

# JANUARY

2026

Pastor: Rev. Jackie Short ~ (507) 517-0769 ~ [pastor.highlandprairie.elstad@gmail.com](mailto:pastor.highlandprairie.elstad@gmail.com)

Parish Administrator: Courtney Lee

Parish Office: (507) 864-2731 ~ [elstadhighlandprairieparish@gmail.com](mailto:elstadhighlandprairieparish@gmail.com)

## January Office Hours

Pastor Jackie is typically be in the office on Wednesdays 8-4 pm. Call or email to set up a time to connect.

HAPPY  
New Year



### A MESSAGE FROM THE EHP PARISH OFFICE

ADMINISTRATOR COURTNEY LEE

As we embark on this new year, I am grateful for the many positive changes we have made together over the past year and look forward to what lies ahead.

I ask for your help in keeping our parish communications up to date. If you notice any missed birthdays or become aware that any of our shut-ins are not receiving the parish newsletter, please reach out to me so I can rectify the situation right away.

Thank you for your continued care and support of our parish community.

Blessings,  
Courtney  
Parish Administrator



# A note from your Pastor

January arrived quietly. The lights are packed away. The carols fade. The manger is returned to its box. And yet—according to the church calendar—Christmas is not over. The story continues.

In January we follow the Holy Family beyond the stable and into the world as it really is: a world that can be dangerous, uncertain, and unpredictable. Scripture tells us that shortly after Jesus' birth, Mary and Joseph are told to get up in the night and flee. This is not the peaceful scene we place on greeting cards, but it is a holy one. God-with-us does not remain safely wrapped in straw and sentiment. God goes on the move.

That matters for us as we begin a new year.

January often comes with pressure—to set goals, make resolutions, be better, do more. But faith invites something different: attentiveness.

**Trust.** The courage to take the next faithful step, even when the whole path is not yet clear.

This season reminds us that God's work often unfolds not through certainty, but through obedience in the moment. Through quiet yeses. Through showing up. Through choosing love again—especially when the world feels heavy.

As congregation's, we step into this year together. We do not know everything that lies ahead, but we do know this: God is already there. God is present in our worship, our questions, our griefs, our hopes, and our shared work. God continues to call us—not to perfection, but to faithfulness.

May this January be a season of gentle beginnings. May we listen closely for God's voice. And may we trust that even now—especially now—God is still at work among us.

Grace and peace to each and every one of you,  
Pastor Jackie



**HAPPY NEW  
YEAR'S  
FROM MY  
FAMILY TO  
YOURS!**

## Where is Pastor Jackie this month.

- **Quality Call Summit in Alexandria: Jan. 12-14**
- **Jan. Conferance Meeting**
- **Vacation January 26- Feb. 2**



# Presidents Report

HELLO HP CHURCH FAMILY,  
IT HAS BEEN AN EXCITING YEAR TO SERVE AS YOUR PRESIDENT WITH EXPANDING OUTSIDE OUR CHURCH WALLS DEVELOPING NEW MINISTRIES, CHURCH ROOF PROJECT AND MAKING OUR CHURCH MORE WELCOMING WITH CHANGES. WATCHING OUR CONFIRMATION STUDENT BEING MORE INVOLVED IN EVERY ASPECT OF OUR CHURCH AND SERVITUDE TO OUR COMMUNITY AND CHURCH. I REALLY APPRECIATE THE HP CHURCH COUNCIL, OUR CHURCH COMMITTEES, PASTOR JACKIE AND CHURCH MEMBERS FOR ALL YOUR HARD WORK AND TALENTS WITH YOUTH, CHURCH PROJECTS, DEVELOPING NEW MINISTRIES OUTSIDE AND WITHIN OUR CHURCH WALLS, YOU SHOULD BE VERY PROUD OF YOURSELVES.

