



Creation in Christ Sunday
Sunday, September 6, 2026
Esther Lutheran Church, ELCA
Making Christ Known Through Faith, Hope, and Love

Introduction:

Since the seventh century, September 1 has symbolized the day of the creation of the world in the Byzantine tradition and has been the opening feast of its liturgical year (known as the Feast of the Indiction), in parallel with Rosh Hashanah marking the Jewish New Year. Creation in Christ celebrates the ongoing creation of the world in and through Christ, who sustains, unites, and holds all created things. We hear today of the triune God who creates all things: sun and moon, shining stars, sea monsters, creeping things and flying birds—and, yes, even human beings. God-in-Christ still takes care of all things and invites us to join in as caretakers of God's good creation.

PRELUDE

BELL

WELCOME

BEHOLD WEEKLY CHALLENGE QUESTION

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God

Please stand as you are able

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God, our hope, our heart, our home.

C: Amen.

P: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Everlasting God, the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end,

C: We confess that we participate in systems that perpetuate oppression and injustice. We are often numb to the pain of the world around us, resistant to change that costs us something, and reluctant to love our neighbors as ourselves. We sin against your good creation, failing to be faithful stewards of the land, the sea, and all their creatures. Make your home among us once more, O God, naming us beloved and opening our hearts to do your will. Amen.

P: All you saints and sinners, this good news is for you: God knows you, forgives you by the self-giving of ✝ Jesus Christ, and frees you to love the world as you have been loved. Creation's story will not end until mourning, crying, and pain are no more. When everything else changes, God's love is steadfast and sure. Nothing can ever separate you from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

C Amen.

P: Glory to you, O God:
you speak a word of power,
and so you create the world.
We praise you, O God:

C: We praise you, O God.

P: For the Spirit hovering to bring forth life,
for the earth ordered from chaos,
and for light and dark,
we bless you, O God:

C: We bless you, O God.

P: For the cosmos beyond our earth,
for the sky above our heads,
and for the cycle of evening and morning,
we exalt you, O God:

C: We exalt you, O God.

P: For the seas, the lakes, and the rivers,
for the land with its mountains and plains,
and for the trees, the plants, and their fruits,
we magnify you, O God:

C: We magnify you, O God.

P: For the sun to rule the day,
for the moon to brighten the night,
and for the shining stars,
we extol you, O God:

C: We extol you, O God.

P: For the fish in the sea,
for the birds of the air,
and for the monsters in the deep,
we glorify you, O God:

C: We glorify you, O God.

P: For wild animals and creatures of all kinds,
for cattle and all livestock,
and for everything that creeps on the earth,
we adore you, O God:

C: We adore you, O God.

P: For humankind made in your image,
for setting us on your good earth,
and for providing us food to eat,
we worship you, O God:

C: We worship you, O God.

P: Bless us, your creatures.
Accept our praise,
and make us worthy of your marvelous creation.
We praise you, O God:

C: We praise you, O God.

P: Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving
and honor and power and might
be to you, our God, forever and ever.

C: **Amen.**

***GATHERING HYMN: “Morning Has Broken” (ELW 556)**

- 1 Morning has broken like the first morning;
blackbird has spoken like the first bird.
Praise for the singing! Praise for the morning!
Praise for them, springing fresh from the Word!**
- 2 Sweet the rain's new fall, sunlit from heaven,
like the first dewfall on the first grass.
Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden,
sprung in completeness where God's feet pass.**
- 3 Mine is the sunlight! Mine is the morning,
born of the one light Eden saw play!
Praise with elation, praise ev'ry morning,
God's recreation of the new day!**

Text: Eleanor Farjeon, 1881-1965

Text © Miss E. Farjeon Will Trust, by permission of David Higham Associates.

