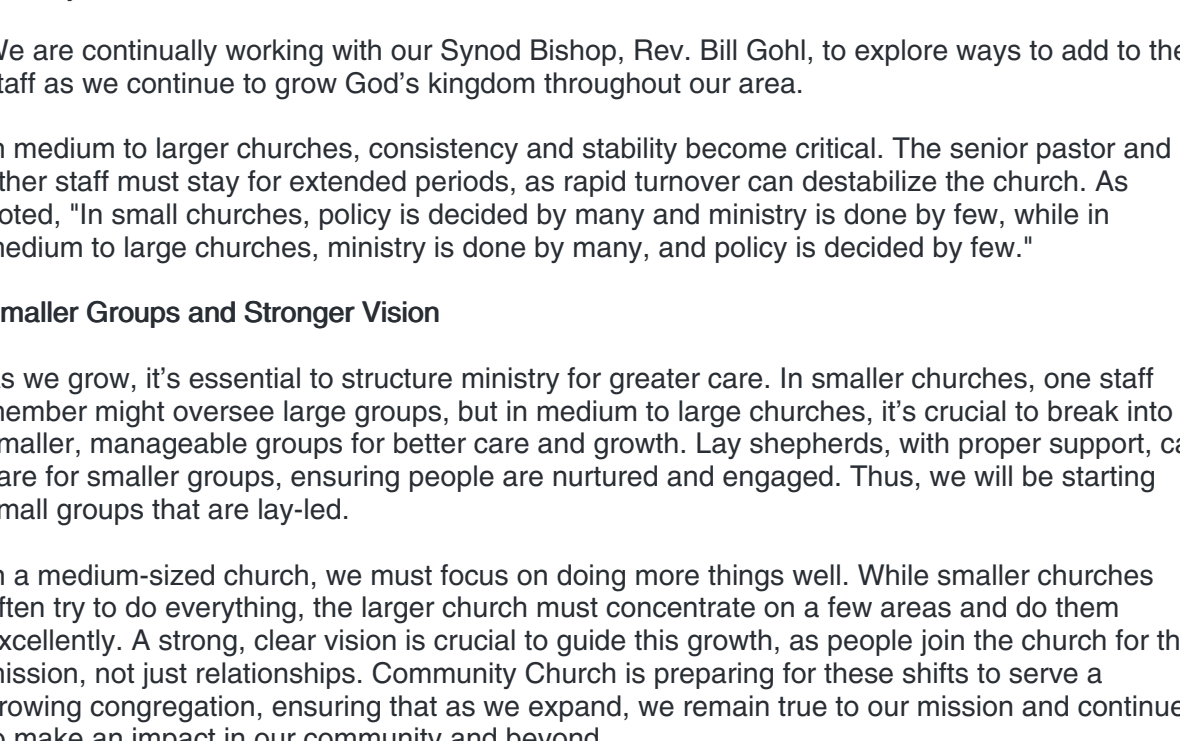


March 21, 2025

## Community Church: Embracing Growth and Change



As we welcome more new members and friends this Easter Sunday, Community Church is on the cusp of exciting growth. Moving from a congregation of 40 two years ago to nearly 200, we are reminded of Proverbs 29:18, "Where there is no vision, the people perish." A clear sense of purpose is essential as we embrace the Great Commission from Matthew 28:19-20, "Go and make disciples of all nations."

This growth marks a shift from a small to a medium-sized congregation. As we expand, leadership is exploring new ways to adapt. Community Church plans to establish multiple locations to deepen our connection with surrounding neighborhoods and maximize our current facility's potential.

As we approach the 200-person threshold, we will officially become a medium size congregation. This will require changes in leadership and ministry, which are essential. Here's how we will evolve:

**Character:** In smaller churches, everyone knows each other. In medium-sized churches, people often belong to smaller affinity groups like ministries, classes, or service teams. These subgroups play a key role in fostering community.

**Leadership:** Leadership shifts from a small group of core leaders to more specialized teams. Leaders are chosen for their skills and gifts, and lay leaders begin to take on more responsibility in ministry, partnering with staff.

**Growth:** Growth in medium-sized churches comes from multiplying programs and services while ensuring quality. Ministries must meet real needs and provide great learning experiences, music, and preaching. A higher quality of development is required.