I WANT TO UPDATE YOU ON THE CHURCH ROOF PROJECT COST AND PAYMENT PLAN:

50-YEAR SHINGLES: \$35,644.44

FACIA: \$ 9,849.58

GUTTERS: \$ 3,217.00

TOTAL: \$48,711.02

PAYMENTS:

INSURANCE CHECK: \$33,105.00

ROOF DONATIONS: \$ 3,834.00

MEMORIAL FUND \$ 8,132.00 ON DECEMBER COUNCIL AGENDA

TOTAL: \$45, 071.00

SHORT: \$3,640. 02 POSSIBLE DONATION FROM WELCA

AS A COUNCIL WE HAVE MADE A REPAIR AND PROJECT PRIORITY LIST THAT WILL BE REVIEWED QUARTERLY AND MAKE ANY ADJUSTMENTS TO THE LIST IF NEEDED. THE REPAIR AND PROJECT PRIORITY LIST HAS BEEN POSTED IN THE CHURCH NEWSLETTER, AND IT WILL BE POSTED ON THE DOWNSTAIRS BULLETIN BOARD. SOME REPAIRS CAN BE DONE BY TALENTS OF CHURCH MEMBERS, AND SOME MUST BE DONE PROFESSIONALLY. HOW TO PAY FOR THESE REPAIRS AND PROJECTS: PAIL OF BLESSINGS,

FUND RAISERS, MEMBERS OFFERING THEIR TALENTS AND INCREASE STEWARDSHIP OF GIVING AND CAPITAL DRIVE. IF YOU WANT TO OFFER YOUR TALENTS TO A REPAIR OF CHURCH AND GROUNDS, PLEASE LET A COUNCIL MEMBER AND/OR PASTOR JACKIE KNOW. PLEASE LET COURTNEY KNOW IF YOU NEED REIMBURSEMENT FOR MATERIALS FOR THE REPAIR. WITH HELP FROM EVERYONE WE WILL BE ABLE TO CHOP AWAY AT THE REPAIR AND PROJECT LIST.

“BE GOOD STEWARD: GOD HAS ENTRUSTED YOU WITH TALENTS AND TO SERVE AND THERE IS A RESPONSIBILITY TO USE YOUR TALENTS RATHER THAN THEM HIDDEN OR INACTIVE.”

GOD’S BLESSINGS TO YOU AND YOUR FAMILY, THANK GOD FOR WHAT YOU HAVE AND REJOICE IN THE BIRTH OF OUR SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST.

HAVE FAITH ALWAYS,  
VALARIE HOWE

# Parish Happenings



## Birthdays

4: Michelle Rein  
6: Bricker Dahl  
7: Angel Bakke  
9: Nathan Bakke  
10: Philip Dragvold,  
Nancy Rustad,  
11: Mollee Johnson  
12: Kay Dahl  
13: Joshua Dahl,  
Tyler Berg,  
14: Colton Horning  
15: Carolyn Smith  
Kaston Klug  
16: David Bakke,  
17: Jennifer Nepstad  
Shane Jacobson  
18: Barb Lee,  
Brenda Chiglo,  
Peter Stensgard  
Annie Hoiland  
23: James Bearbower  
24: Martha Stensgard  
25: Ellen Feine  
Paula Howe  
Sarah Freese  
26: Arden Nepstad  
27: Michael Oian,  
Dave Lawstuen

## Anniversaries



15: Jerry & Julie Dragvold  
28: David & Sue Larson



**We love to celebrate with you, if we have missed somebody's Birthday or Anniversary, please email the church office so we can add them to the list!**