***GREETING:**

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of
the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: **And also with you.**

***PRAYER OF THE DAY:**

P: O God,

C: **In whom we live and move and have our being, in Christ you created the
worlds, and your Spirit breathes life into the universe. We praise you for
your wondrous creation. Bless us and all your handiwork with your
infinite light, and direct our lives to the care of this good earth, through
your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

Please be seated

Special Music – Esther Harmony: “Peace in the Valley”

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song

FIRST READING: GENESIS 1:1—2:4a

At the beginning of time, God the Creator, God the powerful Word, and God the life-giving Spirit form the earth and all its inhabitants. God sees that all this created work is good and then rests on the seventh day.

READER 1: ¹When God began to create the heavens and the earth, ²the earth was complete chaos, and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. ³Then God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. ⁴And God saw that the light was good, and God separated the light from the darkness. ⁵God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

READER 2: ⁶And God said, “Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.” ⁷So God made the dome and separated the waters that were under the dome from the waters that were above the dome. And it was so. ⁸God called the dome Sky. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

READER 3: ⁹And God said, “Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.” And it was so. ¹⁰God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. ¹¹Then God said, “Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it.” And it was so. ¹²The earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seed of every kind and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it. And God saw that it was good. ¹³And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

READER 4: ¹⁴And God said, “Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, ¹⁵and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the

earth.” And it was so. ¹⁶God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. ¹⁷God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth, ¹⁸to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. ¹⁹And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

READER 5: ²⁰And God said, “Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky.” ²¹So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. ²²God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” ²³And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

READER 6: ²⁴And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind.” And it was so. ²⁵God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind and the cattle of every kind and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good.

READER 7: ²⁶Then God said, “Let us make humans in our image, according to our likeness, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over the cattle and over all the wild animals of the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.” ²⁷So God created humans in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

READER 8: ²⁸God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.” ²⁹God said, “See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. ³⁰And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the air and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. ³¹God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

READER 9: ^{2:1}Thus the heavens and the earth were finished and all their multitude. ²On the sixth day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done. ³So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that he had done in creation. ^{4a}These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created. Here ends the first reading.

PSALM 148 ~ Congregation reads the *bold*
God's splendor is over earth and heaven. (Ps. 148:13)

¹Hallelujah! Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise God in the heights.

²**Praise the Lord, all you angels; sing praise, all you hosts of heaven.**

³Praise the Lord, sun and moon; sing praise, all you shining stars.

⁴**Praise the Lord, heaven of heavens, and you waters above the heavens.**

⁵Let them praise the name of the Lord, who commanded, and they were created,

⁶**who made them stand fast forever and ever, giving them a law that shall not pass away.**

⁷Praise the Lord from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps;

⁸**fire and hail, snow and fog, tempestuous wind, doing God's will;**

⁹mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars;

¹⁰**wild beasts and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds;**

¹¹sovereigns of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the world;

¹²**young men and maidens, old and young together.**

¹³Let them praise the name of the Lord, whose name only is exalted, whose splendor is over earth and heaven.

¹⁴The Lord has raised up strength for the people and praise for all faithful servants, the children of Israel, a people who are near the Lord. Hallelujah!

SECOND READING: ACTS 17:22a, 24-28

In Athens, Paul faces the challenge of proclaiming the gospel to Greeks who know nothing of either Jewish or Christian tradition. He proclaims that the “unknown god” whom they worship is the true Lord of heaven and earth who will judge the world with justice through Jesus, whom God has raised from the dead.

^{22a}Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, ²⁴“The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, ²⁵nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. ²⁶From one ancestor he made all peoples to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, ²⁷so that they would search for God and perhaps fumble about for him and find him—though indeed he is not far from each one of us. ²⁸For ‘In him we live and move and have our being’; as even some of your own poets have said, ‘For we, too, are his offspring.’ Here ends the second reading.

Please stand as you are able

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: sung (ELW pg. 142)

Alleluia. Lord to whom shall we go?

You have the words of eternal life.

Alleluia. Alleluia

GOSPEL READING: JOHN 1:1-5

John begins his gospel with this prologue: a hymn to the Word through whom all things were created. This Word became flesh and brought grace and truth to the world.