**Changing Role of Pastors and Leadership:** As our community of faith grows, so does the role of leadership. In smaller churches, the pastor is always available for pastoral care, attending to every need of the congregation. However, in medium to large churches, the senior pastor must recognize their limits and spend more time managing staff, lay leaders, and in prayer and meditation. The larger the church, the more important leadership skills such as vision casting and strategy become.

Additionally, ministry staff must shift from being generalists to specialists, focusing on specific areas of ministry. The senior pastor, in particular, will focus on preaching, vision-keeping, and problem-solving while ensuring that other leaders are empowered to handle more of the direct ministry work.

We are continually working with our Synod Bishop, Rev. Bill Gohl, to explore ways to add to the staff as we continue to grow God's kingdom throughout our area.

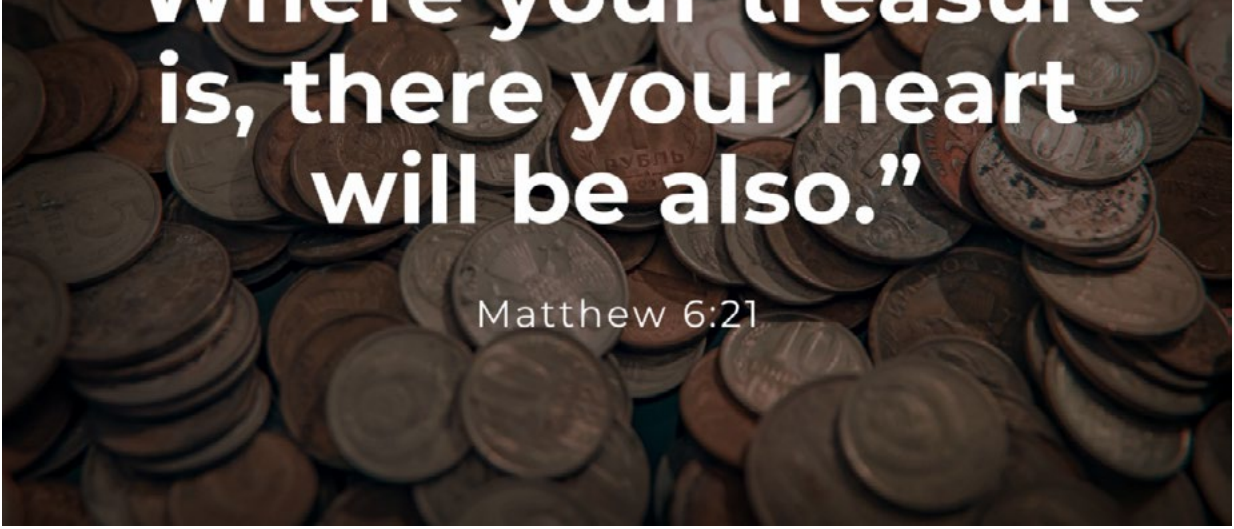
In medium to larger churches, consistency and stability become critical. The senior pastor and other staff must stay for extended periods, as rapid turnover can destabilize the church. As noted, "In small churches, policy is decided by many and ministry is done by few, while in medium to large churches, ministry is done by many, and policy is decided by few."

### Smaller Groups and Stronger Vision

As we grow, it's essential to structure ministry for greater care. In smaller churches, one staff member might oversee large groups, but in medium to large churches, it's crucial to break into smaller, manageable groups for better care and growth. Lay shepherds, with proper support, can care for smaller groups, ensuring people are nurtured and engaged. Thus, we will be starting small groups that are lay-led.

In a medium-sized church, we must focus on doing more things well. While smaller churches often try to do everything, the larger church must concentrate on a few areas and do them excellently. A strong, clear vision is crucial to guide this growth, as people join the church for the mission, not just relationships. Community Church is preparing for these shifts to serve a growing congregation, ensuring that as we expand, we remain true to our mission and continue to make an impact in our community and beyond.

## Upcoming Coffee Hours: Where the Holy Meets the Ordinary



At Community Church, we believe that the holy occupies the ordinary, and there's no better place to experience this than at our coffee hour. Held between worship services, coffee hour is more than just a time to grab a drink—it's an opportunity to connect, build relationships, and create a welcoming space for everyone.

