

March 2026 - Cross Beams



Kingdom Kids in February
So much fun!



Lucy Joy Crook Baptism



Feed My Starving Children
Event on the 11th of
February



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March 2026

Oh God we call,
Oh God we call
From deep inside we yearn
From deep inside we yearn
From deep inside we yearn
For you.

This song is our refrain for our Wednesday night prayers and it is one that is appropriate every day of our lives. Especially if you have been paying attention to the news since the dawn of humankind. I was going to say that last 50 years, but it always seems like the world is going to hell in a handbasket. We may look back on an era of human history and think that it would have been so nice to have grown up in those days, but I guarantee you that they thought that the world was collapsing around them, that people were just as hurt and miserable as we are today. We just have short memories, we struggle to even remember 5 years ago, mostly because that was Covid and we want to forget that that time even happened. And so it is good for us to call out to God and realize that deep down inside of us, we yearn for something deeper, something better, something more meaningful... we yearn for what only God can grant us. The peace that surpasses all human knowledge that comes only from God. From deep inside we yearn, for God.

Speaking of Wednesday nights, we are in the midst of the season of Lent. We gather every Wednesday night for supper at 5:30 PM followed by a brief, contemplative service at 6:30 PM. This will be our Wednesday night schedule for the month of March. The Schedule for Holy Week:

- Sunday, March 29th – Palm/Passion Sunday followed by the Palm Sunday Brunch
- Wednesday, April 1st – Kingdom Kids followed by the Family Supper
- Thursday, April 2nd – Maundy Thursday at ELC @ 6:30 PM
- Friday, April 3rd – Community Good Friday at Zion Covenant Church @ 7:00 PM
- Sunday, April 5th – Easter Sunday Services at 8:30 AM & 10:00 AM

We hope that you can join us during Holy Week. Each day will be a unique experience, one that is hopefully a little different from what we normally experience. Since Holy Week will be so early in the month of April, I wanted to get the schedule out to you now so that you can start your planning.

I love this season of Lent. I love being able to worship with you more frequently. Like I said earlier, if you watch the news, it can be hard to manage your sanity with all of the chaos and trouble going on out in the world. I hope and pray that the church can be a sanctuary for you, a place to unplug from the world and center yourself. A place where you can be reminded that you are God's beloved child. You are not alone, when you walk into the church, you will find yourself in a room full of other people, other broken sinners, who need to be reminded that they are not alone. Because Christ is walking with us. Always and forever. Amen.

Peace! Pastor Pete

CHURCH NEWS

Women's Brunch & Bible Study Wednesday, March 11 9:30 a.m.

Pastor Pete will prepare a brunch followed by Bible Study as part of the "I AM: God's Holy Name and Promise" series, by Rev. Hannah Hawkinson: Session One-Bread, Vine, and Light Abiding with Us. We will explore the "I AM" statements by Jesus and the story of Moses at the Burning Bush.. All women of the church are invited to participate in this fellowship time. (A \$5.00 donation is appreciated to help cover the cost of the brunch.)

Please join us in the Fireside Room. Contact Melba Smith at 641-740-7855 with any questions or for more information.

We look forward to seeing you.

Baptism February 8, 2026

We had the honor of Lucy Joy Crook being baptized on Sunday, February 8, 2026 in our church.

Her parents are Derek & Taylor Crook and sponsors are Luke & Samantha Rose.

Please join us as we celebrate this baptism.

Sharing and Caring Hands

This year we will serve lunch on April 20th.
Lunch is served at 1:00 p.m.

Mark your calendars and join us for this rewarding experience. Sign-up sheets are at church.

A RETREAT FOR GRANDPARENTS!

Here is a new opportunity for grandparents to take time together to discover how God sees our role as a calling. We will share together ways we can build stronger relationships, be equipped to better love and protect those precious grandkids and consider all it means to be the best grandparents we can be. Don't miss this unique opportunity to apply your faith to make a difference in the lives of your grandchildren.

When: March 6-8, 2026 (Opening session 7pm March 6)

Where: Camp Wapo, 1204 74th Ave., Amery, WI 54001

Cost: \$210 Includes Saturday Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, Sunday brunch.

