



ESTHER LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELCA

September 2026 Newsletter

"Knowing Christ – Making Christ Known Through Faith, Hope and Love."

11019 625th Ave – Parkers Prairie, MN 56361

Church Phone: 218-338-2171

Website: www.estherlutheran.com

Office Email: secretary@estherlutheran.net

Facebook: www.facebook.com/estherlutheran

Christ Is With Us

Welcome, September! The month of transitions. From summer to fall. From vacation to back to school. From freedom to structure. Whether you love this time of year, have a tough time making the shift in routine, or have learned to embrace it, September can be a tough month. Transitions can leave us feeling uncertain, and the unknown can be a little scary. We say goodbye to our relaxed summer routines and return to the structure of school, practices, work, meetings, and all the obligations that seem to fill our calendars. At times, it can feel overwhelming.

But in the midst of all these transitions, may we remember this: **Christ is with us.**

As we get up early, Christ is with us.

As we enter a new classroom, Christ is with us.

As we begin a new job, Christ is with us.

As we put ourselves out there and try new things—clubs, sports, activities—Christ is with us.

As we introduce ourselves to new people, Christ is with us.

Christ may show up in a new friend. And Christ may show up to someone else through us.

May we receive grace from others as we navigate our way through these transitions, and may we extend grace to others who are trying to find their way, too. May we be encouragers and helpers to one another. May the light of Christ shine through us to our neighbors, near and far.

And may we remember that not every invitation has to be answered with a "yes" and everything doesn't need to be accomplished in one day. Life is a journey, not a sprint. Be present in the moment. Engage with and enjoy the people around you. And, most importantly, take the time to **share your story.**

As we continue our **"Behold! The New Has Come"** journey, that is exactly what we are seeking to do: share our stories, share our thoughts, and share our faith. Each Monday morning, Mandy sends out the *Behold* devotion by email, and I post it on our website. Beginning September 20, we invite you to join us each Sunday at **9:15 a.m. for "Coffee and Conversations."** We will gather at the tables by the office to share the weekly *Behold* devotion and talk together about the challenge for the week. We also invite you to share your weekly **"challenge story"** during the first moments of worship each week. What did you notice? What did you try? Where did you see God at work? Did you see Christ in someone? What happened when you looked at something—or someone—with new eyes?

Share your story. Share it with us. Share it with your loved ones, your friends, your neighbors—with that person who may need to hear it. Christ may be shining through your story to that person. When we share our lives and our stories, we help one another grow in faith and deepen our relationships with God and with one another. Our stories are unique. Our stories are beautiful. They are part of what makes us who we are. And sometimes, the story we are willing to share may be exactly the story someone else needs to hear to find their way, too. So as we move through the transitions of September, may we remember that we do not walk through them alone. We walk with each other - together in Christ.

"For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them." Matthew 18:20

Peace,

Jewel

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 Muires – 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

SERVING IN SEPTEMBER

Pastor: Sept. 6- Pr. Dennis Preston, Sept. 13-Pr. Greg Billberg, Sept. 20- SAM Jewel Townsend, Sept. 27-SAM Jewel Townsend
Organist: Marcia Guenther
Altar Care: Bev Arvidson
Usher: Mike Arvidson & Rick Arvidson
Acolyte: Chase & Avery Stueve
Lay Reader: Chris Carter
Communion Assistant: Steph Stueve & Amy Stanley
Birthday Card Sender: Lacey Grinager



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

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Kathryn McDaniel	09/03
Christy Hart	09/09
Evangeline Krueger	09/12
Russell Higgs	09/14
Brady Arvidson	09/15
Brooklyn McPhail	09/15
Denelle Hart	09/16
Averie Dobratz	09/17
Derek Hart	09/18
Orran Hart	09/18
Ryan Sansness	09/18
Molly Stanley	09/18
Sawyer Ratajesak	09/19
Jeremy Arvidson	09/20
Ryan Ness	09/20
Vanessa Garlitz	09/21
Deanna Kreidler	09/23
Carrie Price	09/23
Colby Schlosser	09/24
Leann Aldrich	09/26
Michael Arvidson	09/26
Alicia Kruse	09/29
Benjamin Arvidson	09/30
Melissa Schlosser	09/30
Ben Arvidson	09/30

If you would like to be on our email list, please contact secretary@estherlutheran.net

Visit our website at estherlutheran.com

Follow us on Facebook at

facebook.com/estherlutheran/

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."

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 and clicking on the "Faith Formation Resources" tab to find many great resources waiting for you to explore, including our synod newsletter "Northern Lights"

THE BELL TOWER IS LEAKING

AND NEEDS TO BE REPAIRED!

