please contact Jewel Townsend at 320-760-2503**



<b>2026 Proposed Budget</b>	<b>\$107,114.0</b>
<b>Budgeted contributions YTD as of 3/31/26</b>	<b>\$26,778.50</b>
<b>Actual contributions YTD as of 3/31/26</b>	<b>\$22,112.00</b>
<b>Difference YTD as of 3/31/26:</b>	<b>\$ -4,666.50</b>



## SUNDAY MORNING FELLOWSHIP – BEFORE & AFTER CHURCH

Members of the Esther Congregation have been graciously providing food and drinks for our Sunday morning fellowship, and we’d love to invite more people to join in!

Hosting is simple—just bring/make a pot of coffee, some refreshments (such as a cheese and meat tray, sweets, or other goodies), water, and a few drink options for those who prefer something other than coffee. A sign-up sheet is available in the Narthex where you can choose a Sunday that works for you.

We understand that not everyone enjoys baking, so hosting is open to anyone who would like to help in whatever way they can. WELCA has also stocked the freezer with cookies from Hilltop Kitchen, which are available for use at any time. If hosting isn’t for you, donations are always appreciated and help keep this fellowship going strong.

As you may have noticed, we skipped treats on Palm Sunday, anticipating a busy morning in the Narthex—but many of you let us know they were missed! Typically, after worship, we linger, snack, and enjoy time together. Without treats, everyone seemed to head home a bit more quickly! Let’s keep this special time of fellowship going—we appreciate everyone who helps make it happen.



Vanco online giving platform is a great way to set up a scheduled giving plan for even when you cannot make it to church. Scan the QR code, go online to [estherlutheran.com](http://estherlutheran.com), go to the tab “ways to support Esther Lutheran Church” and click on the link <https://secure.myvanco.com/L-ZP4R>, or download the app Vanco Mobile Faith Engagement. Any questions please ask Mandy Arvidson.



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## *The Gift of Planning*

Join us at Esther on Tuesday, June 9 at 6:00 PM for an evening of food, fellowship, and thoughtful conversation about planning for the future to provide the ultimate gift to yourself and your loved ones: peace of mind.

What to expect:

- Representatives from Lind Family Funeral Home will guide us through end-of-life planning.
  - Jewel Townsend will share a Funeral Planning Packet to help you document your wishes and personal story for loved ones.
  - Christy Hart will offer practical tips for organizing financial and vital information, making it easier to access and understand—both now and in the future.
  - We’ll be grilling burgers and brats, so please bring a dish to share as we gather for a meaningful and informative night.
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## The Esther Camp and Spiritual Growth Fund

This was created to help our young members attend bible camp to enrich their faith journey. The Camp Fund Application can be found on our website [www.estherlutheran.com](http://www.estherlutheran.com) under the "Faith Formation" tab.

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## DAY OF CARING

Parkers Prairie High School Student Council is planning for its annual Day of Caring on Friday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>. The students of PPHS are ready to help out the community.

If you would like help with spring clean up or have a special project that needs to get done in the Parkers Prairie, Urbank, and Miliona area, contact PPHS Student Council Advisor Dave O'Brien at [dobrien@pp.k12.mn.us](mailto:dobrien@pp.k12.mn.us).

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**ICE CREAM SOCIAL & SERVICE**  
Homemade ice cream, pies, sandwiches & crafts for sale!!

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**SUNDAY, JULY 26**  
**Esther Lutheran Church**  
11019 625th Ave • Rural Parkers Prairie  
*(9 Miles east of Parkers Prairie, 3 miles north of Rose City)*

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**Church Service: 10am**  
**Ice Cream Social: 11-3pm**

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Esther Lutheran Church invites you to **WHAT A MESS!** VBS  
June 14<sup>th</sup> - June 18<sup>th</sup>  
5:30 PM - 8:00 PM

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## Congratulations to Aria Nordlund who received her 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Bible!





Our WELCA met Sunday, April 12<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 am. We have \$7,833.40 in our Savings/Memorial Fund. We have \$2,155.73 in our checking account. The Easter flower garden monies have not been deposited or the invoice from Anderson Florist is not paid as of yet.