To Register: Fill out form found on www.adultssavingkids.org or call 612-708-1875

Write check to: Adults Saving Kids and send to

Adults Saving Kids, 816 Millwood Ave., Roseville, MN 55113

What to Bring: Notebook, Bible, pillow, sleeping bag or bedding, towel, soap, and personal items.

Leaders: Pastor Al Erickson, Patricia Malloy and musicians

Casual dress – we are at a camp

www.adultssavingkids.org

From the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin



2026 Church Council Members

President: Mark Groen
Vice President: Mike Harris
Treasurer: Eric Van Nocker
Secretary: Danielle Chollett
Cindy Baird
Miranda Mewes



There are baskets located by the front and back doors of the church for donations of nonperishable food items to support the **Pierce County Food Pantry**.

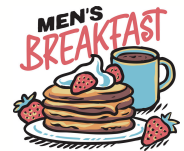
The Food Pantry is in need of the following items:
Flour, Oatmeal, Sugar, Baked Beans, Dry Soup Mix, Ramen Noodles, Cereal, Canned Meats, Vegetable Oil, Dish Soap, Laundry Soap, Paper Towels

To donate money online:
hungerpreventioncouncil.com, click on Give

Thank you for your "kindness".

Men's Breakfasts-Thursdays at 8 a.m. We look forward to seeing you!

The suggested donation is \$5.00 to cover the cost of food.



LENTEN SUPPERS -

Please see the sheets at church for the sign-ups to bring soups and desserts. We also need volunteers to assist with the clean up.

The food is always delicious! Join us as we honor the season.



Easter is Sunday, April 5, 2026

Heart-Touching One Life at a Time

Mission Statement: To reach children and families in tough financial situations. We can assist with basic needs by providing clothing, shoes, coats, toys, or other essential items to help alleviate the challenges faced in these difficult situations.

Heart is here to lend a helping hand to families who need support during tough times. We have access to furniture, school supplies, laundry soap, coats, bikes, toys, and an array of other items.

Recipients will be vetted to confirm the needs. There are limits to what we can offer. We can help families at Christmas with gifts for children, and we work with the Gift Box Program as well as Basics for Kids with donations of coats and boots.

We are here to help change lives and improve the quality of life for those who need a helping hand. We are not allowed to help with things like rent, utility bills, etc. If you are in need or know someone else in need, please reach out to Cindy at 715-307-9615 or Donna at 715-307-2213.

English Lutheran Church Council Minutes

January 13, 2026

Members Present: Pastor Pete, Mark Groen, Mike Harris, Paul Tonsager, Cindy Baird, Danielle Chollette, Eric Van Nocker

1. Meeting was called to order by Mark Groen at 6:35 pm
2. Mission statement was read
3. Pastor Pete read a devotion
4. Agenda was approved with changes adding: Kitchen renovation to the Old Business; Hot Beef Dinner and Thrivent to the new business. MSC
5. Minutes from the November meeting were approved MSC

REPORTS:

- a. Paul gave a verbal Treasurer's report. Notes primary concern is giving down, especially envelope giving. Motion was made to accept the report, seconded and carried
- b. Property – Dave Greeley installed a railing on the steps behind the podium in church, the loose toilets have been tightened down, drinking fountains have been repaired and are operational again and the elevator lights still need to be repaired. Fire inspector evaluation in the past month with a favorable report.
- c. Worship and Music – Advent and Christmas Seasons went very well. We had the Cantata again and this year added the Advent Social. Pastor Pete is asking if we should do Wednesday Advent services again. Likely meeting soon to discuss Easter season (meeting date/time TBD).
- d. Children, Youth & Family – Have not met recently, but will meet soon to begin planning the spring and to make endowment requests.
- e. Endowment – Will meet again on Feb. 11th, get requests in by Feb. 4th.
- f. Pastor's Report – Pastor has recovered from the Christmas season and is getting back into the swing of things again. Busy preparing for the Lent Season, soup suppers will be happening again this year, need to get the sign-up sheets ready.

