

# APRIL 2026 NEWSLETTER



New Website Page: [www.ericksonlutheranchurch.com](http://www.ericksonlutheranchurch.com)

New Emails: Pastor Heather: [hhowdle84@gmail.com](mailto:hhowdle84@gmail.com)

Office: [office.ericksonlutheran@gmail.com](mailto:office.ericksonlutheran@gmail.com)

Please note that volunteers staff the Administrative Office.  
If you require assistance, kindly leave a message and your inquiry will be addressed promptly.

## MESSAGE FROM PASTOR HEATHER



**Resurrection – and Spring – with signs of new life, new life in Jesus, new life in our congregation and church when we ask God for help and guidance in prayer and discernment together!** Our cup is not only half full but running over with love and life!

Although new life in our congregation and church may take on different forms, we will continue to find ways to live out and share the Gospel as Jesus has called us to do.

It is the 'How' that we are all wondering about in a time when 'going to church' seems not to be in the mindset in many Christian families in society today. This is not criticism but an observation from the last 20 years.

In last month's newsletter I mentioned that many churches and congregations are facing similar challenges of smaller and aging members. This means that there are less people to support the costs of operating the church building and the Pastor. Thankfully, we are people of faith, we believe that scripture and prayer as a faith community will help our discernment. What is discernment?

Discernment is a spiritual practice of communal listening and an honest naming of reality. It is prayerful attention to where God may be calling us next. It opens the door to what God is doing. It is not a vote disguised as prayer, or avoiding difficult conversations, or strategic planning without

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spiritual reflection. Faithful discernment asks What gives life? What drains life? Where might new life emerge? These questions are united through prayer.

So, discernment is a posture of communal, prayerful, honest listening – not a technique or a vote.

Numerous people nationwide have participated in webinars on ‘Courageous Discernment,’ hosted by the Eastern Synod of our National church and led by facilitator Katja Brittain.

Since October several topics were covered and the most recent on Thursday evening March 19, 2026, focused on the three movements of discernment about ‘What to Keep’, ‘What to Let Go’, and ‘What to Transform’.

We were asked, what is life giving in our church? Where is the energy, what spaces do we spend the most time? What do we spend the most time doing?

We were also asked to reflect on the following questions in break-out groups, after a discernment process.

Past- What building decisions shaped our congregation the most in the past 20 years?

Present – What decision is pressing now?

Future – What decision may we need to make in the next five to ten years?

What questions are we avoiding talking about?

Most answered the first question with universal access upgrades to our church buildings. We put in an elevator and outdoor ramp so that all abilities can participate in our worship and events. The current pressing decision is how to partner with others while staying in line with our mission and ministry. The discernment needed within the next five to ten years was a more challenging question, as many felt we have pressing issues within the next one to three

years. The questions that we need to discern appear to be, will our ministry be more outward based i.e. in the communities in which we live.

This means worshipping and sharing our ministry in the care homes more, in community centers more, at hockey games, hosting gospel singsongs in community buildings, or inviting other church or ministries to share our space as well?

During Jesus' era, ministry faced obstacles due to ongoing strife, conflict, imperial rule, and strict religious authority.

As a congregation you have a voice and it will be good to come together to participate fully in discerning how our faith community moves forward at Erickson Lutheran Church. Each of us has a role, our Council to help with the formal process, and as your Pastor, I continue to be committed to be a support, a messenger of Christ's light, of the Living Word and Sacraments.

Let us pray for faithful discernment for where and how God is calling us to share the good news of the resurrection, new life each Spring and each Easter season.

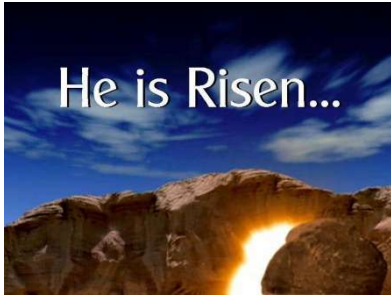
In gratitude for our church family,

**Pastor Heather**





Spring is arriving which brings new beginnings and growth filled with beauty. A time to celebrate, He has Risen!



Council continues to meet once a month. The following are the positions of council members: Chair - Shaun Oakley, Vicechair - Dolores Hall, Secretary - Cathy Hackenschmidt, Treasurer - Mary Nichols, Member at large (maintenance) - Earl Wickdahl. You may contact the Chair, Shaun Oakley (mywillalone@hotmail.com), regarding anything that needs to be brought to Council. Previous month minutes are posted on the board in the Narthex.

Services for Easter: April 3, 2026, Good Friday at 10:30 a.m., April 5, 2026, Easter Sunday - Sunrise Service 7:00 a.m. at Bethel Lutheran Society Inc. and Communion Service 10:30 a.m. at Erickson Lutheran Church. The Worship service on Sunday, April 12, 2026, will have installation of church council officers, Sunday School, and a potluck lunch.

We would love your help making our Easter Sunday celebration special! If you have decorations or creative ideas, please join us for decorating on Saturday, April 4, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. in the church. If you are unable to attend but would like to contribute, please bring your decorations to the church by 10:00 a.m. on Saturday morning. Thank you for helping to brighten our worship space!

