



ELIM
CHURCH
AN OASIS
IN THE CITY

AUGUST
2017
THE
FORECASTER

Paradox and Healing In The Flesh

Paul Olson, Lead Pastor

Elon Musk, the famed multi-billionaire, founder and CEO of Tesla and SpaceX, sent out an email recently addressing a poor company safety report:

“No words can express how much I care about your safety and wellbeing. Going forward, I've asked that every injury be reported directly to me, without exception... I would like to meet every injured person as soon as they are well, so that I can understand from them exactly what we need to do to make it better... I will then go down to the production line and perform the same task that they perform... At Tesla, we lead from the front line, not from some safe and comfortable ivory tower. Managers must always put their team's safety above their own.”

Musk's offer to personally appear at the site of an employee's injury is an astounding promise. Musk, the man who invented reusable space rockets, and reinvented the electric car, will soon be flying tourists around the moon and eventually—he hopes—to Mars. As one of the world's most sought-after public personalities, Elon Musk's time is valuable—yet, his promise to care for his employees in this way seems to be just another impossible feat for him to take on.

Musk is not a religious person, but his actions to take personal responsibility are certainly Christ-like. We serve a God who, seeing the distress and injury of humanity, sent Jesus into the world—paying the ultimate price—healing the world and demonstrating God's astounding love. The Creator-God who had all power and rights over the creation descended into fleshly humanity:

⁷ [Christ Jesus]... emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of humankind. ⁸ And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ⁹ —Philemon 2:7-9

This, of course, is a paradox—an inconceivable mystery. How can the God of the universe be both ruler of the universe and be subject to the creative operations of the womb? Ephraim the Syrian, a 4th century hymnographer and theologian, wrote, “*the power that governs all dwelt in a small womb. While dwelling there, he was holding the reigns of the universe.*” (Hymnus de nativitate 4, II.)

Elsewhere he wrote: *Glorious is the Wise One Who allied and joined
Divinity with humanity,
one from the height and the other from the depth.
He mingled the natures like pigments
and an image came into being: the God-man.*

In the first few weeks of being your Lead Pastor, I have had the privilege of joining you in the wonder and healing found in this paradox. Elim, I see your Christ-likeness, your sacrifice and your love—your desire to be poured out for others. I am inspired by your love. What a great God we serve, who is simultaneously our Lord and chief servant. Like the good shepherd who lays down his life for the sheep, may we, too, be the kind of people who—without a second thought—pick up our cross and come alongside (in Jesus' name), the injured, the brokenhearted, and those in need of forgiveness and salvation.

Leadership Team Update

Roger Dahl, Elim Church Chair

Two topics one rarely sees together, but are often together in peoples' thinking, are finances and atmosphere. Economists will tell you that what folks think about the future affects how they invest. If we expect a recession, we hang on to our money for investment or purchases, and a recession has a better chance of happening. If we are optimistic about the future, we buy and invest and that stimulates aspects of the economy. As a church, Elim would like to think we are above such human trivialities and—in eternal terms—we are. But we still act as humans and as a human institution.

Since April, I think we have felt optimistic about who we are and who we can be. We acknowledged that our demographics are aging and that a focused attempt to draw in younger folks was needed. That is not a small admission. Our actions have mirrored this in our desire to search for “a different pastoral candidate” and our willingness to accept a larger budget. As of the July business meeting, you officially know that “leadership” also took on a unique role to make this work in the form of the Olson Family Housing Fund. You also know that it raised about double what it sought. Finally, it was announced that we are looking at a refinance (or second loan) to help us deal with the physical needs of our beautiful, but in need of renovation, building. This concept drew 9 out of 9 votes from the Leadership Team and serious support from others who know about the needs of our building. These folks believe in the present and future ministry of Elim, and therefore voted to invest in it.