## Council Meetings ...

### January Joint Council Meetings @ Highland Prairie

Sunday January 11th

Highland Prairie Council Meeting: 12:30pm

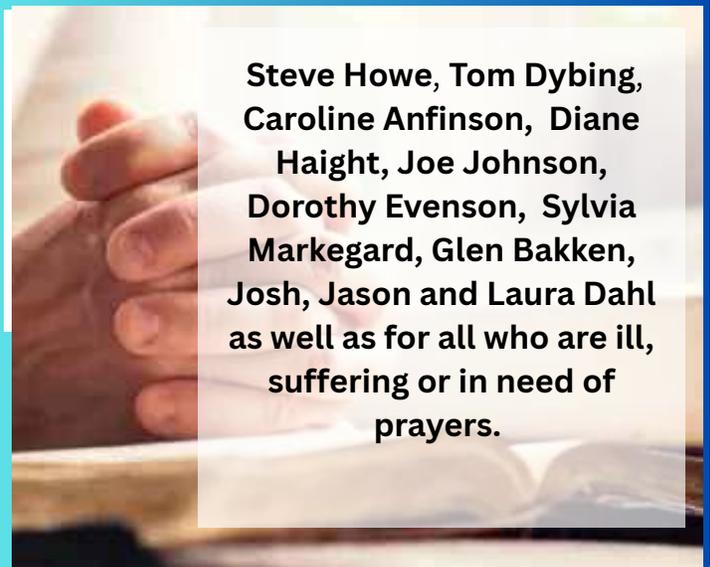
Parish Council Meeting: 5:30pm

Elstad Council Meeting: 6:30pm



## In our Prayers

Steve Howe, Tom Dybing, Caroline Anfinson, Diane Haight, Joe Johnson, Dorothy Evenson, Sylvia Markegard, Glen Bakken, Josh, Jason and Laura Dahl as well as for all who are ill, suffering or in need of prayers.



# Save the date!!!

## SAVE THE DATE!!

ELSTAD: JANUARY 18<sup>TH</sup> AFTER 10:30 WORSHIP

HIGHLAND PRAIRIE: JANUARY 25<sup>TH</sup> AFTER 10:30 WORSHIP

JOIN US FOR A TIME OF COMMUNITY, GRATITUDE,  
AND SHARED VISION.

BRING YOUR FAVORITE DISH AND YOUR VOICE AS WE CELEBRATE THE YEAR BEHIND US AND LOOK FORWARD TO WHAT'S AHEAD. YOUR PRESENCE MATTERS—ALL MEMBERS ARE NEEDED TO ATTEND SO THAT WE CAN FAITHFULLY CARRY OUT THE WORK OF THE CONGREGATION TOGETHER.

## January Worship Times

Elstad	Highland Prairie
1/04 10:30 am	1/04 9:00 am
1/11 10:30 am	1/11 9:00 am
1/18 10:30 am	1/18 9:00 am
1/25 9:00 am	1/25 10:30am

**We will not be changing worship times this year UNTIL after the annual meetings**

## Don't forget about your BUCKETS OF BLESSINGS

A joyful, hands-on stewardship campaign inviting all members and friends of our congregation's to care for our church home. Just as drops of water can fill a bucket, the small gifts we share; spare change, extra dollars, or folded bills—add up to make a big impact.

Together, we can "Repair & Restore: One Pail at a Time."



### How It Works

- Each household is invited to bring home a Buckets of Blessings pail from the back table.
- Throughout the year, you are all encouraged to place spare change, extra cash, or intentional gifts into their buckets.
- When your bucket is full bring it to church as an offering of gratitude and support and place it in the large pail up front. If your pail is for a specific mission leave it up front and grab another bucket.

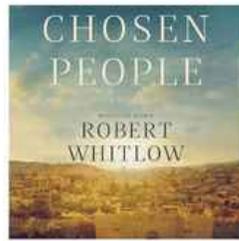


We are looking for help with shoveling at the churches. We have a sign-up sheet for those interested helping out. If this is something you are interested in helping with, please fill out the information sheet. They will be located on the information tables at both churches.



### Book Study

Meet @ Elstad  
Monday  
January 19th  
6:00pm



Highland Prairie



ELSTAD



Elstad WELCA will be serving coffee before the 10:30 a.m. worship service. Coffee will be served at **9:15 each Sunday morning**.

Reach out to Carolyn Smith or Ruth Abrahamson with any questions.

Highland Prairie WELCA will be serving coffee after the 9:00 a.m. worship service. Reach out to Mary Gudmundson to sign up to host fellowship.



### Growth and Education

**The Leah Circle** will meet on at 2pm at Park Lane. We use the bible study is from "The Gather" magazine, all are welcomed to join. Reach out to Carol Dixon for more information if interested in joining.