Coffee hour is not an afterthought or a mere formality; it's a vital extension of the worship experience. It's where we put into practice the hospitality we proclaim, fostering a true sense of belonging among all of God's people. It's a time when we can be open, welcoming, and intentional in making sure everyone feels like they are part of the community.

In fact, coffee hour often serves as a litmus test for newcomers. Visitors can sense right away whether they're being embraced by the congregation or not. It's during coffee hour that many will remember the warmth of their welcome—or the absence of it. For some, it's the deciding factor in whether they'll return or not. As a church, let's strive to ensure that every visitor feels the love and connection that is at the heart of our community.

Mark your calendars for the upcoming coffee hours! These are more than just dates—they're opportunities to get to know one another better and to share in God's love together:

- **March 23**
- **April 6**
- **April 20, Easter Sunday – New Member & Friend Welcome Celebration**

Let's make these coffee hours moments to nurture our relationships, extend hospitality, and deepen our sense of home together. See you there!

## It All Begins, and Ends, With What We Value Spiritually.



*"Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."*

Matthew 6:21

"Where Your Heart Is..." It's no mystery that we tend to invest our time, resources, and love into what we truly value in life. It's not different within our spiritual life. In the Gospels, Jesus shares a challenging truth: our hearts walk alongside what we treasure.

So, beloved, what do you value?

It's clear to see what we hold dear by looking at the impact of our ministries in local neighborhoods. We actively serve those who are marginalized and in need. Our inclusive ministry continues to grow as we feed the hungry, teach English to Spanish speakers, educate others about the love of Jesus, lead devotions on area beaches, and support the LGBTQIA+ community in meaningful ways. And this list is just the beginning.

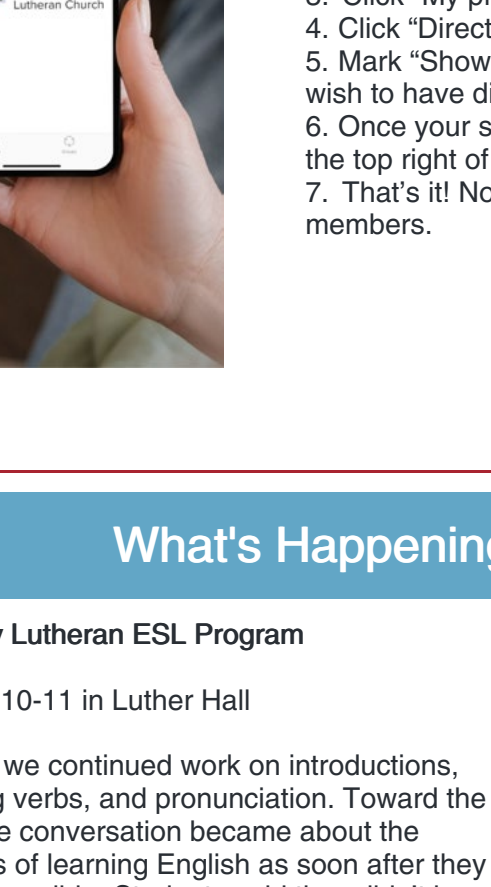
These things cannot happen without you. Your support is vital.

Today, we ask you to contribute to the continued growth of our ministries.

Please place your phone next to the QR code below and donate to help us reach more hearts and change more lives.

Many thanks for showing Community what you value.

Peace,  
Pastor



## New Member & Friend Recognition on Easter Sunday!



Sunday, April 20, at 10:30 a.m. Worship Service

Did you know? If you consider yourself a member of Community Church, then you are a member! This Easter Sunday, we're excited to celebrate all those who identify as new members or friends of Community Church.

What's the difference?