People do not invest in things that they think are “over the hill.” Our finances are stretched but our imaginations are enlivened and encouraged. To me, there is an atmosphere of optimism and enthusiasm in the services, in ECK and ECY, in a new group for young adults called Oasis, and is seen in levels of giving across the board, interest in what we are doing with Hope Avenue and our refugee family and the coming week of VBS. We are invigorated by the heart, ideas, efforts and spiritual commitment of our pastors, both longstanding and new.

Since I have been at Elim, finances have always been an issue. Old, urban churches who take their ministry seriously often face economic issues. But since I have been at Elim, the commitment to what we do has also been there, but with ups and downs. This feels like an “up” time. The atmosphere feels spiritual and optimistic. This is work in Jesus' name and I trust the finances will continue to follow the atmosphere. I ask you to join in with both actions and finances as we renovate old facilities and add to the nature of our demographic mix. Your presence and participation add to our collective atmosphere.



ECY Update

Several Elim youth and leaders attended our mission trip to the Quad Cities of Iowa/ Illinois. The theme was based on John 10:10b: “I have come that you may have life and have it to the fullest!” Our motto for the week was “The Good Life,” and we shared devotions based on the idea that God wants the best for us. We returned from the trip energized to find ways that we might serve in our own communities.

This summer, ECY has met weekly for fun and fellowship, and are continuing a series each Sunday called “Donuts and Devos in the Park.” We taste donuts from various places and visit different parks in Minneapolis

each Sunday during the 9 am Sunday School hour. A different leader offers a short devotional before we return for morning worship. It has been a great time to enjoy our city, one another and God's word.

Rick Dischinger, Interim Director of Youth Ministries

Family VBS At Elim: August 7-11



Elim Church is excited to be hosting Family VBS during the evenings of August 7-11. This program is for everyone ages 0-99! As we focus on the marvels painted in the sky by the Creator, we will discover that the God who created everything wants a personal relationship with us. There is no cost for VBS; it is our gift to you and your family.

Schedule: 5:30-6:00—Dinner (Dining Room)
6:00-6:30—Worship Rally (Sanctuary)
6:30-8:15—Kids/Youth/Adult Activities (see below)

Kids/Youth/Adult Activities

- **Nursery (0-36 months)** – Childcare is available in the nursery.
- **Pre-K (3 yrs – entering K)** – Bible stories, arts & crafts, learning centers, and music (Rooms 4-5).
- **Kids (completed K – 5th grade)** – As Galactic Starveyors, we will search the skies and God's Word to uncover God's truth. Activities include Bible Study Club House, crafts, and games.
- **Youth** – Students will encounter amazing and wonderful things designed by a creator who is even bigger than the vastness of His creation. Led by Rick and Beth Dischinger.
- **Adults (Sticky Faith)** – Sticky Faith will empower adults to develop robust and long-term faith in kids of all ages. Sticky Faith presents both a compelling rationale and a powerful strategy to show parents how to encourage their children's spiritual growth so that it will stick with them into adulthood and empower them to develop a living, lasting faith. Led by Pastor Paul Olson.
- **Adults (Searching the Visible, Discovering the Invisible)** – The God who created everything wants an intimate relationship with us. From the very beginning, God had a plan to restore the relationship He knew people would break, and a plan to heal broken people. Led by Randy Somody.

Registration – Fill out the registration card (available on the website), and return it to the registration table at Elim Church on a Sunday morning. Everyone who plans to attend (child or adult), should register, so that meals, classes and nursery care can be planned accordingly.

Reach Out – You have the opportunity to reach people by inviting them to attend VBS with you. Think about who you will bring with you. Tell your friends, neighbors, co-workers, and family members! The VBS brochure has all of the information and can be downloaded from our VBS web page: elimchurch.com/vbs (or scan the QR code).



Seniors' Lunch—Tuesday, August 1, at Noon—With Pastor Chuck's retirement, our lunch in August will be a time for Pastors Paul and Becky to listen to your needs and wants for the design of the seniors' ministry. As always, please bring food to share, and a friend!