Donna Pederson is on the Sunshine Committee. She sends cards to those that are sick, accomplishments, or just thinking of them. If you know someone who needs a card, please let Donna know.

The Spring Conference 8 Meeting was on April 18<sup>th</sup> at Bethesda Lutheran. We had 62 ladies representing 14 churches of the 30 churches in our Conference. Pastor Karen Young Trenne gave devotions. She discussed love languages and how we all need to be shown love in different ways, but need to convey to our partners what is most important to us. The five love languages are: Acts of service, receiving gifts, quality time, words of affirmation, and physical touch. The speaker was Peggy Kallevig from Women of Valor. She portrayed Mary of Bethany. It was an interesting prospective of her acting out Mary and conversations she had with many of the disciples and Jesus.

Our Fall Conference 8 meeting will be October 24<sup>th</sup> at Grace Lutheran Church in Brandon. Next Spring is supposed to be in Wheaton and the fall of 2027 will be at United Lutheran over at Elbow Lake. 2028 will probably be the time when Esther WELCA will be on the list to host a conference meeting again. It cycles about every 6 years. Some churches have not been meeting as a WELCA group but are still hosting the conference meetings. Some churches such as Faith Lutheran in Miltona do not have enough ladies to host a conference meeting. We have been asking these churches to serve coffee and muffins for the registration time of our meetings.

VBS will be Sunday, June 14<sup>th</sup> through June 18<sup>th</sup>. We are asking for help from our WELCA to make and serve the meals. Please make sure to spread the word to kids to get them signed up for VBS. We currently have 11 signed up. We had 30 last year so hopefully we can have many more.

Anything donated to Luther Crest for their Quilt Auction will need to be there June 26<sup>th</sup>. If anyone is doing any project you would like to put on the auction, there are forms in the Narthex bulletin board to fill out. Our WELCA is donating a baby blanket and Lana is embroidering a tablecloth. The Auction is July 11<sup>th</sup>. We will follow up with our Ice Cream Social and Country Store July 26<sup>th</sup>. There will be posters to hang up again. The Circles will be: Naomi Circle - make ice cream, Martha Circle - serve ice cream, Ruth Circle advertising

September 18-19 will be the Annual Convention up at Trinity Lutheran in Crookston, MN. We hope some of you will be able to attend. We do need a voting member from our church to attend. Each church is asked to bring a basket or two for the silent auction that is held at the Annual Convention. Last year we had 108 baskets! WELCA decided to use the themes Baby & Gardening. If you have any items that would be good for one of these baskets, please bring them to church.

WELCA has purchased another batch of cookies from Hilltop Kitchen to be used for Sunday Fellowship. These cookies can be used for anyone wishing to host. If anyone wishes to donate to this cause, please do so. We gathered Wednesday, April 29<sup>th</sup> to make two blankets for our graduates Evy Grinager & Isaiah Schlosser. Ruth Circle will be serving for our Graduation Recognition on Sunday, May 17<sup>th</sup>.

Our Quilt Group decided to see how many places locally we could donate the quilts that were made. We are going to donate 10 of them to St William's Living Center to brighten up their rooms and we always donate many to Todd Country Social Service. If anyone knows of places that can use a single size quilt, please let us know.

Our next WELCA meeting will be on Sunday, May 10<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 am.

**Lots have been happening here at Esther!**

**Thank you to our confirmation students to leading worship on April 26<sup>th</sup>!**



**Thank you to all who came and helped make tie blankets!**



**Thank you to our quilters!**



**Thank you Esther Harmony for your gift of music!**



Thank you all so much for helping clean ditches! It was a wonderful evening of fun & fellowship!



Kentucky Derby inspired hats!



Church isn't a  
*function* we attend.  
It's a family  
we're a *part of*.

Happy Mother's Day to all our moms and those who love and nurture us like moms!

If you would like to be on our email list, please contact [secretary@estherlutheran.net](mailto:secretary@estherlutheran.net)

Visit our website at [estherlutheran.com](http://estherlutheran.com)

## Can You Help Me Find My Mom?

In the left column are some of the most famous men in the Bible. On the right are the names of their mothers. Can you match the sons to their mothers?