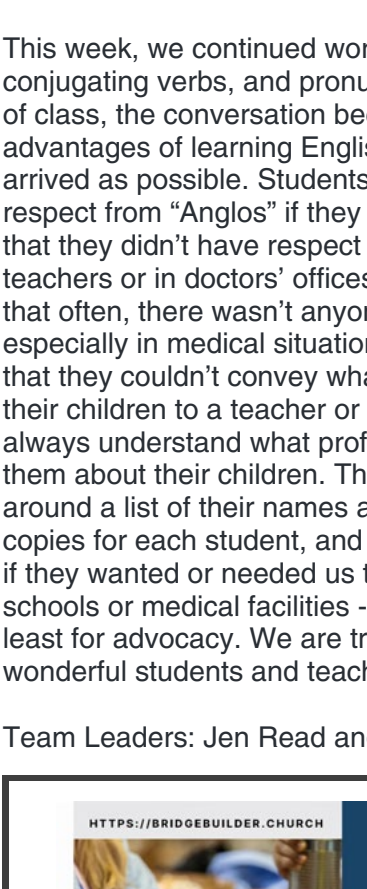
- Members have a voice in church elections and help guide the direction of our congregation.
- Friends may not vote according to the ELCA Constitution, but your presence and support mean the world to us. Church membership isn't for everyone, and we truly value you as a friend of Community!

Pastor wants to publicly recognize members and friends!

Simply reach out to Pastor at [Pastor@bridgebuilder.church](mailto:Pastor@bridgebuilder.church), and we'll make sure you're celebrated this Easter!

[E-mail Pastor](mailto:Pastor@bridgebuilder.church)

## Updating the Online Directory



Some have recently noted that in the online directory, phone numbers and email addresses are not being displayed. If a phone number or email address is not displayed, it is because the person has not chosen specifically to display that information. Each of us must actively opt-in.

In order for people to see your personal contact information (phone number and/or email address) in the online church directory, you must specifically authorize it.

To authorize the display of this information:

1. Log on to Church Center
2. Click your profile setting at the top right corner.
3. Click "My profile & settings" at the top.
4. Click "Directory Profile"
5. Mark "Show selected contact info" and choose items you wish to have displayed.
6. Once your selections have been made, click "Update" at the top right of the screen.
7. That's it! Now your information will be displayed to other members.

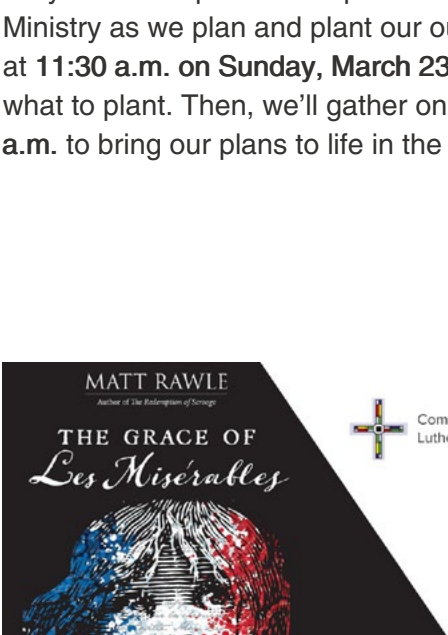
## What's Happening at Community

### Community Lutheran ESL Program

Thursdays 10-11 in Luther Hall

This week, we continued work on introductions, conjugating verbs, and pronunciation. Toward the end of class, the conversation became about the advantages of learning English as soon after they arrived as possible. Students said they didn't have respect from "Anglos" if they couldn't speak English and that they didn't have respect in school meetings with teachers or in doctors' offices. Part of their concern was that often, there wasn't anyone who could translate, especially in medical situations. Another concern was that they couldn't convey what they wanted to say about their children to a teacher or a doctor and couldn't always understand what professionals were saying to them about their children. The ESL teachers passed around a list of their names and phone numbers, made copies for each student, and told them to call one of us if they wanted or needed us to accompany them to schools or medical facilities if not for translations, at least for advocacy. We are truly blessed to have wonderful students and teachers.

Team Leaders: Jen Read and Mari Satterlee



### Food Pantry Ministry

The Community Food Pantry Ministry is dedicated to providing food and support to those in need within our community.

We serve on the first and third Tuesday of each month, with volunteer set-up beginning at 8:30 a.m. and concluding by noon. Volunteers are always welcome to help with organizing, distributing, and supporting our neighbors. Whether you're looking to give back or need assistance, we invite you to join us in making a difference and spreading kindness.

