

NEWSLETTER

BUILD. SERVE. STAND.



JOIN US FOR WORSHIP
Sundays at 10am

SHORELINES
June-August 2024

PASTORAL UPDATE



One of my favorite writing prompts lately is to write about a small delight. I got the idea from the author Ross Gay, who has published *The Book of Delights* and *The Book of (More) Delights*. When he turned 42, he challenged himself to write an essay each day on one delight. He drafted them quickly and wrote them out by hand. This practice developed his “delight muscle.” He found himself noticing more and more delights, more than he could possibly write about.

It’s fun to see what he found delightful—he explores his delights in deep and reflective ways. Some of my favorites: a new friend of his who uses air quotes excessively, silent nods between the only two black people in a room, the way his mother tells a story, beating a pair of 12-year-olds in basketball 21-0, sleeping in your clothes, a mother and child each holding one handle of a shopping bag.

When I write about delights, I tend to list them instead of expounding on them. My son’s piano teacher writing a thoughtful note to him as the spring session comes to a close. Ina Garten’s strawberry rhubarb crisp (the orange zest makes it pure perfection). My uncle’s ridiculous bear stories from when he camped out west. When all six of us laugh at the same joke. Real mugs at a coffee house. Knowing the names of the shop owners in Excelsior. Starting each work day chatting with my coworkers and volunteers. Deep-fried vegetables. A head massage when I get my hair cut. The snooze button. Lavender—the flavor and the color.

Summer is a natural time for us to pay attention to delightful things around us. For as much as we complain about our winter, we ought to balance it with equal measure of delight in our summers. Each day, try the spiritual discipline of noticing small delights. There is no end of things to celebrate in this world. Each day is filled with thousands of them—try to find at least one. Ross Gay found delights even as he struggled with racism, politics, and division. Developing our “delight muscle” may just be the antidote to cynicism and despair. Goodness knows, we will need this as we head into another election cycle in the fall that promises to test our faith and relationships.

Whether you write them down or just reflect on them for a couple minutes as you drive to the grocery store, I hope you find a way to pay attention and notice the small delights in your life. For our God delights in you (Psalm 149) and I pray that you will delight in God and God’s creation (Psalm 37).

With gratitude for the delight you bring me,
Pastor Brooke

BROOKE HEERWALD STEINER
LEAD PASTOR

brooke@excelsiorumc.org
office: 952.474.5471 x103

BUILD. SERVE. STAND.



CURRENT SERMON SERIES

ECUMENICAL WORSHIP SERVICE



June Worship Series Foundations of Our Faith

We hear the messages out there that we should attend church. Many of us have been baptized, either as children or adults. We take the bread and the juice during Holy Communion. We feel within us a calling towards a certain way of life. Why do these things matter? How does the Holy Spirit work through them? What is the purpose of the sacraments? During the month of June, we'll explore the foundations of our faith and how they continue to shape us and bless us.

| | |
|---------|------------|
| June 2 | Communion |
| June 9 | Baptism |
| June 16 | Church |
| June 23 | Calling |
| June 30 | Evangelism |

Sunday, July 28 at 10am Excelsior Commons Band Shelter

Four churches will join up together down at Excelsior Commons for a unified community worship service. Bring a chair and your neighbor! This will be a lovely ecumenical service of Methodists, Congregationalists, Lutherans, and Episcopalians worshiping together. No worship will be in our building that day.



Holiday Building Hours

The building and office will be closed
Wednesday, June 19
Wednesday, July 3
Thursday, July 4



Excelsior
UNITED
METHODIST
CHURCH

BUILD. COMMUNITY



CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

The Sunday School and nursery were bustling over the spring! Our attendance numbers (and energy levels!) have been consistently high. We spent this spring learning stories about Jesus' teachings and healings and the work of the disciples.

The children are eagerly awaiting Vacation Bible School. Our theme this year is *Stellar*, where we'll launch kids on a cosmic quest and they'll have a blast shining Jesus' light to the world! At VBS, kids can expect a fun time interacting in the telling of Bible stories, watching funny skits, singing new songs, playing games, enjoying tasty treats, making crafts, and trying out lab experiments.

In addition to VBS, several of our young families will be spending a weekend in August at Baker Campground. We will also be offering a couple other family events such as a picnic dinner and mini golfing at Big Stone in July and a So-Hi Community Park Olympic Games and Community Meal event in August. Keep an eye on the weekly e-mails for details. We look forward to an exciting summer!



