



The Eternal Light

Eternal Savior Lutheran Church
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**From the Intentional Interim Pastor
March 2023**

A Fruitful Church

“All over the world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing, just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and understood God’s grace in all its truth.” Colossians 1:6

We say: “All God expects of us is faithfulness!” Wrong! He expects faithfulness and fruitfulness! Fruitfulness is a major theme of the New Testament: Scripture says, “...I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit - fruit that will last...” (John 15:16). God wants to see lasting results from our ministry *“This is to My Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be My disciples”* (John 15:8). A successful ministry is proof that we are following in Christ’s footsteps: *“We pray... that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please Him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work...”* (Colossians 1:10). Our ultimate goal should be to please the Lord in all that we do.

You see, the nation of Israel lost its privileges because of unfruitfulness. Listen once again to the Word of God: *“...the Kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit”* (Matthew 21:43). The same principle applies to churches. We’ve all seen God remove His hand of blessing from churches - churches that have been greatly blessed in the past - because they became self-satisfied, self-absorbed and stopped bearing fruit.

The word fruit is used about 55 times in the New Testament and refers to repentance (Matthew 3:8); practicing the truth (Matthew 7:16-21); answered prayer (John 15:7-8); giving to God (Romans 15:26-28); winning the lost (Romans 1:13). The truth is, God wants us to be faithful- and fruitful! As long as there is still one unreached soul, and we have a community full of them for whom Christ died, our work has not been completed. There’s much to be done!

Many churches justify their lack of growth by saying, “God hasn’t called us to be fruitful, just faithful.” Actually, God expects both! Being “fruitful” involves fulfilling the great commission to win the world. Being “faithful” means accomplishing as much as possible with the resources and talents He’s given you. That’s why comparing churches is a mistake. Success isn’t being larger than some other church; it’s bearing as much fruit as possible, given your gifts, opportunities and potential. Christ doesn’t expect you to produce more fruit than you can, but He does expect you to produce all that you can by His power. And that’s a lot more than most of us think is possible! If we’re not breaking new ground in our ministry then it’s not requiring that we use our faith, and if our ministry doesn’t require any faith then we’re not being faithful.

Are we being faithful to God’s Word if we keep communicating it in an outdated style that fails to reach people or insist on doing ministry in a way that’s comfortable for us, even though it doesn’t produce any results? Too many of us are orthodox in our beliefs, but unfaithful to Christ because we refuse to change programs, methods, styles of worship, or even locations in order to reach a lost world for Him. Vance Havner (*a pastor and missionary*) used to say: “A church can be straight as a gun barrel doctrinally, and just as empty spiritually.” We must be willing to say with unreserved commitment, We’ll do whatever it takes to reach people for Christ. That is what we are to do! And that is the mission that we’ve been called to do.

Pastor Schultz

“Keep Your Eye on the Ball”

Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. (*Hebrews 12:2*)

Growing up in a small town in east central Minnesota, I heard, many times, my uncle say “Keep your eye on the ball.” It didn't matter if we were playing baseball, basketball, football, darts, golf, ping-pong, archery, or target practice; this was my uncle's universal “sporting” advice, “Keep your eye on the ball.” This was his way of saying “keep on track”, (*watch what you're doing.*) This was his way of saying; you can have a great game if you keep your eyes and your focus on the one thing that matters: the ball (*the target*). Taking your eyes off of the ball means a dropped ball, a missed pass or some other “error” that can cause you to lose your focus.

And so, it is in the Lord's church. There is one thing that matters: Jesus Christ and Him crucified. We are given a gift by the Holy Spirit, a faith that keeps our eyes (*and our minds*) on Jesus. When our eyes are kept on Jesus we are rejoicing in God's gifts, all the gifts that Jesus gives: the forgiveness of our sins, eternal life, salvation, heaven, His kingdom, His church and so much more. The devil wants nothing more than to divert our eyes from Jesus, to steal our joy. He tries to take our joy in Christ away. Taking our eyes off of Jesus and blaming others for things that have happen in the past can only lead to hopelessness and despair. So let us not blame one another for things that have happen in the past.