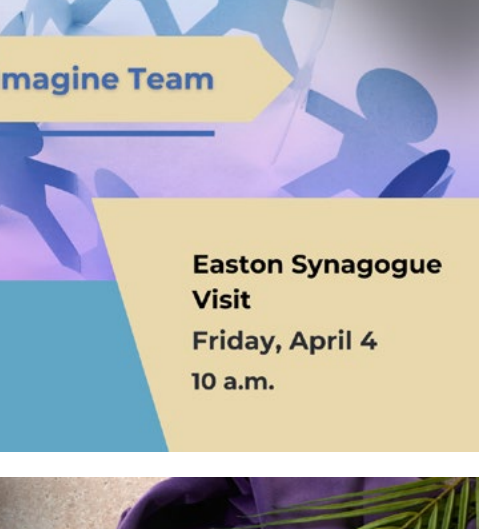
### 2024 Contribution Statements

The Finance Committee sent out 2024 Contribution Statements at the end of January. If you have not received yours, please check your spam folder. If it is not there, contact Terri Windlan at [twindlan@gmail.com](mailto:twindlan@gmail.com), and she will ensure you receive a copy.

[Email Terri](mailto:twindlan@gmail.com)

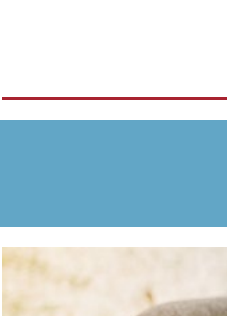
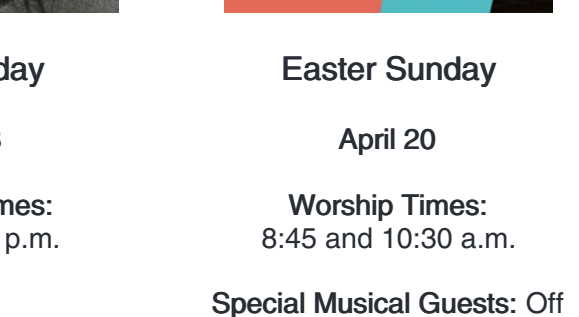
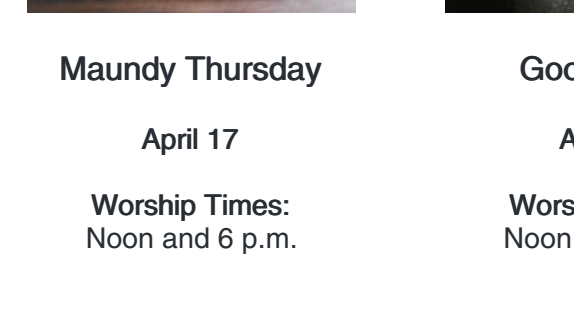
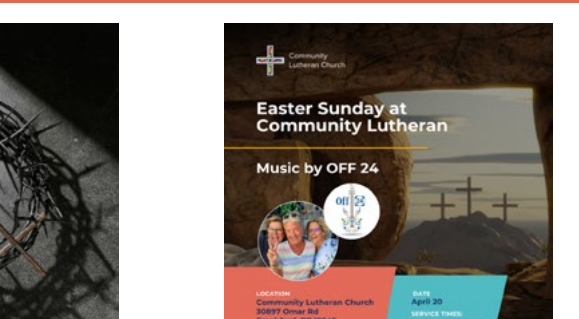
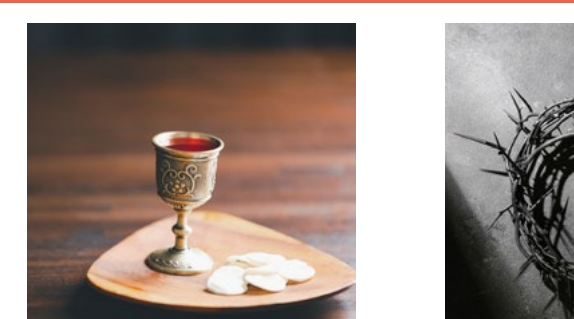
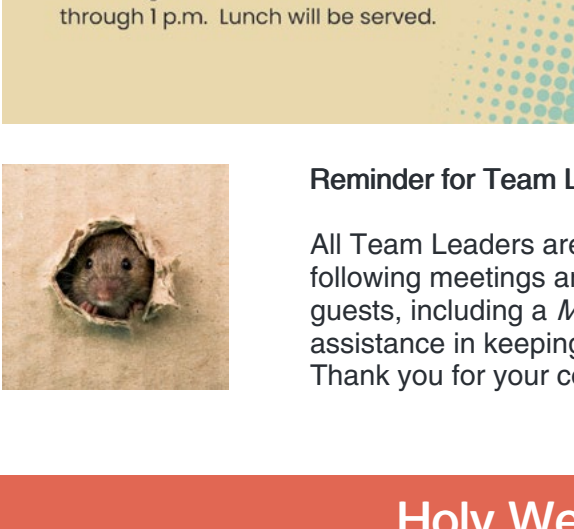
The team members of the Food Pantry will be doing a special Easter "Basket" for the families/children that we serve. We are looking for donations of individually wrapped Easter candy and small gifts. On Palm Sunday, we will assemble 150 baskets between services. Please mark this volunteer opportunity on your calendar. Katie, Susan, and Mona will have a sample basket template ready to go so that assembly should be easy. The baskets will be given out Tuesday, April 15th, during the regular Food Pantry distribution. The joy that this work gives will only be exceeded by the joy and excitement of our children.