Stellar Vacation Bible School

Registration is open for Vacation Bible School. Join the fun!

Dates: July 29 – August 1
Time: 5:30 – 8pm daily
Who: Ages 4 to completed 5th grade
Cost: \$20/child, \$50/family max

Youth in 6th grade and above can volunteer to help. Contact Kallie (kallie@excelsiorumc.org) if you have questions.



Young Families Camping Weekend

Dates: August 9-11
Location: Baker Campground, Baker Park Reserve, Maple Plain
Cost: \$57 Campsite fee
Registration: threeriversparks.org/location/baker-campground

Contact Jeremy Steiner (jeremy@steinermn.com) for information.



YOUTH MINISTRY

The Youth had a wonderful spring connecting with each other and ecumenical friends!

We had a Lock-In at EUMC where we spent 6 hours on a Friday night having joy together! We utilized the café kitchen, made pizzas, and baked treats. It was a beautiful evening and we played games outdoors. We divided into 2 groups, and each did a skit titled "Helping a Friend" which brought out so much creativity and laughter. We are all looking forward to doing it all again next year.

For ICA March Food Share Month, we received over 150 boxes of cereal for our drive and made a video of our cereal dominos - thank you Kurt Jewell!

In April, we had a youth group at Trinity Episcopal and had so much fun singing karaoke! Not a single youth just sat and watched, all participated with solos and small groups.

We baked delicious sweets in May at St. David's Episcopal and we couldn't help it - we had to bring back karaoke!

Thank you to those that joined us at Mount Calvary Lutheran Church for Smokes & Sweets! The desserts were popular, Benno Sand made us the best side dishes ever for our dinner, and the youth did a wonderful job performing their songs. We raised enough money with our free-will donation basket to get tickets to see the Minnesota Twins for the Pride Day game on June 15.

We spent an evening volunteering at Simpson Homeless Shelter with the EUMC group to serve dinner and clean up. We were also taken on a tour and learned about how Simpson contributes to their guests and the vital difference they make in the community.

Our May Shoe Drive for Pet Haven was a huge success as well. We collected over 200 pairs of shoes which impacts Pet Haven's mission to help rescue animals. A big thank you to all that donated!

Many of us are excited to head to Summer Festival Camp in July, and we'll tell you all about it in the next Shorelines edition.

Have a great summer!





The So-Hi Community Playground officially opened on Friday, May 24 and a steady stream of children and families have been present ever since. One child ran off the bus towards the playground and said, “I’m wasting no time!” as they rushed to check it out for the first time. A community member told us after it had been opened two days that he had been there “nine times already” with his children. Each Sunday after worship, it’s difficult to pull the kids away from the slides and swings; their joyful laughter can be heard from the church building. Even adults without children find their way down to chat and mingle with others. It truly is a wonderful community space that will only provide more and more community as the summer months and years go on.

With so many community partners and so many different people invested in this project, it has only magnified the excitement and pride present in our community. All are invited to join us for the Grand Opening Celebration on Saturday, June 15. The event runs from 11am until 1pm, with a short ceremony taking place at 11:30am. There will be free food and treats for all. We hope to see you there!





LEADERSHIP

The EUMC Leadership team continues to meet monthly to discuss this thriving community, celebrating changes and tackling challenges!

In April we welcomed new leadership team members, Sarah Nelson (Communications) and Beth Firkins (Ministries). This spring Jennifer and the ministry team collected descriptions and documentation for each ministry and leadership role; Tyler navigates the team through financial reporting (see more from Finance Update); Trustees extend a big “Thank you” to the many volunteers for the Trustees Work Day (April 27) where an entire dumpster was filled with items that had accumulated during/after the re-model; and Sarah shares the updates on So-Hi Community Park.

After two years of work by several church and community members, the community playground on EUMC church property will be open and ready to use by June! A dedication will take place on Saturday, June 15 at 11am.

Staff parish is working on backfilling the music director position and plans for the summer outdoor ecumenical service on July 28 are underway.

As always, we are here for you.