The bell tower is leaking and needs to be repaired!

Because of the high reach and difficult area to work in, 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. We need to preserve the future!

Help keep the bell ringing!



PUT A LITTLE GOOD IN YOUR HEART



Please send your donation to:

Esther Lutheran Church
11019 625 Ave
Parkers Prairie, MN 56361

Or donate
electronically:
Scan the QR Code



Confirmation



Confirmation Class

will start up again with a Get-to-Know You Potluck & Planning Night on September 16th at 6 pm for all students and their parents. We welcome anyone, 7th grade through adult, who would like to be a part of the class, whether you have already had Confirmation instruction or not. If you are interested in having your child or yourself in class, please contact Jewel Townsend at 320-760-2503.

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.



Youth Group 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 the 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!

SUNDAY SCHOOL RALLY DAY! Sunday, September 13, 2026, 9 am

We **invite you to celebrate** the start of a wonderful new year of Sunday School as we **sing, learn, play and grow together!**

In honor of **Grandparents Day** we especially invite you to bring a grandparent - or two, or more! - to Sunday School to join in the fun!

Then during the **10 am worship** we will have three special blessings:

- **Blessing of the Backpacks**
- **Back-to-School Blessing**
- **Grandparent Blessing**

And after worship, stick around for a special treat—**ROOT BEER FLOATS!**

We can't wait to welcome you and your family as we begin another great year of Sunday School together!

WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU!

CONNECT & REFLECT: COFFEE & CONVERSATION

Sundays, starting Sept. 20 | 9:15 – 9:40 AM



Behold, the new has come, is our initiative to grow in faith—both individually and as a church community. To help us share how we live out our baptismal promises in everyday life, 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 week's 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!



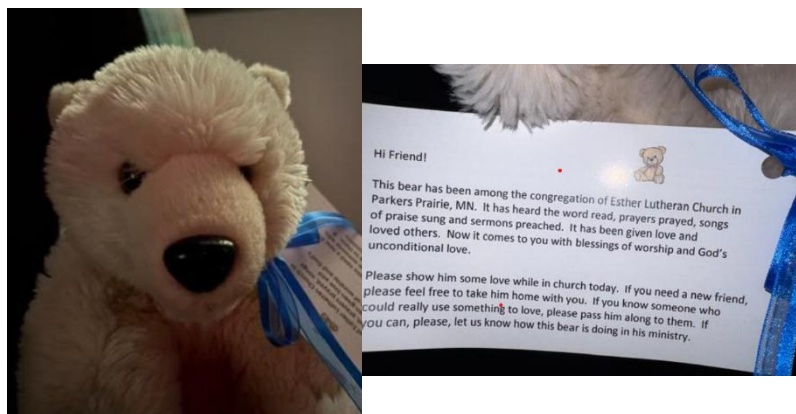
Convenient ways to give to Esther through our Vanco online giving platform:

- Scan the QR code below.
 - Go to estherlutheran.com and click on the "Give to Esther Lutheran Church" tab and click on the Vanco Link or scan the QR code
 - Download the Vanco app.
 - Follow this link: <https://secure.myvanco.com/L-ZP4R>
- If you have any questions please ask Office Secretary Mandy Arvidson.

QR Code for
Esther Lutheran Church



We believe everyone has a unique and valuable place in God's family and we welcome all to share in the community of faith here at Esther. If you would like to become a member please contact Mandy in the church office at 218-338-2171 or secretary@estherlutheran.net or Jewel Townsend at 320-760-2503



*Dear God,
As we send our children back to school, we pray for Your protection and guidance. Keep them safe from harm, both physically and emotionally. Help them to find friends who will support and encourage them. Give them wisdom as they face challenging situations. And help them to always remember that You are with them, no matter what.*



WELCA met Sunday, August 9th at 8:30 am.
 Treasurer's report: Savings/memorial \$7,833.40
 Checking account \$4,133.77. Many of the
 expenses for ice cream social etc. had not been paid as
 of yet.

Just another reminder: If someone is having difficulty,
 sick, or in the hospital, please let Donna Pederson
 know. She will send them a card to let them know the
 Esther family is thinking and praying for them.