OLD BUSINESS:

- a. Strategic plan – Next Batch of Questions for the Threats section will go live in February. Pr Pete, Mike & Danielle will meet to discuss the themes of the Opportunities responses
- b. Budget – Made one significant adjustment to the budget, doubled the custodial wage budget to allow for more hours for a more thorough cleaning of the church. Curt D will give the finance report and lead the budget discussion for the annual meeting.
- c. Annual Meeting – will be on Sunday, January 25th after church. Some possible discussion items could be the outdoor banner poles (banners cost \$1000 per outside set; typically cost taken from memorial & gifts) and the SWOT Analysis.
- d. Advent social – went pretty well for the first time around. People enjoyed the music and dessert afterwards. Between the Advent Social and the Christmas Brunch after the Cantata, we raised \$400 for the Food Pantry and donated over 100 pounds of food too.
- e. Kitchen Renovation – No updates. Cindy will contact a couple of contractors to submit bids for the project.

NEW BUSINESS:

- a. Custodian Position – position is being bumped up to 10 hours a week with a wage in the \$18-\$20 range. Pastor and Julie will post the position online and in the church's publications
- b. Hot Beef Dinner – will be on Feb 21st, a change from previous plans. It will be on Saturday night and will be strictly drive-thru. Advertising kick off underway.
- c. Thrivent – Diane Wiskerchen and Bev Greeley will coordinate the Thrivent Action Teams. They will work to connect events and organizations with Thrivent Members who can apply for Action Team Grants. Can award 2 \$250 gift cards per Thrivent member per year for appropriate requests.

LORD'S PRAYER & ADJOURNMENT – Meeting was adjourned at 7:30 PM. Meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Next Scheduled Meeting, **Tuesday, February 17, 2026 6:30 PM**

English Lutheran Church Council Minutes February 17, 2026

Meeting held virtually, noting some members are ill/out of town

Members Present: Pastor Pete, Mark Groen, Cindy Baird, Danielle Chollett, Miranda Mewes Absent: Eric Van Nocker, Mike Harris

Meeting was called to order by Mark Groen at 6:32 PM. The mission statement was read. Pastor Pete read a devotion.

Tonight's meeting agenda was approved. January 13th, 2026 council meeting minutes were approved.

REPORTS:

Finance / Treasurer's Report - Email provided; Eric not present at this council meeting. Highlights from 2/10/2026 finance meeting: 827 Property fund had a large \$2000 donation from a family directed specifically to property fund. Interest rates for CCF bank investigated with the money market accounts at CCF interest rates ranging between 1-2% depending on the amount in account. 7 month CD is 3.8%; 13 month CD 3.6%. Investigating other options that would be financially beneficial. Thrivent account set up for Eric/to discuss with Gary Brown. 464 Garbage high because it was a two month billing period; 101 Envelope Offering - A family gave their once a year offering of \$8700. Reviewed treasurer's report as printed; motion was made to accept the report, seconded and carried.

Property - Elevator lights fixed. Stairs along Main Street outside will require fixing soon; possibly once spring. Lights around the building continue to be maintained.

Worship and Music - Missy and Pastor working through Google documents to plan out services and music (planned through Maundy Thursday currently). Good Friday service will be at Zion Covenant. Wednesday Advent services begin soon with soup suppers being planned.

Children, Youth & Family - Met a few weeks ago; endowment requests addressed/approved (see below). Luther Point staff to teach/support VBS in the summer. Feed My Starving children last Wednesday went well.

Endowment - Has 3 divisions: women's fund, children's fund and general fund. Email provided; Mike not present at today's council meeting. Highlights from 2/11/2026 endowment meeting below. Mark had a question if the endowment can assist in paying/supporting Luther Point VBS costs; Pastor answered yes but not until billed, which last year, bill came in the late summer months so request would not be placed to the endowment committee until bill received.

Sharon Schulze requested \$250 for Basics for Local Kids program (from general account fund). Approved

Melba Smith - requested (on behalf of the Women's Bible Study group) \$100 for ELCA good gifts program. Approved. Also requested \$100 for a specific Rotary which provides support for young girls in Kenya. Approved.

Children's fund:

Kim Warren requested \$150 for carnations for Mother's Day. Approved

Kayla Zimmer requested \$200 for end of year Sunday School Party Approved

Renee Van Nocker - requested \$300 for an end of year confirmation bowling party. Approved

Pastor Pete - requested \$400 for craft supplies for Kingdom Kids. Approve pending they first spend the \$300 that was approved in November.