Your Leadership Team:

Julie Newell (Chair)
Sarah Nelson (Communications)
Tyler Cronk (Finance)

Bill Lester & Phil Pulitzer (SPRC)
Jennifer Brady Johnson & Beth Firkins (Ministry Teams)
Jim Stromberg & Jill Jewell (Trustees)

SERVE. OTHERS



OUR COMMUNITY

Food Ministry Highlights

Our ICA Food Shelf at EUMC continues to be a success in our community! We serve 35-45 families in our community each time we open our doors and give out 1200-1800 lbs. of food. We are so grateful for the dedicated volunteers that support our ICA Food Shelf and for the continued support of the EUMC community for your food donations and financial support.

We had a visit from the ICA Food Resource Team during our May 8 ICA Food Shelf event. The group was very impressed with our ICA Food Shelf room, by our process and the number of clients we serve so many families in only 2 hours, and by the inviting atmosphere of the waiting area for our guests, including music by Jeff Fawbush and the delicious coffee and treats made by the Outreach team.



We see an increase in the Little Free Pantry use during the summer months when kids are out of school. We will be needing to restock more often with snacks and hygiene items. We are happy to accept donations in the ICA Food Shelf/Little Free Pantry box located in the church narthex and appreciate your support!

The annual Backpack/School Supply Giveaway will be held on August 14 during the ICA Food Shelf at EUMC from 3-5pm. Backpacks, Target gift cards and money donations will be accepted until Sunday, August 11. Please leave backpacks in the donation box in the Narthex. Gift cards, cash or checks can be dropped off in the office during office hours, or donations can also be made online. We hope to provide 80-100 backpacks this year. Thank you for your support of this important ministry! If you're interested in volunteering for the Backpack Giveaway, please contact Cherrie Blackford.



We are excited to welcome Jim Gagnon as a new EUMC co-chair for Simpson Homeless Shelter in Minneapolis, along with Jill Jewell and Jane Pole. Jim has served with the Simpson Shelter volunteer group many times, and we are grateful he'll be stepping into this new role. Our EUMC monthly meals at the Simpson Shelter will take a break during the summer months. Look for information this Fall for the next planned meal on Tuesday, September 24.

STAND. FOR JUSTICE



FIGHT TODAY
FOR A BETTER
TOMORROW

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Anti-Racism Team Prepares Fall Events

Lee Newcomb, a long-time member of EUMC, created his special shirt as he gets ready for the Mendota Mdewakanton annual POW WOW (September 13-15). Lee has worked with the church's Anti-Racism team in preparation for fall events which will engage our congregation in learning and in conversations about the history of Native Americans.



During the months of September thru November, plans are under way for a special Dinner & Movie Night for adults and children, a mid-week Speaker Event, a Sunday after church Conversation That Matters, and a book read.

Coming in June, we will sponsor a summer reading challenge with a book list available for adults and children. For example, the book *Massacre at Sand Creek: How Methodists Were Involved in an American Tragedy* by Gary L. Roberts is the devastatingly true story told about Native Americans slain while under the protection of the U.S. government. Upon visiting the Sand Creek Historic site in Colorado a visitor was surprised to learn she had not heard of this event. She stated "*Something happened here that nobody should have done. Which makes me wonder what else happened in our history that we weren't told.*"

The many stories of Indigenous peoples have been hidden. Now is the time for us to learn and talk about this history and the current challenges facing Native Americans today.

Environmental Justice Team Spring Highlights



The Environmental Justice Team brought education and inspiration to EUMC for Earth Month. We honored Mother Earth through a variety of music and Native America prayers during worship.

We had an Earth Day Dinner & Movie Night with the profound documentary "Kiss the Ground" that taught us about soil health and its crucial role in mitigating climate change. In the film, "Activist, scientists, farmers, and politicians turn to regenerative agriculture to save the planet's topsoil to combat climate change." During movie night, the kids also enjoyed the Earth Day movie "The Lorax".

The team put together letters for the community to sign including, an UMC letter asking Congress to prioritize bold climate action in ongoing budget and appropriations decisions, a letter supporting the Plastic Pellet Free Water Act, and a thank you letter to Senator Kelly Morrison for sponsoring Pro-Boundary Waters legislation.



CALENDAR

Calendar subject to change. Check website calendar for current schedule.