Some dates to remember:

- September 18 & 19: Annual Convention at Trinity in Crookston. Donna Pederson volunteered to be our voting delegate this year. The convention starts on Friday, the 18th at 2:00 pm. Hoping more of you ladies can attend. We are doing two silent auction baskets and we need items for these two baskets please. Themes are: Garden and Baby. If you can add to these baskets, please bring it to church ASAP. Need by Sept 15th at latest
- October 24th: Conference 8 Fall Meeting at Grace Lutheran in Brandon. Speaker will be a mother and son from Health Partners in Tanzania who supports this mission regularly.
- November 7th: Porch Pot Making at Kathy Mittag's. Hope you are gathering up items as you see them. You can drop them off at Kathy's as she has room to store them until November.
- November 20 & 21: First lefse making
- December 4 & 5: Second lefse making
- December 6th: Soup/Sandwich and Christmas Market. Hope you are working on some things to share at the Christmas Market!

We spent quite a bit of time discussing the Ice Cream Social. Attendance was low this year, and road construction and the hot weather contributed to that. At this point, we have not come up with any solutions or changes we would like to try for next year. Even so, the Ice Cream Social does provide a valuable opportunity for all of us, as well as others in the community, to come together. It gives us a chance to

enjoy one another's company while sharing great ice cream, pie, and our sandwiches. There is value in keeping that sense of community and togetherness in mind as we consider the future of the event.

Our next WELCA meeting will be September 13th at 8:30 am. That is the first day of Sunday School so so big day at church!

Luella Thom
 President

BECOME AN OTTER EXPRESS VOLUNTEER DRIVER

WHY VOLUNTEER?

- ☐ Help local residents maintain their independence
- ☐ Make a meaningful difference in someone's day
- ☐ Meet people throughout our communities
- ☐ Choose volunteer opportunities that fit your schedule
- ☐ Support accessible public transportation
- ☐ Be part of the Otter Express team

WE ARE LOOKING FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE:

- ✓ Friendly & dependable
- ✓ Patient & compassionate
- ✓ Safety-minded
- ✓ Willing to provide excellent customer service
- ✓ Interested in giving back to their community

NO VOLUNTEER DRIVING EXPERIENCE?

That's ok!

Otter Express provides the training & support you need to become a successful volunteer driver!

218-998-3002

rides@otterexpress.com

CONNECTED PARENTING

RAISING THE NEXT GENERATION OF RESILIENT KIDS

SEPTEMBER 26

9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

CALVARY CHURCH IN ALEXANDRIA, MN

FREE CHILDCARE AGES 0-5TH GRADE

**RAISING
THE
NEXT GEN**

Designed to equip parents with practical insights, and inspiration for supporting kid and student mental health & emotional resilience in our connected world

Calling all parents, caregivers, & anyone invested in the next generation's growth and well-being



DR. CHINWE WILLIAMS

a nationally recognized speaker, therapist, and best-selling author specializing in anxiety, trauma, and wellness with over 15 years of experience across clinical, academic, and corporate settings



WILL HUTCHERSON

an author, pastor, and founder of Curate Hope, a non-profit dedicated to suicide prevention and mental health awareness for teens

\$10



SCAN TO REGISTER AND LEARN MORE

CONNECT WITH OTHER PARENTS AND GAIN VALUABLE TOOLS FOR NAVIGATING MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES

WWW.RAISINGTHENEXTGEN.ORG/CONFERENCES

Humble Hearts
— Grief Support Services —

You are invited!

2026 REMEMBRANCE WALKS

WALK TO HONOR. WALK TO REMEMBER. WALK TO BRING HOPE.

— SIXTH ANNUAL —
ALEXANDRIA, MN
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13TH, 2026, 12:00-3:30PM
LAKE BROPHY PARK
REGISTRATION DEADLINE: AUGUST 24TH, 2026

— THIRD ANNUAL —
SLEEPY EYE, MN
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27TH, 2026, 12:00-3:30PM
ALLISON PARK
REGISTRATION DEADLINE: SEPTEMBER 14TH, 2026

Scan to register, donate, and learn more!

EVENT INFORMATION:

Walk with us to honor your loved ones and help bring hope to others. Proceeds support affordable grief care for those who need it most.

- 12:00pm-1:00pm Registration, Meal, Shopping
- 1:00pm-2:00pm Remembrance Walk (1.5 Miles)
- 2:00pm-3:30pm Inspirational Program and Recognition of Loved Ones (Alexandria Only: Dove Release)

Adults \$50
12 & Under \$20

INCLUDES:

- T-Shirt
- Meal
- Memorial Sign on Walk
- Recognition of Loved One during Program

LOOKING FOR MORE WAYS TO SUPPORT US?

- BECOME A SPONSOR.**
- ATTEND OUR REMEMBRANCE WALK.**
- SPREAD THE WORD!**

Consider a donation on our website, or help us spread the word!

Sponsorship details can be found on the back of this registration form.