Remember the story of Peter walking on the water? When the disciples saw Jesus walking on the water they were afraid, thinking they saw a ghost. Jesus comforts them saying, “Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid” (*Mt 14:27*). Peter answers, “Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.” Jesus says, “Come,” and Peter does, walking on the water with Jesus. But then as it were Peter 'takes his eye off the ball.' The text says that “when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried out” (*Mt 14:30*). Peter was distracted with the wind and the waves, and taking his eyes off of Jesus, he began to sink. But Peter's cry was a cry for help, “Lord, save me!” And Jesus answered his prayer, “immediately” stretching out his hand and catching him. The same Lord Jesus is faithful to answer our prayers. As our focus is distracted and our eyes drawn away for the gifts of God in Christ Jesus, we, too, cry out, “Lord, help us!” And Jesus is quick to save, to draw our eyes back to Him and the gifts He desires to give us.

So I appeal to you...to strive together with me...so that by God's Will, we may have joy and be refreshed” (*Ro 15:29-32*). Let each one of us, by the grace of God, ask the Lord for help. Lord help us to “keep our eye on the ball, which is you and let not us look for faults of one another or for things that have happened of the past.”.

My dear friends, let us give praise, honor and glory to Christ in all that we do. And by His grace, join me in doing just that. May we fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith.

In His Service

Rev. Gary H. Schultz

Lenten Discipline: Denying the Self

We are at the beginning of Lent. During the Lenten season, the church calls to our attention the sufficiency of what God gives. It points to the sufficiency of God's grace in the atoning work of Jesus. It shows us the sufficiency of faith in Jesus' work for us. It makes known the sufficiency of God's Word in faith and life.

But Lent doesn't just remind us of the sufficiency of God's spiritual gifts — the gifts that pertain to our redemption and salvation. Lent also reminds us of the sufficiency of the physical, temporal gifts of God which pertain to this body and life. In other words, it reminds us of the importance of godly contentment and of outward discipline and training of the body.

This outward training of the body teaches us not to give in to every desire of our flesh, but to learn to say no to them. And it does this in such a way that if you fail, it is no sin. It is a way to practice without putting yourself into a compromising situation.

Fasting is a good example of this outward training. When you fast, you are practicing saying no to the desires of your body. But if you fail in this, if you break your fast, you have not sinned. But you have learned something about how your flesh works, how difficult it is to fight against it, and how you need help from above to discipline the desires of your body. Another example is almsgiving. An increase in giving to the church and its mission during Lent is also a form of outward training. We all know that our flesh finds security in money and stuff. By committing to give more to the church, you are

training your flesh. You are, by this outward discipline, training yourself to be content with what God gives. You are practicing saying “no” to your desires. Again, if you fail, you have not sinned. But you’ve learned just how powerful your flesh is — it leads you instead of you leading it. You’ve learned how you need help from above in being content with what God gives.

This is why St. Paul instructs young Pastor Timothy in this way:

But godliness with contentment is great gain, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs. (1 Tim. 6:6–10)

Our sufficiency is not of ourselves; it is in God. Let us learn this without sin by training our flesh this Lenten season.

This article was taken from LCMS Stewardship Ministry: lcms.org/stewardship

God’s Continued Guidance Through Eternal Savior’s Call Process

March 2023 marks the tenth month of Interim Ministry at Eternal Savior and our fifteenth month of vacancy. Our congregation is well-organized and moving with God’s guidance toward calling our next Pastor.

The IITT (Intentional Interim Taskforce Team), along with Elders and Church Council, met with our District President, Rev. James Maxwell, on January 31. We shared an overview of the congregation, our mission, and our journey with interim ministry thus far. We also discussed our next steps and plans toward calling a pastor. President Maxwell remarked that our congregation is very well-organized and has taken a thorough approach toward interim ministry. The presentation we shared, along with our new Mission and Ministry brochure, are at the links below. (Have a look, you may find your photo!)