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it. The Gospel of the Lord... **Thanks be to God!**

Please be seated

CHILDREN'S TIME & SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY: *"This is My Father's World"* (ELW 824)

- 1 This is my Father's world,
and to my list'ning ears
all nature sings, and round me rings
the music of the spheres.
This is my Father's world;
I rest me in the thought
of rocks and trees, of skies and seas;
his hand the wonders wrought.**
- 2 This is my Father's world;
the birds their carols raise;
the morning light, the lily white,
declare their maker's praise.
This is my Father's world;
he shines in all that's fair.
In the rustling grass I hear him pass;
he speaks to me ev'rywhere.**
- 3 This is my Father's world;
oh, let me not forget
that, though the wrong seems oft so strong,
God is the ruler yet.
This is my Father's world;
why should my heart be sad?
The Lord is king, let heaven ring;
God reigns, let earth be glad!**

Text: Maltbie D. Babcock, 1858-1901

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE:

Last petition sing: *"Take, Oh Take Me As I Am"* (ELW 814)

L: We join with Christians far and near to worship God the Creator, praying for the earth and for all in need.

A brief silence.

L: As we remember 9-11 on this day, continue to work healing for all those who grieve and whose lives were changed forever that day. We pray for all first responders, and ask for your guiding and protecting hand with them whenever they go into places most of us would flee. Give them a strong sense of your presence surrounding, leading and caring for them. Hear us O God,

C: Our mercy is great.

L: For the earth we pray: that this bounteous creation receive continued divine blessing, that the air be wholesome, that the waters be plentiful and clean, that the land be treasured, and that animals be protected. Grant that what on earth has been despoiled will be healed. Hear us, O God,

C: Your mercy is great.

L: For the nations we pray: that farmers, herders, foragers, fishers, and grocers provide the food humans need, that legislators strive in all things for the common good, and that science and technology lead us toward more responsible ways to live. Hear us, O God,

C: Your mercy is great.

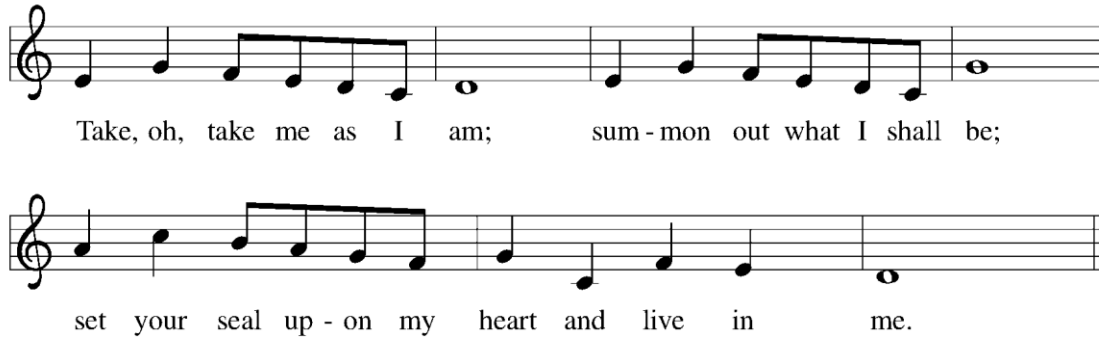
L: For our country we pray: that national parks, forests, and wildlife refuges be safeguarded, that all natural resources benefit the whole population, and that our children learn respect for nature. Hear us, O God,

C: Your mercy is great.

L: For those in need we pray: that humankind be sheltered from pandemic and from extreme weather, and that all who are sick or suffering receive medical attention and communal support. Give heed to those whose names we call out to you especially Jerry, Bruce, Cheryl, Chris, Kristy, Ricky, Larry, Joan, Dennis, Lois, Bev, Gary, Shirley, Joyce, Allison, Becky, Kim, Sara, Marg, Karen, Pete, Lynnsy, Barb, Wes, and Patrick. Hear us, O God,

C: Your mercy is great.

L: Into your hands, O God, our maker and keeper, we commend ourselves and your whole creation, trusting in your mercy, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.