Moses	Mary
Isaac	Elizabeth
Joseph	Hannah
Timothy	Jochebed
John the Baptist	Sarah
Jesus	Rebekah
Solomon	Leah
Jacob	Eunice
Samuel	Rachel
Judah	Bathsheba

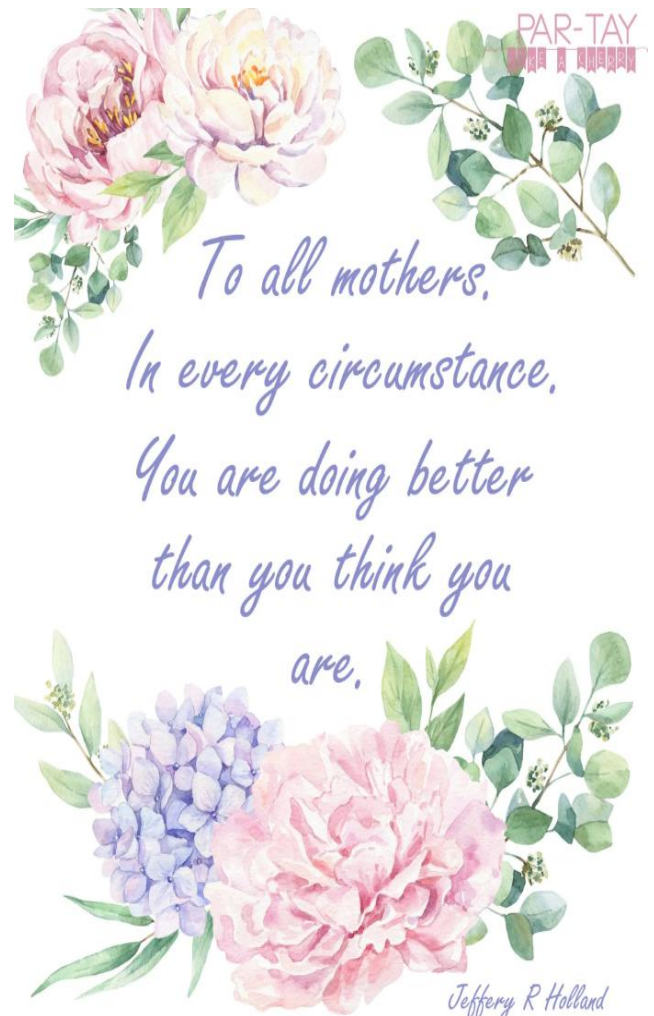
We encourage you to keep up on the happenings of our synod and the ELCA, along with our partner ministries, by going to our website [www.estherlutheran.com](http://www.estherlutheran.com) and clicking on the "Faith Formation Resources" tab to find many great resources waiting for you to explore, including our synod newsletter "Northern Lights".

**\*\*Answers will be in next week's bulletin\*\***

**2026 DIRECTORIES ARE AVAILABLE ON THE USHER TABLE.** We will not be labeling directories this year—please take as needed for you and your family. Additional copies will be printed as needed throughout the year. If you would like a directory sent to you by email or USPS, please contact [secretary@estherlutheran.net](mailto:secretary@estherlutheran.net)



Congrats to graduates Evalynn Grinager & Isaiah Schlosser! We will be honoring them during worship on Sunday, May 17<sup>th</sup>. There will also be a cake reception before worship at 9:30 am. Baccalaureate is at Immanuel Lutheran Church on Sunday, May 17<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm. Graduation is Friday, May 29<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 pm at the Parkers Prairie High School.





Inez Marie Nelson, age 90, of Northfield, passed away peacefully at home on Sunday, April 26, 2026.

Inez was born on September 4, 1935, in Luverne, Minnesota, to Herman and Thelma (Tokheim) Schmidt. She was raised in Luverne, where she graduated from high school. She went on to pursue her passion for education, earning her bachelor's degree from Augustana University and later her master's degree from Mankato State University.