KTHUMBLEHEARTS.ORG

KTHUMBLEHEARTS@GMAIL.COM

It's Retreat Season at Luther Crest
Check out our upcoming programmed retreats

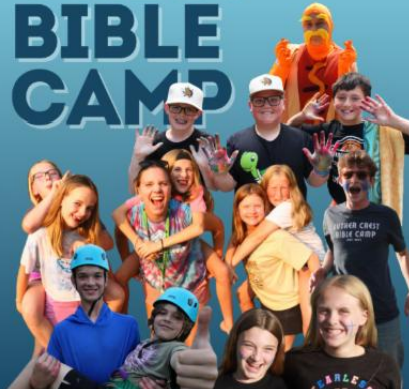
- Oct. 15-16: MEA Day Camp (K-5)
- Nov. 20-22: Women's Weekend (Adults)
- Dec. 5-6: Middle School Youth Gathering (6-9)
- Jan. 10-12: Youth Leader Jamboree (Adults)
- Jan. 22-24: Children and Youth Retreat (3-9)
- Feb. 19-21: Children and Youth Retreat (3-9)
- Feb. 26-28: High School Recharge Retreat (9-12)
- March 4-7: Adult Creative Retreat (Adults)
- April 23: Spring Day Camp (K-5)

While Luther Crest is known for summer camp, we're open year-round for retreats and rentals! From family reunions and business meetings to birthday parties, weddings and banquets, environmental education, and relaxing getaways, we have a space for your next gathering!

Get in touch with us or schedule a visit today!

Phone: (320) 846-2431
Mail: 8231 County Rd. 11 NE
Alexandria, MN 56308
Website: www.luthercrest.org
Facebook, Instagram, and Youtube: @luthercrest

LUTHER CREST BIBLE CAMP



Keep moving mountains all year long with Luther Crest
Besides attending summer camp and retreats, check out the other ways you can get involved year-round.

Volunteer! We are always looking for helpful volunteers to assist in caring for our site and facilities, mailings and office work, and more. Reach out to lcbb@luthercrest.org.

Check out **FaithSource**, Luther Crest's on-demand materials for faith formation in your home in church.

Donate! Together, we can make sure financial barriers never stand in the way of a child experiencing the joy, faith, friendship, and adventure of camp.

The mission of Luther Crest is to inspire faith, stewardship and community in God's creation and we are blessed to be able to live out that mission here in the beautiful lakes area of Alexandria, MN.

From the team here at Luther Crest, thank you for sharing your children, your young adults, your pastors and ministers, your church communities, and your congregations with us. We felt the love and support from all of you this summer and cannot wait to continue sharing the ministry of Luther Crest with you all in the future. The momentum and the spirit are strong here at camp and we are so excited to see what this next year brings.



Today, we pray for the kids
and youth in our church
family.
May they grow strong in faith
and know they are deeply
loved.

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

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2 <u>Behold Team Meeting</u> 6:30 pm	3	4	5
6 Creation in Christ Sunday <i>Fellowship before and after worship</i> 10 am – Worship with Holy Communion led by Pr. Preston 2 pm – Worship at St. William’s	7	8	9 <u>Council</u> 6 pm	10	11	12
13 Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost <i>Fellowship before and after worship</i> <i>Grandparents Day!</i> 8:30 am – WELCA 9 am – Sunday School begins! 10 am – Worship led by Pr. Billberg – Back to school/Backpack Blessing 2 pm – Worship at St. William’s	14	15	16 <u>Confirmation</u> <u>Get-To-Know You</u> <u>Potluck & Planning</u> <u>Night</u> 6 pm	17	18 38 th Annual NW MN SWO Convention In Crookston Pribula/Howard Rehearsal	19 38 th Annual NW MN SWO Convention In Crookston Pribula/Howard Wedding
20 Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost <i>Fellowship before and after worship</i> 9 am – Sunday School 9:15 am – Behold Connect & Reflect: Coffee & Conversation 10 am – Worship with Holy Communion led by SAM Jewel Townsend 11 am – Youth Meeting 11 am – 9 th grade Confirmation student meeting 2 pm – Worship at St. William’s	21	22	23 <u>Confirmation</u> 6 pm	24	25	26
27 Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost <i>Fellowship before and after worship</i> 9 am – 3 rd Grade Bible Class 9 am – Sunday School 9:15 am – Behold Connect & Reflect: Coffee & Conversation 10 am – Worship led by SAM Jewel Townsend 2 pm – Worship at St. William’s	28	29	30 <u>Confirmation</u> 6 pm	Oct. 1	2	3

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.

Esther Lutheran Church
11019 625th Ave
Parkers Prairie, MN 56361