Text: John L. Bell, b. 1949

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Please stand as you are able

***APOSTLES' CREED: (ELW pg. 105)**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,**

the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

***PEACE:**

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: **And also with you.**

Please be seated

OFFERING

We thank you for our gifts of time, talent, and treasure that help this congregation, to continue our ministry together, and to make Christ known in our communities and the world.

OFFERING HYMN: “Nearer, My God, to Thee, Nearer to Thee!” vs. 2 (CLH 426)

2 Though like the wanderer, the sun gone down,
 darkness be over me, my rest a stone;
 yet in my dreams I'd be
 nearer, my God, to thee;
 nearer, my God, to thee, nearer to thee!

United Methodist Hymnal, 1989

Please stand as you are able

***OFFERTORY PRAYER:**

P: O God, maker of heaven and earth,

C: **Your steadfast love embraces all creation. You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth and bring forth its bounty. Through these gifts of bread and wine, draw us into the death and life of your Son, who calls us to bear witness to his saving work. We ask this in Jesus’ name. Amen.**

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

***GREAT THANKSGIVING: sung (ELW pg. 107)**

P: The Lord be with you.
C: **And also with you**
P: Lift up your hearts.
C: **We lift our hearts to the Lord.**
P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
C: **It is right to give our thanks and praise!**

***THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION:** *sung "Remember Now My Children"*

The night of His betrayal, our Lord took bread.
He broke it and he blessed it, and then he said,
"My body given for you is what this means,
remember now my children what you have seen."

And then He took the chalice, and raised it high.
"My body broken for you, a full supply...
a covenant, a promise, a cleansing stream.
Remember now, my children, what you have seen."

We share this food together, remembering Christ;
we share a common treasure and know the price
we share it without measure, a gift of love;
we share our life forever, with God above.

*** THE LORD'S PRAYER:** *spoken*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.

***EUCCHARISTIC INVITATION:**

P: The gifts of creation for God's beloved creatures. Come and share.

Please be seated

COMMUNION

The acolytes, ushers, organist and those assisting with communion should come forward at this time and receive around the rail. Following the assistants, we celebrate Holy Communion continuous. The ushers will direct you. We welcome all to the Lord's Table where we experience the unity that God intends for all people. Gluten-free wafers and apple juice are available.

COMMUNION HYMN: "In the Garden" (CLH 456)

- 1 I come to the garden alone,
While the dew is still on the roses;
And the voice I hear, falling on my ear,
The Son of God discloses.

Refrain:

And He walks with me, and He talks with me,
And He tells me I am His own,
And the joy we share as we tarry there,
None other has ever known.

- 2 He speaks, and the sound of His voice
Is so sweet the birds hush their singing;
And the melody that He gave to me
Within my heart is ringing.

Refrain:

And He walks with me, and He talks with me,
And He tells me I am His own,
And the joy we share as we tarry there,
None other has ever known.

- 3 I'd stay in the garden with Him
Tho' the night around me be falling;
But He bids me go; thro' the voice of woe,
His voice to me is calling.

Refrain:

And He walks with me, and He talks with me,

**And He tells me I am His own,
And the joy we share as we tarry there,
None other has ever known.**

Baptist Hymnal, 1991

COMMUNION HYMN: "*Let All Things Now Living*" (ELW 881)

- 1 Let all things now living
a song of thanksgiving
to God the creator triumphantly raise,
who fashioned and made us,
protected and stayed us,
who still guides us on to the end of our days.
God's banners are o'er us,
God's light goes before us,
a pillar of fire shining forth in the night,
till shadows have vanished
and darkness is banished,
as forward we travel from light into light.**

- 2 God rules all the forces:
the stars in their courses
and sun in its orbit obediently shine;
the hills and the mountains,
the rivers and fountains,
the deeps of the ocean proclaim God divine.
We too should be voicing
our love and rejoicing;
with glad adoration a song let us raise
till all things now living
unite in thanksgiving:
"To God in the highest, hosanna and praise!"**

Text: Katherine K. Davis, 1892-1980, alt.
Text © 1939, 1966 E.C. Schirmer Music Company

Please stand as you are able

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION:**

P: God of our salvation,

C: **We give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls, reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for the journey. Through the body and blood of your Son, may we become Christ's body in the world, bearing witness to your love for all creation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world

***BLESSING:**

May God be merciful to us and bless us.