Renee Van Nocker requested \$500 for Easter baskets for Preferred Living and nursing home residents. Approved

Renee Van Nocker requested \$100 for cake for the graduating seniors Sunday event (May 17th). Approved

Pastor's Report - Very busy with Luther Point bible camp. Executive director Sam resigned; leadership in flux with Pastor assisting with new recruitments and on committee to find leadership replacements. Preparations being made and developed for Lent. Pastor to have vacation over Marcus' spring break for family trip (leaving March 1st and returning March 4th). Will need assistance for Wednesday, March 4th, 2026 Lent supper meal given he won't be readily available this week. Cindy and Pastor working together with St. Pauls' UCC for intergenerational, ecumenical programming for the community (funds provided via UCC grant received to support Ellsworth community); March 9th guided dinner conversation to be held in English given large space and Pastor's cooking talents. Our Saviors is also involved.

OLD BUSINESS:

Strategic plan - Opportunity responses have been collected and themes developed. Threats live now and will collect responses for 2 months' time (February and March 2026); with themes developed once submission timeline complete. Will meet to review threat themes once the submission window is complete.

Custodian - Tami has started and we appreciate her hard work; it is going well.

Hot Beef Dinner - This Saturday, 2/21/2026. Gravy and Bars to be made Friday 2/20. Pastor assisting with the meat preparation.

Preparations are coming along as planned; difficult to know how many to expect. Continued marketing with signs to be placed on the side walk.

NEW BUSINESS:

Sharing Shed - Heart and church members continue to support items donated to the shed; personal care items are always in high demand. Some customers are taking multiple quantities of items. The community is using the service. Continued monitoring. The door of the shed continues to be left open at times which remains a challenge.

Kitchen Renovation - Bid received for project approx. \$64,000 (cabinets, frame pantry wall, drywall mud and tape party wall and opening, touch up drywall in kitchen, replace suspended ceiling in kitchen; labor and commercial vinyl tiles). This bid did NOT include plumbing (drain issues; estimate \$8-10,000 for plumbing for the renovation) or the wall with the water issues which was a separate \$3000 bid. Equipment (sink, dishwasher, oven) estimated at roughly \$30,000. Water heater in question (gas versus current electric). To continue to discuss.

Request made that meeting minutes for the current month be made available in next month's newsletter. Danielle will complete meeting minutes within 24-48 hours of meeting completion; submit to council for approval via email response and once approved, will send them to Julie to be included in next month's Cross Beam Newsletter.

LORD'S PRAYER & ADJOURNMENT - Meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer. The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 PM.

March 2026 English Lutheran Church Calendar

Mar 2026 (Central Time - Chicago)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>1</p> <p>9am - Worship 10am - Fellowship Hour 10:15am - Choir Practice</p>	<p>2</p> <p>1pm - Pool Players (Sr.)</p>	<p>3</p> <p>9am - Footcare (Sr. Ctr.) 1pm - Game Day (Sr. Ctr.)</p>	<p>4</p> <p>5:30pm - Lenten Suppers 8:30pm - Lenten Service</p>	<p>5</p> <p>8am - Men's Breakfast 8pm - Recovery Group</p>	<p>6</p> <p>1pm - Pool Players (Sr.)</p>	<p>7</p>
<p>8</p> <p>9am - Worship 10am - Fellowship Hour 10:15am - Choir Practice</p>	<p>9</p> <p>1pm - Pool Players (Sr.) 5pm - Who Is My Neighbor</p>	<p>10</p> <p>11am - Discovering 8:30pm - Finance Meeting</p>	<p>11</p> <p>9:30am - Women's Brunch 3:30pm - Kingdom Kids 5pm - Family Supper 5:30pm - Lenten Suppers 8:30pm - Lenten Service</p>	<p>12</p> <p>8am - Men's Breakfast 1pm - Euchre (Sr. Center) 8pm - Recovery Group</p>	<p>13</p> <p>1pm - Pool Players (Sr.)</p>	<p>14</p>
<p>15</p> <p>9am - Worship 9:45am - Sunday School 10am - Fellowship Hour 10:15am - Choir Practice</p>	<p>16</p> <p>1pm - Pool Players (Sr.)</p>	<p>17</p> <p>9am - Footcare (Sr. Ctr.) 9am - St. Croix Valley 8:30pm - Church Council</p>	<p>18</p> <p>5:30pm - Lenten Suppers 8:30pm - Lenten Service</p>	<p>19</p> <p>8am - Men's Breakfast 8pm - Recovery Group</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Deadline for Newsletter 1pm - Pool Players (Sr.)</p>	<p>21</p>
<p>22</p> <p>9am - Worship 9:45am - Sunday School 10am - Fellowship Hour 10:15am - Choir Practice</p>	<p>23</p> <p>1pm - Pool Players (Sr.)</p>	<p>24</p> <p>1:30pm - Celebrating</p>	<p>25</p> <p>5:30pm - Lenten Suppers 8:30pm - Lenten Service</p>	<p>26</p> <p>8am - Men's Breakfast 1pm - Euchre (Sr. Center) 8pm - Recovery Group</p>	<p>27</p> <p>1pm - Pool Players (Sr.)</p>	<p>28</p>
<p>29</p> <p>9am - Palm Sunday 9:45am - Sunday School 10am - Palm Sunday 10:15am - Choir Practice</p>	<p>30</p> <p>1pm - Pool Players (Sr.)</p>	<p>31</p> <p>3:30pm - Kingdom Kids 5pm - Family Supper</p>	<p>1</p> <p>3:30pm - Kingdom Kids 5pm - Family Supper</p>	<p>2</p> <p>8am - Men's Breakfast 5:30pm - Maundy 8pm - Recovery Group</p>	<p>3</p> <p>1pm - Pool Players (Sr.) 7pm - Good Friday</p>	<p>4</p>