<https://bit.ly/ESLC-IIM-Update>

<https://bit.ly/ESLC-Mission-Ministry>

On **March 19, we will welcome President Maxwell to Eternal Savior** once again. This time, he will preach as part of our Sunday morning worship that day. Following worship, we will hold a **congregational meeting** where President Maxwell will speak to the entire congregation to educate us and answer our questions about the Call process. Please mark your calendars and prioritize attendance on March 19th.

Our congregation will also complete a Self-Study. This document is the vehicle by which our congregation officially shares with the District President our ministry priorities, and important qualities of our next pastor. We have received a copy of the Self Study template, and the IITT, Elders and Officers have been actively working to organize how we will complete the study. There are three sections: congregational statistics, ministry priorities, and qualities of our next pastor. **Every member of our congregation will have the opportunity to complete a survey** regarding ministry priorities and pastoral qualities. Following President Maxwell’s visit on March 19th, we will open the survey for all members to complete. The survey will be available in two formats: in paper form to return to the church office, and as an online survey. There will even be a children’s version of the survey! All surveys will be completed anonymously. The results will be aggregated, and

emerging themes will be shared with the congregation. We plan to hold another congregational meeting to do this, prior to submitting to our District President in April. He will use this information to search for and create lists of candidates that we will consider for a Call.

Additionally, the Voters of Eternal Savior have officially **ratified the Call Committee for calling our next pastor**. Our constitution requires five voting members to form this committee. We were blessed with seven capable leaders to fill out the committee:

- Melisa Anderson
- Mary Bunge
- Cheryl Lambrecht
- Laura Raben
- Dave Sherrets
- Karen Sherrets
- Wayne Thomas (Committee Chair)
- Tom Stahly (President, ex officio)
- Keith Cowley (Elder Chair, ex officio, Liaison to RMD Office)

This committee will start its work in March. Please pray that God would guide and bless our Call Committee, as He has our entire congregation through this interim journey!

OFFERING REPORT

Offerings for the month of February were:

February 5	\$4,372
February 12	\$2,011
February 19	\$2,426
February 26	\$2,982

This weekly average (\$2,948) compares to our 2023 weekly budget needs of **\$4,369**.

COUNTER SCHEDULE

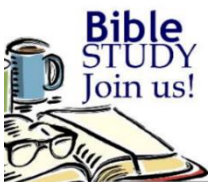
If you have a conflict on a day you are scheduled, please arrange with another counter to cover that day.

March 5 – Marc and Jan Ertle	April 2 – Mark and Mary Bunge
March 12 – Marc and Jan Ertle	April 9 – Mark and Mary Bunge
March 19 – Polly Cowley and Katherine Crane	April 16 – Sam and Lynn Kelley
March 26 – Polly Cowley and Katherine Crane	April 23 – Sam and Lynn Kelley
	April 30 – Marc and Jan Erle

**** We have a handful of members successfully using both of our electronic giving options. If you are interested in trying it out but need a refresher please let Mary know and she will have someone get in contact with you.

Game Night

We had another successful game night with strong attendance. We hope to continue to have these nights with so much fun and fellowship.



Sunday Morning Bible Study! – Grab a cup of coffee and please join us each Sunday at 10:40AM in the Fellowship Hall!

Wednesday Morning Bible Study! – Please join us for Wednesday Morning Bible Class – we will study the pericopes (*readings*) for the upcoming Sunday. Please join us.

Wednesday Night Bible Study - The Wednesday night Bible study hears from Prof. Joel Biermann (Concordia Theological Seminary) cover and unpack the Book of Philippians, and there will be time for brief discussion after his presentation. Who knows, there might even be light refreshments. Please consider joining us Wednesday evenings at 7:00 pm. We will meet in the Fireside Room, and a Zoom link will be available to anyone who would prefer to attend remotely (please email Jeff Reuer, jeff.reuer@gmail.com, or call 720-600-5997).