May the light of God's face shine upon us.

May God ✝ walk with us, wherever we go, in peace and love.

THREE FOLD AMEN

***SENDING SONG: "How Great Thou Art" (ELW 856)**

**1 O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder
consider all the works thy hand hath made,
I see the stars, I hear the mighty thunder,
thy pow'r throughout the universe displayed;**

Refrain

**Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee,
how great thou art! How great thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee,
how great thou art! How great thou art!**

**2 When through the woods and forest glades I wander,
I hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees;
when I look down from lofty mountain grandeur
and hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze;**

Refrain

**Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee,
how great thou art! How great thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee,**

how great thou art! How great thou art!

- 3 But when I think that God, his Son not sparing,
sent him to die, I scarce can take it in,
that on the cross my burden gladly bearing
he bled and died to take away my sin;

Refrain

Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee,
how great thou art! How great thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee,
how great thou art! How great thou art!

- 4 When Christ shall come, with shout of acclamation,
and take me home, what joy shall fill my heart!
Then I shall bow in humble adoration
and there proclaim, "My God, how great thou art!"

Refrain

Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee,
how great thou art! How great thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee,
how great thou art! How great thou art!

Text: Carl G. Boberg, 1859-1940; tr. and adapt. Stuart K. Hine, 1899-1989.

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***DISMISSAL:**

P: Go in peace. Christ is with you. May God bless you with peace, protection,
and strength for the week ahead.

C: **Thanks be to God!**

IN OUR PRAYERS

Jerry Anderson	Kristy Fyhrie
Larry Sather	Joan Burquest
Dennis Rosenquist	Lois Rosenquist
Ricky Hart	Sara Skoglund
Cheryl Farber – mother of Melissa Schlosser	

Rev. Bruce Miller- father of Karin Wagner
Marg Peterson -friend of the Thoms
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
Becky Yttrie – friend of the Townsends
Kim Casavan – friend of Mandy Arvidson
Karen Schlosser – mother of Justin Schlosser
Pete Baugh – brother-in-law of Pr. Ken Bowman
Chris Clapshaw – step-brother of Mark Ratajesak
Wes & Barb Hoyhtya – friends of the Thoms
Patrick Suchy – cousin of Mandy Arvidson
Family and Friends of: Katie Jahnke, Colleen Burquest, Doug Tvedt,
Jerry Pogose, Terry Burns, Bruce Carter, Gary Willie, Connie Pesta,
Kathy Wilkins, Ivy Christensen, Jim Schlosser, Leroy Olson, Dale
Flemming, Wally Schlosser, and Carter Stockert

THIS WEEK AT ESTHER

Sunday, September 6th – *Creation in Christ Sunday*

Sunday Fellowship Before and After Worship

10 am – Worship with Holy Communion led by Pastor Preston

2 pm – Worship at St. William's

Wednesday, September 9th

6 pm – Council

Sunday, September 13th – *Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost*

Sunday Fellowship Before and After Worship

8:30 am – WELCA

9 am – Sunday School begins!

10 am – Worship led by Pastor Billberg – Back to School/Backpack/Grandparents

Day Blessing during worship

2 pm – Worship at St. William's

NEWS AND NOTES

Check out the Esther Calendar on our website to stay up to date on everything happening! Go to estherlutheran.com and click on "Esther Calendar."

You are invited to the Sixth Annual 2026 Remembrance Day Walks by Humble Hearts Grief Support Services on Sunday, September 13th at Lake Brophy Park in Alexandria, MN. There is also a walk in Sleepy Eye, MN on Sunday, September 27th. 12 pm – 1 pm is registration, meal, and shopping, 1 pm- 2 pm is the Remembrance Walk, and 2 pm – 3:30 is the Inspirational Program and Recognition of Loved Ones (Alexandria only – dove release).