Mariners' Breakfast—Tuesday, August 8, at 9 am—Our August breakfast will be at Byerly's Restaurant (1601 County Road C West in Roseville).

Oasis Young Adult Group—Sunday, August 13, at 6 pm—August's meeting includes a free dinner, time to relax by the lake, be refreshed through worship and prayer, and the opportunity to engage in friendly discussion. If you are between ages 19-29, we hope to see you there. Bring a friend! We'll meet at the home of Dave and Heather Carlson: 6795 East River Road, Fridley, MN. For more information, talk with Heather Carlson or Pastor Paul, or check out our Instagram page. User: [oasis.in.the.city](https://www.instagram.com/oasis.in.the.city)

Missions Moment

Carolyn Pinke, for the Missions Team

**“See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!”
—1 John 3:1**

A looming concern for many people today is the presence of terrorists in the world. But God bids us superimpose his love and concern for the wicked, even over our fears. “For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.” —2 Timothy 1:7

We believe Jesus is the hope of our planet today. He can change the hearts of terrorists. Look what happened to Saul, who became, by God’s power, the apostle Paul. The gospel is the new ideology that creates peace.

So what can I do?

- Ask the Holy Spirit to show you where you have adopted the spirit of fear rather than the Spirit of love regarding Muslims.
- Pray for the Spirit of God to overcome your fear and enable you to show his love to Muslims around you. Ask him to help you find a Muslim friend!
- Pray for those who are involved in terrorism, that Jesus will reveal himself to them and they will be transformed! We have already heard some testimonies. Cry to God for more hearts to find Shelter!
- Thank God for our ‘adopted’ Sudanese family, who we love! We see that they respond with warmth to the Father’s kindness that flows through us to them. Pray that our team can be Jesus to them. Ask God to give them faith to believe that Jesus is their Savior, too, so they would know that same love lavished on them!

Adult Summer Sunday School in August (9 am in the Dining Room)

Teachers—Laurel Bunker (August 6) and Ralph Gustafson (August 13 & 20)—No Sunday School on August 26

August 6—Spiritual Formation—Since birth, we have been formed into who we are today. Every decision has brought us to where we are and who we are becoming. Formation will take place until we die. We, therefore, are in need of transformation—changing the trajectory of our formation into that of Christ.

About Laurel—Pastor Laurel Bunker serves Bethel University as the dean of campus ministries and as campus pastor. As the dean of campus ministries, Laurel is a member of the President’s Executive Leadership Team, providing guidance on issues related to the spiritual formation and personal development of the student body. As campus pastor, Laurel is the primary preacher during Chapel and leads a vibrant and gifted team that is dedicated to providing transformational ministry opportunities for the Bethel community.

August 13 & 20—Reaching And Engaging Millennials—The Millennial Generation (those born between 1982 and 2000 or thereabouts) have often been misunderstood, misrepresented, and in far too many cases they have become disengaged from the church. What do we actually know about this unique generation that can help us reach, teach, and actively engage them in the mission of Jesus Christ? What are their core/common traits, what energizes them, and what are a few of the myths that the media has portrayed about them? We will explore the research and truths about this amazing generation, then seek to apply what we learn to both evangelism and discipleship in the local church in the 21st century.

About Ralph—Dr. Rev. Ralph Gustafson is the Executive Minister for Church and Seminary Alumni Relations at Bethel University. Ralph led our Adult Sunday School in July, and we’re happy to have him back in August!



From Midweek Doldrums To A “Midweek Miracle”

***A Reflection by Deborah Somody,
Director of Children’s Ministry***

“Something electrifying is happening at Elim Baptist Church in Minneapolis,” says Bonnie Johnson, coordinator of Elim’s new Wednesday Night Live (WNL) midweek program. “We’re experiencing a midweek miracle.”