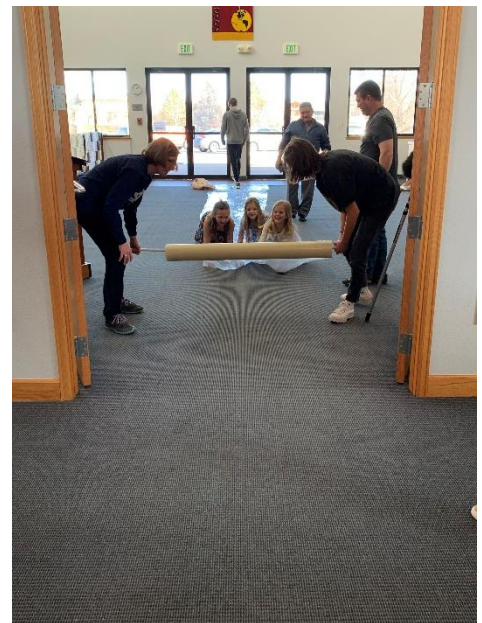
Sunday School! We are studying the “Enduring Faith” curriculum, Unit 8. Sunday School opening is at 10:30AM in the Fellowship Hall. All children are encouraged to join us!

Service in the Fellowship Hall

While the sanctuary was disassembled for the reredos painting we held our service in the fellowship hall. Thank you to everyone for being flexible.



The Reredos Project Completed!



This project was a long-term project with first initial email exchanges beginning in February of 2020. Then COVID hit in March and the committee held many meetings via zoom.

Committee members were Mary Bunge, Keith Cowley, Jan Ertle, Stacy Jundt, Lindalee Koehler, Tom and Cindy Stahly, Linda Thompson, and Robin Warnken. Marge Paugh and Pastor Rhode were also part of the committee. Pastor Schulz joined the committee upon his arrival to ESLC.

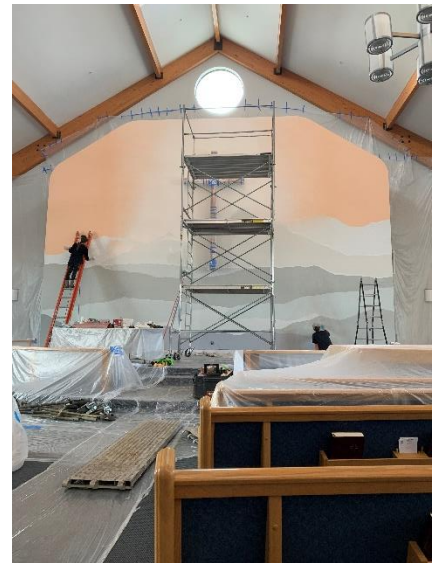


Hours were spent having fruitful conversations discussing designs for the wall and material choices considering load bearing for the floor. The decision was made to have a mountain scene borrowing from the beautiful environment God has created for us in Colorado.

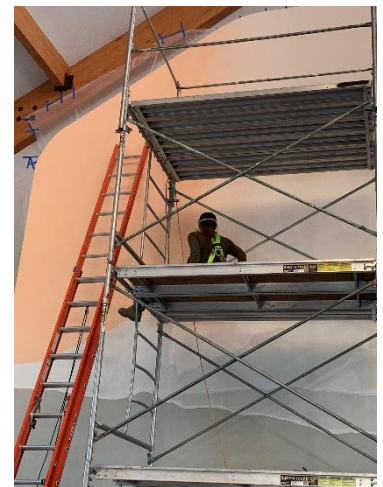
The committee worked with the Liturgical Art Center at Seward Concordia for about a year to focus details on the shape and color of the mountains. The sunrise/sunset color was added to fill in the large amount of white space above the mountains and helped to complete the scene. This design was approved by the congregation in November and the committee noted