See the church website for the most up-to-date calendar

Fill out this form or scan the QR Code and fill in the form at that link. You can also provide input at the back of the church.

S.W.O.T. “Threats” questions

Note: Threats are external factors. Threats may endanger our church’s “competitive advantage” or our church’s ability to operate.



1. Why have we lost members to other churches?

 2. What local demographics are affecting our church?

 3. What are the obstacles we are facing with our current mission?

 4. What have we done (if anything) that causes negative impressions in the community?

 5. What changes do we see in our members’ preferences?

 6. How are local politics affecting our church?
-
7. What does a contemporary worship service look like to you?

S.W.O.T Analysis - Threats

We invite each member of the English Lutheran Church community to lend their unique insights as we continue on this exciting S.W.O.T. Analysis journey together! Your participation is not only easy and accessible –scan the QR code (or click on the link) to access the S.W.O.T. Form-Threats, or feel free to share your thoughts on Post-It Notes at the table at the back of the church. Every individual voice matters, and your contributions will play a crucial role in strengthening our mission. We are immensely grateful for your ongoing support and active participation, as your perspectives are the heartbeat of our growth and vitality. Let's envision a vibrant future for our church, one that is beautifully shaped by your collective wisdom and insights! Thank you for being such an integral part of our church family!

PRAYER list



Prayer requests:

Janet Arndt
Max Beck
Tomi Erlandson
Matt Feuerhelm
Julie Gore
Dean Mewes
Judy Morrow

Steve Pieczykolan
Darren Place
Greg Place
Melba Smith
Sophia Sokolik
Elaine Wegerer

Military service prayers:

Josh Bechel
Jonathan Bergman
Kohl Flock

Financial Update

January 31, 2026 Cash Balances

General Fund = \$90,549.02

Dedicated Fund = \$104,917.52

Total = \$195,466.54

Thrivent = \$119,232.70

January General Fund

Income = \$18,177.64

Expenses = \$22,149.43

The next finance meeting:

March 10 at 6:30 p.m.

Deaconess

The role of the Deaconess consists of sending thoughts, well wishes, and congratulations to members of our church to let them know we are thinking of them. Please notify the church office or any deaconess worker with prayer requests.

The Deaconess for March is Jeanette Wright.



English Lutheran Church
229 West Main Street
Ellsworth, Wisconsin
Phone: 715-273-4617

Church Website:

www.englishlutheranchurch.org

Find us on Facebook!

EnglishLutheranEllsworth

Office Hours

Please contact the office for an appointment

office@englishlutheranchurch.org
715-273-4617

Staff

Pastor Pete Warren

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Communications Coordinator: Julie Winger

office@englishlutheranchurch.org

Office: 715-273-4617

Finance Administrator & Accompanist: Ava Maxwell

finance@englishlutheranchurch.org

Music Director: Missy Kowalchyk

music@englishlutheranchurch.org

Custodian: Tami Place