This quote is taken from an article written by Bonnie back in 1985. At that time, Elim suffered from the all-too-usual midweek doldrums—with just a handful of people out for the evenings activities. Since dropping WNL back in the 1990’s, I believe the lethargy has again fallen upon the midweek programming.

My family was blessed to be a part of WNL in the mid-eighties. It was truly a highlight of our week! Parents met, the rationale for regular attendance was explained, and the need for strong biblical teaching was stressed. WNL wasn’t a smorgasbord of enjoyable activities to choose from. It was a single experience with its sum total greater than its individual experience. The ingredients for WNL were dinner, Bible, music and activity.

To make sure everyone got the basics, registration was required. Also, one parent or “substitute parent” from each family agreed to help in an area of his or her choosing. Why the parent involvement? It gave parents the responsibility to encourage their children’s attendance and participation.

Activities began with supper at 6 pm, prepared by a team of volunteers. Menus ranged from soup and sandwiches to a turkey dinner. The dinner table was more of a “family time,” where individual families sat at different tables each time to encourage new friendships. Table leaders encouraged participation in conversation, table games and singing, besides teaching table manners. Meal times became an avenue for building relationships, which are so essential for a community of believers—especially when people come from different walks of life.

After family time, children, youth and adults went their separate ways to enjoy classes and or activities that ranged from Bible Study, music, hand bells, games and crafts, grouped according to school grades. A nursery was provided as well as a preschool class.

Who staffed such a program? At Elim, its church adults—mostly parents—volunteered as class leaders and kitchen staff. Non-churched parents were also encouraged to volunteer. They got to know the church people and also felt like they were contributing to a program that benefitted their child.

Many were surprised that a structured program could succeed so well. Bonnie Johnson said it didn’t surprise her at all. She said, “most things we really enjoy in life—from symphonies to sports—are surrounded by discipline.” She experienced the Holy Spirit working at Elim through WNL. It brought sparkle and enthusiasm and the family of God working together at Elim.

Elim is returning to Wednesday Night Live on September 20, on a once-a-month basis to begin. It will be built on the foundation of Wednesday Night Live that began 32 years ago. This same concept is alive and well at Calvary, our sister church in White Bear Lake. I believe that God will do something special in our lives together here at Elim as we return to the roots of Family Programming. Please pray for this ministry and put it on your calendars and think about how you will participate.

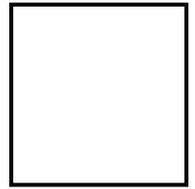
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Time Sensitive Information

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 •Seniors' Lunch, Noon, Dining Room	2 •Jesus Calling, 6:30 pm, Prayer Room	3 •Kidz Klozet and Unlimited open, 9:00 am	4	5
6 •Sunday School, 9:00 am •The Gathering, 10:00 am •Worship, 10:30 am	7 •Women's Bible Study, 10:00 am, Lounge •VBS, 5:30 pm	8 •Mariners' Breakfast, 9:00 am •VBS, 5:30 pm	9 •VBS, 5:30 pm	10 •VBS, 5:30 pm	11 •VBS, 5:30 pm	12
13 COMMUNION •Hope Avenue, 7:15-9:30 am •Sunday School, 9:00 am •The Gathering, 10:00 am •Worship, 10:30 am	14 •Women's Bible Study, 10:00 am, Lounge	15	16 •Jesus Calling, 6:30 pm, Prayer Room	17	18	19
20 •Hope Avenue, 7:15-9:30 am •Sunday School, 9:00 am •The Gathering, 10:00 am •Worship, 10:30 am	21 •Women's Bible Study, 10:00 am, Lounge	22	23 •Seniors' Bible Study, 1:00 pm, Library •Jesus Calling, 6:30 pm, Prayer Room	24	25	26
27 •Hope Avenue, 7:15-9:30 am •The Gathering, 10:00 am •Worship, 10:30 am	28 •Women's Bible Study, 10:00 am, Lounge	29	30 •Jesus Calling, 6:30 pm, Prayer Room	31		