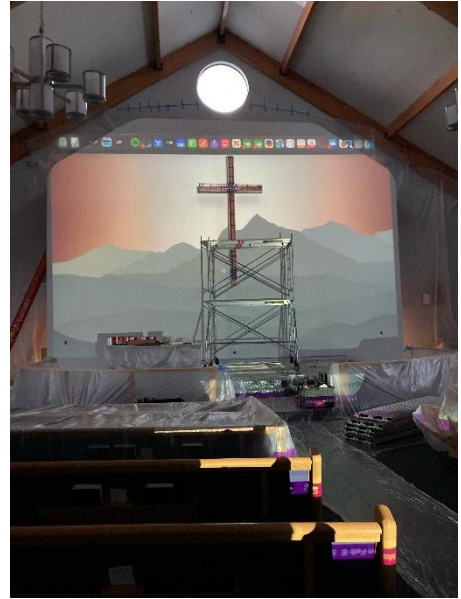
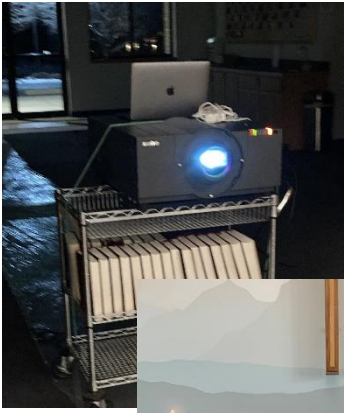
comments of members and brought those concerns to the artist, Gigi Douglas. Ms. Douglas helped us dial in the exact colors to use and tweaked the shape of the mountain peaks.

The mural was painted by Ms. Douglas during the week of February 5th. Great consideration was taken to keep the cross as the focus of the wall by using muted, soft colors that complement the decor of the sanctuary. The overall concept of the wall is to represent the Trinity. The mural painting of the mountains with the sunrise/sunset represent God the Father's majestic creation. The cross represents Jesus, the Son and our Savior who died on the cross for our sins. Plans are for a stained-glass dove in the round window above to represent the Holy Spirit. The Trinity would then be completed.



The committee updated the candles with pillar candles on floating shelves that match the rest of the wood on the chancel. A special "Thank You" to Tom Stahly for sharing his wood working skills by making the shelves. The hymn boards and banners were removed from the Reredos so there would be no distractions. We will be keeping the banners in banner stands and moving them around the sanctuary until we decide on a good location. Let us know if you have ideas. Thank you to the congregation for supporting us during this project. It is a big change and hope that it enhances your worship. A special "Thank You" to all the members that helped to move furniture pieces off the chancel, clean, put down plastic and then put everything back together.





REMINDERS

The Deacon's Fund supports Emergency Family Assistance, ULC, and other charities as well. All of these funds will be used to alleviate the needs of people who are in very vulnerable circumstances. The agencies have expressed great gratitude. We are only able to do this because of the generous and faithful contributions of you, our dear members, to the Deacon's Fund! Please consider contributing via your offering envelopes or in the Deacons' Fund collector in the Narthex! Thanks!!!

Please be responsible!!! For everyone who has access to the church building, it is your responsibility when you leave to make sure that all lights are off, the heat/air-conditioning/fans are turned back or off and all of the **doors are locked and secure!!** Please do double checks before you leave.

We ask that all members of the congregation please be conscious of protecting their valuables while at church. Many times, the doors are left unlocked, and people are downstairs. This gives easy access to someone who may not be a member. We will try to remember to lock the doors after service.

Sign Up to Receive Text Messages - Eternal Savior is building a text message list for urgent communications. i.e. Service is cancelled due to a blizzard. If you would like to receive notifications like that via text message, please text **ETERNALSAVIOR** (one word, no space) to 84576. Contact Laura Raben if you need help signing up.

The **2023 Flower Chart** is now available on the bulletin board. Please look to see if there is a service you would like to provide flowers. Also include if the flowers are for a special occasion.