We are updating the ELC Directory and send any changes to Cathy, [cat7cool@gmail.com](mailto:cat7cool@gmail.com).

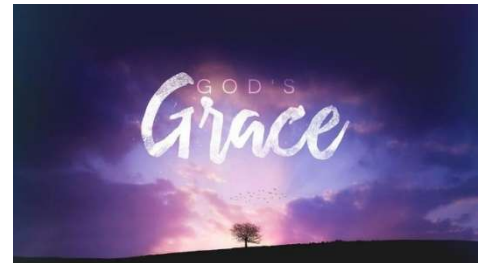
Thank you everyone for assisting in all areas with keeping our doors open.

In God We Trust, **Church Council**



The season of Easter, a time of renewal as we experience God's **GRACE**.

**G - God's**  
**R - riches**  
**A - at**  
**C - Christ's**  
**E - expense**



The hymn chosen for April is ELW 672 "Signs and Wonders". The words for this hymn were written by Susan Palo Cherwien 1953-2021. Before Susan's passing, she wrote about her life. Writing poetry helped her survive her teen years. She had grown up in a Finnish Lutheran congregation singing hymns since she was little. By singing hymns in church Susan learned to read music. "I was steeped in the music and poetry of the church" she wrote.

Her interesting biography can be read on [susanpalocherwien.com](http://susanpalocherwien.com)

Choir continues every Tuesday at 7:00 p.m.

Let's invite and bring someone to our Sunday worship. Offer them a ride, sit with them and worship in our space, comfort, peace and hope.

**Sue and Viola**  
**Music and Worship**

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Erickson Lutheran Women News

# Ministry to Women



We thank those who attended and made offerings. A lovely light lunch was provided and enjoyed by all.

We will be decorating the church for Easter on Saturday, April 4, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. Please bring flowers that morning or on Good Friday, April 3, 2026.

Women's Bible study is Thursday, April 9, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. at Dolores's.

**Theme: Sacrificial Sharers**

- Bible passages:  
 Romans 15:24-29;  
 2 Corinthians 8:1-13;  
 Hebrews 13:15-16;  
 Philippians 1:3-8.



Submitted by Dolores Hall



The World Day of Prayer service was held on Thursday, March 5, 2026, at 2:00 p.m. at Erickson Lutheran Church. Christian women of Nigeria prepared the service.

MARCH OFFERINGS:	
BUDGET	\$ 7,623.00
ONLINE	\$ 803.86
CEMETERY DONATION	\$ 300.00

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# Erickson Lutheran Church

APRIL 2026

**Sunday Worship at 10:30 AM and Sunday School the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of April Only at 10:30 AM**

Website: [www.ericksonlutheranchurch.com](http://www.ericksonlutheranchurch.com) [www.facebook.com/ EricksonLutheranChurch](https://www.facebook.com/EricksonLutheranChurch)

Donation E Transfers gratefully accepted: [office.ericksonlutheran@gmail.com](mailto:office.ericksonlutheran@gmail.com) P.O. Box 414 – 30-3rd Street SW Erickson Manitoba R0J 0P0 - 204-636-2259

U = Usher/Host R=Reader CA = Communion Assistant	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1 Private Event – Kitchen Only	2 <b>Holy Thursday</b>  Private Event – Kitchen Only	3 <b>Good Friday Communion Service at 10:30 AM</b>  <b>Saturday April 4 – 10:00 AM decorate Church for Easter Sunday</b>	
Pastor Heather U: Rhonda R: Marlene CA: Cathy	5 Bethel Sunrise Service at 7:00 AM Erickson Easter Communion Service at 10:30 AM. All Welcome – Coffee to follow <b>Easter – The Resurrection of Our Lord</b>		7 Healthy Baby Program 10:00 AM to Noon  Palliative Care Meeting at Mary's 1:00 PM  Choir -7:00 PM	8 S2S Exercises Chair Yoga at 1:30 PM	9 Communion PCH Services Erickson 10:00 AM Sandy Lake 2:30 PM  ELW Bible Study at Dolores' House at 7:00 PM  Private Event – Kitchen Only April 9 and 10		
Pastor Heather U: Reg, Sharon R: Linda	12 Worship Service and Installation of Church Council Officers. Sunday School followed by Potluck Lunch Second Sunday of Easter		14 Choir -7:00 PM	15 S2S Exercises Chair Yoga at 1:30 PM	16  ELCIC Webinar - 6:30 PM 'Practical Climate Action for Church Buildings'		18
Pastor Heather U: Mary, Sue R: Mary	19 Hymn Sing Service followed by Coffee and Church Council Meeting Third Sunday of Easter	20 Deadline for ELC Newsletter articles	21 Choir - 7:00 PM	22 S2S Exercises Chair Yoga at 1:30 PM	23	24	25
Lay Service U: Andrew, Jewel R: Sylvia-Linda	26 Lay Service followed by Coffee Fourth Sunday of Easter	27	28 Choir - 7:00 PM	29 S2S Exercises Chair Yoga at 1:30 PM	30		