

Jacob's Ladder  
4K/PRESCHOOL/DAYCARE



AMY NELSON

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A heartfelt "Thank You" to all who purchased Butter Braids in support of new wheeled toys to use on our new playground, coming this spring! We are so excited to PLAY! Orders will arrive on **Tuesday, March 12 at 10 AM.** Please plan to pick up your order in the church vestibule.

Preschool Registration for Fall of 2024 is now open! Classes are for children ages 3-5, and space is still available in our 2-Day AM and 3-Day PM Classes. Please help spread the word on this opportunity to fill the rooms. Contact Amy Nelson with any questions or to set up a tour today!



"Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these." Luke 18:16



NOISY OFFERING

March 10 & 17, April 7

Children will be collecting loose change for Ezekiel's Relay for Life Team during the offering on the dates above. Please remember to bring your loose change (and bills)!



MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE!



FLOWERS



LUMINARIES



BUTTERFLIES



\$5 each



Will be sold between services on March 10 & 17 and April 7 in Fellowship Hall.

THE BOX SCORE

General Fund January 2024

Revenue:	\$ 60,995
Expenses:	\$ 47,063
Difference:	\$ 13,932

General Fund Year to Date

Revenue:	\$ 60,995
Expenses:	\$ 47,063
Difference:	\$ 13,932

1 year Capital Campaign for Mortgage, Mission, & Ministry

"Moving Forward in Faith" – Gifts thru Jan.:	\$ 40,102
Pledged over 1 year:	\$126,804
Amount Needed for Goal:	\$140,000

Ezekiel Mortgage Balance: \$340,740



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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



CONNECTIONS

March 2024

Vol. 5 Issue 3

A PUBLICATION OF EZEKIEL LUTHERAN CHURCH, RIVER FALLS, WI  
Pastor Steve Dow

EZEKIEL  
LUTHERAN  
CHURCH

2024 HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

PALM SUNDAY, MARCH 24

One service at 9:30 AM  
Brunch following the service

MAUNDY THURSDAY, MARCH 28

Service at 7:00 PM

GOOD FRIDAY, MARCH 29

Service at 7:00 PM

HOLY SATURDAY, MARCH 30

Prayer Vigil from 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM

EASTER, MARCH 31

Services at 8:30 AM & 10:30 AM



## PASTOR



PASTOR STEVE DOW  
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### It Takes a Village

I'm writing this article shortly after returning home from the Haiti concert. I was impressed before the event even began as I heard the mass choir rehearse their numbers. But the whole evening was filled with good music, hymn singing, and a great slideshow about all the work taking place in Haiti.

I've known River Falls is a different place since I arrived. Here's one example, River Falls has one of the best productions of High School sports streaming on the internet. It's free on YouTube and not behind a paywall. And it is amazing how many people are watching during away games. The community is invested.

As I heard about how much money has been raised for Haiti just from the River Falls community over all these years, the number is staggering. River Falls is invested in Haiti. This afternoon, another \$19,500 was raised. That's amazing! Of course, the money is important and necessary, but the significant impact is on the lives in Haiti. Seeing the pictures of the school, the orphanage, and the clinic is inspiring. But it is the faces of the people impacted by these facilities that is so rewarding. It's the people that work on the ground that benefit as well and so does the surrounding community. These facilities are impacting the community in multiple, positive, ways.

I can't wait to see what is next for this community of River Falls and for the community in Haiti. Our prayers are continually needed for Haiti because so many people are struggling with poverty, finding clean water, and just having safe passage from one place to another. Together, we can do great things. This concert reminded me of that once more. Great job to all involved!

Thank you especially to Curt Larson for all of his years on the board of Haitian Relief Services and all the work he did planning this event. Congratulations to Jeanette Juetten for stepping up and joining the board. As Curt said yesterday, "the board is in good hands." If you missed the concert, it is streaming on Ezekiel's YouTube channel.



A sincere thank you to our Ezekiel family for their invaluable assistance and unwavering support during our highly successful "It Takes a Village" concert last Sunday afternoon. Special thanks to Pastor Steve; choir director Joyce; the choir members; Matt and our Worship Band; as well as the ushers and money counters; and the dedicated teams handling sound, recording, and projection – Jim and Josh. We're grateful to the reception food providers; kitchen and serving crew; custodian Barb; Leslie and her office team; along with everyone who graced the concert with their presence. Your contributions made this event a resounding success, raising an incredible \$19,500! Thank you!

Dee, Curt, and Jeanette

## Congratulations to Ezekiel's 2023 Volunteers of the Year



Each year the Service and Mission Committee selects volunteers of the year. Congratulations to Jeanette Juetten, Rich Kuss, Delane Claflin, as those chosen for 2023.

For more than 20 years the River Falls Rotary Club has met each week in room 100 at Ezekiel. Meals are provided at these meetings. Rotary contributes funds each week to support these. This remains a thriving fundraiser at Ezekiel. The funds play a pivotal role in supporting mission trips, youth gatherings and camps for the youth in our congregation. In 2023 River Falls Rotary contributed \$8200 to this ministry.

Jeanette handles the meal coordination with Rotary. This includes working with the food donor volunteers, the funding and most of the shopping. She is quick to thank all of the congregation members who contribute their Thrivent funds, time and effort to prepare, bake and serve.

Delane is the person the Rotarians see every week. With great care, consideration, and grace she manages the meal set up and service. Often starting before 6 a.m. to kick off breakfast efforts or overseeing the entire lunch meal from start to finish. Delane is the first to say that there are many other hands involved and thanks them.

Jeanette and Delane have many other avenues of service here at Ezekiel. Jeanette supports the 10:30 worship service as a communion server and a reader. In addition to her many community activities she is Team Captain for Relay for Life representing Ezekiel. Delane serves the congregation on the altar guild, and is a regular volunteering at weekly coffee between Sunday services.

Rich tells us "First I am blessed to have a partner who is an inspiration and example. My wife Barb has a servant's heart. We love our Ezekiel family. Worship is the main reason we come together. Whether sharing music or thought, both tied to scripture it has been my privilege to provide worship leadership."

Rich continues to lead his group, The Zekies, at the second service once a month. His collaboration graces Advent and Lenten services. His dramas and special material have brought the Word alive to us.

He has served on the Invite, Connect, Nominating and Worship committees. His involvement in youth education includes Confirmation, Lutheran Campus Ministry, and Journey House. He and Barb represent the congregation at Synod Assembly, serve at coffee hour, and are part of the Prayer Chain.

All three of them would say that the more people we have involved, the more our Ezekiel family will grow in faith and our connections with one another.

## Teen and Young Adult MINISTRIES



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### ELCA Youth Gathering Envelope Fundraiser

#### What's with the envelopes?

This is a fundraiser to support students attending the 2024 ELCA Youth Gathering in New Orleans. We plan on collecting envelopes throughout the season of Lent.

#### How does this work?

We ask that if you'd like to donate, please take an envelope (at random or your choosing) and the amount of the envelope is what you contribute by cash, check, or online. Please place the filled envelope in the offering basket.

#### Why 139 envelopes?

139 coincides with the 2024 ELCA Youth Gathering theme, "Created to Be," centered on Psalm 139:14, "I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made."

#### How much will this make?

If all 139 envelopes are taken and returned, we will raise \$9,730, nearly half of the total cost for our trip.

Estimated cost per participant: \$1,064

Cost for entire group: \$22,344