Prayer request cards are available on a table in the narthex. If you would like to include a prayer request in Sunday's prayers, please email the secretary at secretary@eternalsavior-lutheran.org

Parking spaces in front of the church should be reserved for those members and visitors that need to park close to the building due to health concerns or weather. Please be considerate and leave these spaces to those who need them most.

Large print worship service folders and assisted listening devices are available. Please ask an usher if needed.

SERVING IN MARCH

Thursday, March 2 – Lenten Service

Organist /Pianist	Pam Mayer
Usher(s)	Roger Landowski
Elder(s)	Jeff Reuer, Dave Sherrets
Altar	Melisa Anderson
Snow	Ryan Lambrecht

Sunday, March 5

Organist /Pianist	Linda Thompson
Acolyte	Micah Anderson
Usher(s)	Keith Cowley, Tom Stahly
Greeter(s)	Keith and Polly Cowley
Counter(s)	Marc and Jan Ertle
Elder(s)	Ryan Lambrecht, Kirk Anderson
Altar	Melisa Anderson
A/V Booth	Ed Warnken
Snow	Ryan Lambrecht
Flowers	Raben

Thursday, March 9 – Lenten Service

Organist /Pianist	Pam Mayer
Usher(s)	Roger Landowski
Elder(s)	Keith Cowley, Jeff Reuer
Altar	Melisa Anderson
Snow	Ryan Lambrecht

Sunday, March 12

Organist /Pianist	Linda Thompson
Cantor	Tom Stahly
Acolyte	Levi Hinrichs
Usher(s)	Keith Cowley, Marc Ertle
Greeter(s)	Larissa and Jeff Reuer
Counter(s)	Marc and Jan Ertle
Elder(s)	Kirk Anderson (r), Jeff Reuer
Altar	Melisa Anderson
A/V Booth	Kirk Anderson
Snow	Ryan Lambrecht
Flowers	OPEN

Thursday, March 16 – Lenten Service

Organist /Pianist	Pam Mayer
Usher(s)	Roger Landowski
Elder(s)	Dave Sherrets, Keith Cowley
Altar	Melisa Anderson
Snow	Kirk Anderson

Sunday, March 19

Organist/Pianist	Linda Innes
Acolyte	Mikayla Richardson
Usher(s)	Kirk Anderson, Marc Ertle
Greeter(s)	Sam and Lynn Kelley
Counter(s)	Polly Cowley and Katherine Crane
Elder(s)	Dave Sherrets, Wayne Thomas
Altar	Melisa Anderson
A/V Booth	Nick Mayer
Snow	Kirk Anderson
Flowers	OPEN

Thursday, March 23 – Lenten Service

Organist/Pianist	Pam Mayer
Usher(s)	Roger Landowski
Elder(s)	Jeff Reuer, Keith Cowley
Altar	Melisa Anderson
Snow	Kirk Anderson

Sunday, March 26

Organist/Pianist	Linda Innes
Cantor	Pam Mayer
Acolyte	Levi Hinrichs
Usher(s)	Ryan Lambrecht, Roger Landowski
Greeter(s)	Kirk and Melisa Anderson
Counter(s)	Polly Cowley and Katherine Crane
Elder(s)	Wayne Thomas (r), Kirk Anderson
Altar	Melisa Anderson
A/V Booth	Laura Raben
Snow	Kirk Anderson
Flowers	OPEN

Thursday, March 30 – Lenten Service

Organist/Pianist	TBD
Usher(s)	Roger Landowski
Elder(s)	Dave Sherrets, Ryan Lambrecht
Altar	Melisa Anderson
Snow	Kirk Anderson

We have many ways in which our members can share their gifts with others each Sunday. Some of those are Greeters, Offering Counters, Ushers, Livestream and Audio Engineers, Lawn Mowing/Snow Removal. These are all listed on the Servant Calendar on our web site. Please reach out to Mary at the church office if you can serve. We so appreciate and thank God for your service!