Sunday School begins on Sunday, September 13th! We welcome all children ages 3 through 6th grade to join us.

During worship on September 13th, we will also celebrate the start of the school year with a Back-to-School Blessing and Prayer, followed by a Backpack Blessing during the Children's Sermon. We hope you'll bring your backpacks and join us for this special day!

Confirmation classes will begin again in September with a Get-to- Know-You Potluck and Planning Night on Wednesday, September 16th at 6:00 pm. Students and their parents are invited to attend. We welcome everyone from 7th grade through adults to join the class, whether you are preparing for confirmation, have already been confirmed, or would simply like a refresher on the faith. For more information or to sign up, please contact Jewel Townsend.

38th Annual NW MN SWO Convention will be held at Trinity Lutheran Church in Crookston, MN on September 18-19th.

Connect & Reflect: Coffee & Conversation will be held on Sundays starting on September 20th at 9:15 – 9:40 am. We invite you to grab a cup of coffee and join us for a casual Sunday morning chat. Each week, we'll look back at the Behold devotion sent out the previous Monday morning. Together we'll share our thoughts, stories, and everyday experiences with that weeks; challenge question. Whether you read it on Monday or just want to listen in, you are welcome here as

we build our faith and community together!

Youth Meeting will be held on Sunday, September 20th at 11 am. We invite any Youth going into 7th-12th grade and their parents to discuss upcoming events through the ELCA and our church Youth Group. We ask that parent(s)/guardian(s) accompany them and stay for the meeting. We will serve pizza for lunch. We will discuss if anyone is interested in helping in Sunday School, Hayride & Bonfire date, and the 2027 ELCA National Youth Gathering. Hope to see you there!

9th grade Confirmation students will meet on Sunday, September 20th and Sunday, October 4th at 11 am. We will be planning your Confirmation worship service, answer any questions, pick out gowns, and run through your faith statements. Please turn in your faith statement to Jewel by October 1st.



The Bell Tower is leaking and needs to be repaired. Because of the high reach and difficult area to work with, we do not have an exact idea of cost, but it could surpass \$50,000. Please consider helping with this important and much needed repair. Help keep the bell ringing! Please send your donation to the church: 11019 625th Ave Parkers Prairie, MN 56361 or scan the QR code.



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](https://secure.myvanco.com/L-ZP4R), 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.



We welcome you to join in the weekly “Behold the New Has Come” devotions available on our website estherlutheran.com on the “Behold” tab. Devotions are posted to the website and emailed out each Monday. If you are not currently on the email list and want to be, please notify Mandy in the office. Each weekly devotion includes a challenge for the week. This past week’s challenge is:

Is there someone that you need to release from a debt? Are you able to see past the sin, and forgive the sinner? Forgiveness can be hard, but when we stop keeping tabs on who owes what, or a ledger of past sins, we are able to reflect the mercy that we have already received from God.

Paul doesn't tell the people of Corinth to forgive because others deserve it. He tells them to forgive because the Lord has forgiven all of us. Our debt has already been canceled, and when we live into that, when we believe that, we are free to forgive others.

We hope these devotions and weekly challenges will inspire conversations and stories that we can share with one another as, together, we grow in faith through this initiative.

Fall Conference Gatherings: Conference 5: October 15th at Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Moorhead, MN and Conference 8 at Grace Lutheran in Brandon, MN.

Ice Cream Still Available! If you missed the Ice Cream Social, you are in luck! We still have individual cups of ice cream available in the basement kitchen freezer. Feel free to help yourself and place your donation in the box provided. Suggested donations: \$2.50 per cup or 5 cups for \$10.

You belong here. We believe that each person has unique gifts, are created in God's image, and is a beloved child of God. We welcome you to join us each week to share in the community of faith at Esther - "Knowing Christ - making Christ known through faith, hope and love". If you would like to become a member of Esther, please contact Mandy in the church office at 218-338-2171 or secretary@estherlutheran.net or Jewel Townsend at 320-760-2503 or jewellht17@gmail.com.

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