Sundays in June

10am- Worship and Sunday school, communion June 2

Mondays in June

7:30am- Men's Bible Breakfast
9:30am- Bible Study with Pastor Brooke thru June 10

Saturdays in June

8am- Men's Support Group

Tuesday, June 4

5pm- Sarah/Lydia Circle

Monday, June 11

6:30pm- Leadership meeting

Wednesday, June 12

3 to 5pm- ICA Food Shelf

Thursday, June 13

10am- Funeral Planning class

Saturday, June 15

11am- So-Hi Community Playground Celebration
12pm- EYMF to Twins Game

Tuesday, June 18

12 to 6pm- Red Cross Blood Drive

Wednesday, June 19

6:30pm- Juneteenth Movie Night
Office and Building closed until 6pm

Wednesday, June 26

3 to 5pm- ICA Food Shelf

Sundays in July

10am- Worship and Sunday school, communion July 7

Mondays in July

7:30am- Men's Bible Breakfast

Saturdays in July

8am- Men's Support Group

Wednesday-Thursday, July 3 & 4

Building and office closed for Independence Day

Wednesday, July 10

3 to 5pm- ICA Food Shelf
6pm- Big Stone Mini Golf Family Night

Sunday-Wednesday, July 14-17

Summer Fest Youth Camp at Gustavus Adolphus College

Wednesday, July 24

3 to 5pm- ICA Food Shelf

Sunday, July 28

10am- Ecumenical worship at The Commons, no Sunday school

Monday-Thursday, July 29-Aug. 1

5:30-8pm- Vacation Bible School

Sundays in August

10am- Worship and Sunday school, communion August 4

Mondays in August

7:30am- Men's Bible Breakfast

Saturdays in August

8am- Men's Support Group

Friday-Sunday, August 9-11

Young Families Camp Out

Wednesday, August 14

3 to 5pm- ICA Food Shelf and Backpack Giveaway
4 to 6pm- Olympic Games and Community Meal

Wednesday, August 28

3 to 5pm- ICA Food Shelf

FINANCE TEAM REPORT

Thank you for your continued financial support during this exciting time at EUMC! All gifts as well as progress on commitments (Operating and Capital) can be seen on your quarterly statement.

Operating Budget Update: We are happy to report that year-to-date contributions are slightly above budget projections, and expenses are in line with the 2024 budget passed by the leadership team. The 2024 budget contained a projected deficit of (\$90k). We have made material progress in closing this gap, and are now projecting that the deficit will be in the \$45-60K range. With this in mind we are continuing to exercise prudence in all spending. Fit-for-purpose dedicated funds are being deployed to ensure we continue delivering on our mission: To share God's love by building community, serving others, and standing for justice.

Capital Campaign Update: We have now utilized all gifts received to date and have drawn on our credit facility. Any funds received going forward will be used to pay down our loan; completing commitments timely along with any additional giving will help to reduce the ongoing debt service associated with our construction loan. Thank you again for your generosity!

Ongoing Focus on Generosity: We are actively working on both short and longer term plans for how we can engage our community to grow in generosity as we look to align giving with our ministry and programing needs. Engagement, increased financial commitments along with one-time gifts from a number of individuals and families are an indication that with increased focus we will continue to build momentum in this area.

Tyler Cronk and Beverly Eckhardt



PURPOSE

Loving Beyond Ourselves

VISION

To be known as a nurturing, inclusive and courageous Christian community.

MISSION

Sharing God's love by building community, serving others, and standing for justice.

CONTACT US

excelsiorumc.org 952.474.5471
881 Third Ave, Excelsior, MN 55331

STAFF

REV. BROOKE HEERWALD STEINER

Lead Pastor

Ext. 407 brooke@excelsiorumc.org
651.238.5906

KALLIE STROH

Children's Ministries Director

Ext. 410 kallie@excelsiorumc.org

SARAH HEYD JOHNSON

Youth Ministries and Community Engagement Dir.

Ext. 409 sarah@excelsiorumc.org

JENNIFER SPECA

Office Administrator

Ext. 406 office@excelsiorumc.org

BEVERLY ECKHARDT

Treasurer

Ext. 412 bev@excelsiorumc.org

JEFFERY FAWBUSH

Instrumentalist & Songwriter

JAMES LeVOIR

A/V Coordinator

JOSH KNOWLES

Custodian

DIANE BAYSINGER

Nursery Childcare

KATY GLICK

Nursery Childcare



Non-Profit Organization
Permit No. 39
Excelsior, Minnesota
U.S. Postage Paid

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



881 Third Avenue
Excelsior, MN
55331

 excelsiorumc.org
 952.474.5471