Faithfully,  
Food Pantry Team Leaders



### Garden Ministry: Calling All Green Thumbs!

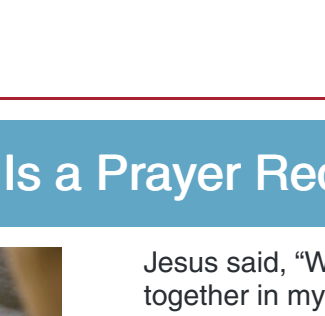
Do you have a passion for plants? Join us for the Garden Ministry as we plan and plant our outdoor garden! We'll meet at 11:30 a.m. on Sunday, March 23 to strategize and plan what to plant. Then, we'll gather on Saturday, April 5 at 9:00 a.m. to bring our plans to life in the garden.



**Maunder Thursday**

April 17

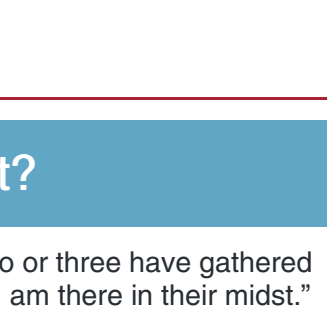
**Worship Times:**  
Noon and 6 p.m.



**Good Friday**

April 18

**Worship Times:**  
Noon and 6 p.m.



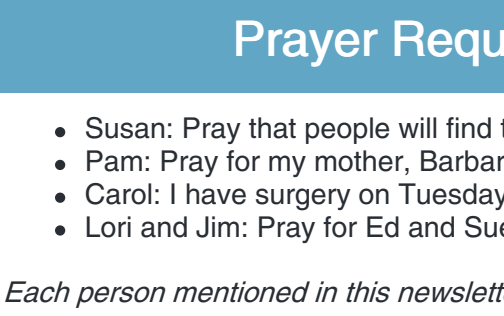
**Easter Sunday**

April 20

**Worship Times:**  
8:45 and 10:30 a.m.

**Special Musical Guests:** Off 24

## What Is a Prayer Request?



Jesus said, "Where two or three have gathered together in my name, I am there in their midst." Prayer is powerful, especially when many are praying for the same person or situation. At Community Church, we are committed to praying for you and those you hold dear—whether they are struggling with illness, grieving a loss, or facing any other hardship life may bring.

To maintain confidentiality, we will only include first names when sharing prayer requests, but you may share your relationship to the person being prayed for. We also ask that you refrain from sharing personal details about someone else without their consent.

How Can We Pray for You?

If you would like to submit an e-newsletter prayer request, whether for yourself or a loved one, please contact: [tech.clc.30897@gmail.com](mailto:tech.clc.30897@gmail.com).

We are here to support you and lift you up in prayer, trusting that God hears and answers in God's perfect timing.

[Submit a Prayer Request](mailto:tech.clc.30897@gmail.com)

## Prayer Requests: Together in Faith

- Susan: Pray that people will find their way to God.
- Pam: Pray for my mother, Barbara, who has broken her collarbone.
- Carol: I have surgery on Tuesday, March 11th, for my cancer
- Lori and Jim: Pray for Ed and Sue as he faces complicated foot surgery.

Each person mentioned in this newsletter publication has granted us permission to do so.

### Team Leaders

Please submit e-newsletter articles every Tuesday at noon for publication each Friday.