Inez began her teaching career in a one-room schoolhouse west of the Twin Cities before continuing her work in the Wayzata school system. It was during this time, while spending time with a group of friends, that she met Glade Nelson. The two were united in marriage on July 20, 1963, beginning a lifelong partnership rooted in love and devotion.

After the birth of their first child, Inez chose to dedicate herself fully to her family, embracing her role as a wife and mother to their three children. She found great joy in creating a warm and welcoming home. Inez was known for her baking—especially her homemade bread—as well as her quilting and sewing. She took pride in caring for her family, whether by preparing meals or mending Glade's suits. Her love for children extended beyond her home as she remained active in church life, contributing her time to confirmation classes, ladies aid, and other groups.

In retirement, Inez and Glade shared a love of travel. Together they explored Europe, enjoyed cruises, visited Disney World, and made many

other cherished trips. Their cabin became a special place of rest and connection, where countless treasured summer memories were made with family. During the winter months, they spent many years in Arizona, where they formed lasting friendships and enjoyed a slower pace of life. Inez also had a keen eye for antiques and found great pleasure in antiquing.

Inez will be remembered as a caring and loving woman with a deep compassion for others, especially children. She was intelligent and independent, approaching life with quiet strength and a calm, steady presence. She had a way of not dwelling on life's small worries, and her gentle resilience left a lasting impression on those who knew her.

She is survived by her loving husband, Glade; her children, Amy of Northfield, Erik of Bloomington, and Sonja of Maple Grove; and her sister, Alice Schmidt of Bloomington. She was preceded in death by her parents; her brother, Howard Schmidt; her sister, Dorothy Feeken; and an infant brother.

A celebration of Inez's life will be held at 2 PM, Tuesday, June 9, 2026 at Bierman, Benson & Langehough Funeral Home in Northfield. Visitation will be one hour prior to the service at the funeral home and a reception will be held after the service at the funeral home. Interment will be held privately at Esther Lutheran Cemetery in Parkers Prairie, MN.

Arrangements are with Bierman, Benson & Langehough Funeral Home & Crematory.  
[www.northfieldfuneral.com](http://www.northfieldfuneral.com)



## May 2026 “Knowing Christ-Making Christ Known through Faith, Hope and Love”

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
<b>3 Fifth Sunday of Easter</b> 10 am – Worship w/Holy Communion led by SAM Jewel Townsend 2 pm – Worship at St. William’s	<b>4</b> <u>VBS Planning Meeting</u> 5:30 pm at church	5	<b>6</b> <u>Confirmation</u> 6 pm – End of Year Student, Mentor & Family Potluck	7	8	9
<b>10 Sixth Sunday of Easter</b> 8:30 am - WELCA 10 am – Worship led by Pr. Bowman 2 pm – Worship at St. William’s	11	12	<b>13</b> <u>Council</u> 6 pm  <u>VBS Prep Night</u> 6 pm at church	14	15	16
<b>17 Seventh Sunday of Easter</b> 9:30 am – Senior Recognition Cake Reception (Ruth Circle hosts) 10 am – Worship w/Holy Communion led by Pr. Preston & Senior Recognition 2 pm – Worship at St. William’s 7 pm – Baccalaureate at Immanuel Lutheran Church	<b>18</b> <u>Worship Committee</u> 6 pm	19	20	21	<b>22</b> PPHS Day of Caring	23
<b>24 Day of Pentecost</b> 10 am – Worship led by Pr. Brigitte – <b>Wear Red Today!</b> 2 pm – Worship at St. William’s	<b>25</b> Memorial Day	26	27	28	<b>29</b> Graduation at PPHS 7:30 pm  Newsletter articles due to the church office	<b>30</b> Synod Assembly
<b>31 The Holy Trinity</b> 10 am – Worship led by Megan Townsend 2 pm – Worship at St. William’s	1 JUNE	2	3	4	6	6

*Join us for Sunday Fellowship each week before and after worship. Come early and stay after to catch up with friends and meet new ones. Coffee, juice and treats provided.*

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**Parkers Prairie, MN 56361**