**The Esther Circle** will meet at 9:30am at the Haight Home. Reach out to Ruth Abrahamson for more information if interested in joining.

**Elizabeth Circle** meets at 8:45am at Park Lane Contact Lori Bakke for more information.

**Naomi Bible Study:** will meet at 6:30 pm in 1/7/25 at Highland Prairie. We will continue our study of Eve. Grab your bible and join us on as we exploring and engage with the bible through conversation, study and "Bible Journaling".

**WELCA Bible Study:** 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday 1pm @ Highland Prairie

HP Quilting and potluck 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Wednesday of the month starting at  
9:30am



# Youth & Family

January 3<sup>rd</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup>

## Youth Lock-In

7-12 grade Students - Come Spend the night at church enjoy an evening of Games - Food - Fun and Fellowship!! Invite a friend or two or TEN!!

NO need to pack your Sunday Church Clothes because Sunday January 4<sup>th</sup> is wear your Jammies to Church Sunday!!!

Let's kick off the New Year together!!

This is a PARISH Event and all are welcome to attend!!

Please reach out to Pr. Jackie to sign up or with any questions!!

# PAJAMA DAY



January 4<sup>th</sup> is Pajama Sunday!

**Elstad and Highland Prairie!** Come cozy and comfy—wear your favorite pajamas to church as we start the new year with joy and fellowship! This is not just for the littles all ages are invited to wear PJ's!!!

Elstad Sunday School  
Sunday school will resume on January 4<sup>th</sup>

## Education

HP COMMUNITY SUNDAY SCHOOL WILL RESUME ON JANUARY 4TH



## CONFIRMATION



### SCHEDULE

#### JANUARY

Jan 7: 6:30pm @ HP  
Jan 14: 6:30pm @ HP  
Jan 21: 6:30pm @ HP  
Jan 28: 6:30pm @ HP

#### FEBRUARY

Feb 4: 6:30pm @ HP  
Feb 11: 6:30pm @ HP  
Feb 18: Ash Wednesday 5pm @ HP  
7pm @ Elstad  
Feb 25: Lenten Service 6:00pm @ Elstad

Starting on Jan. 7th Class will start meeting at Highland Prairie

Parents please remind your student to keep up on their sermon notes. During the holidays if you are worshipping with family in another congregation you can make notes on your bulletin and hand it in for credit.

# Highland Prairie Council Meeting Minutes

## Highland Prairie Lutheran Church Council Meeting

December 17, 2025

President Val Howe called the meeting to order at 5:23 pm.

Council Members present were Mary Gudmundson, Val Howe, Courtney Lee, David Markegard and Mike Pepin. Robert

Anfinson and Kristi Gudmundson, Amy Jacobson, Chellsey Lind were absent.

A quorum was not realized.

Respectfully submitted.

Mary Gudmundson

Next Meeting **January 11th, 12:00** at Highland Prairie, **6:30 pm** Joint Parish Council

# January

# 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				Happy New Years! Bulletin Items Duel		
				Esther Circle 9:30am Bulletin Items Duel		
Highland Prairie W: 9 am Elstad W: 10:30 am-SS: 10:45am	Bible Study @ Bethlehem 9:30am	Worship Committee Meeting 6:30pm	Pr. Jackie Office 8-4 HP Bible Study Elizabeth Circle 1:30pm 8:30am Confirmation @ Highland Prairie 6:30-8 pm	8	9	10
Community Sunday School 3-5pm			Pr. Jackie Office 8-4 WELCA Quilting @ HP 9:30am	15	16	17
Highland Prairie W: 9 am Elstad W: 10:30 am-SS: 10:45am		Leah Circle 2:00 pm Education Committee Meeting 5:30pm	Confirmation @ Highland Prairie 6:30-8 pm			
Council Meetings @ HP HP: 12:30p E5:30p Parish: 6:30p	Pr. Jackie Region Summit 1/12-1/14 Bible Study @ Bethlehem 9:30am		Pr. Jackie Office 8-4	Bulletin Items Duel		
Highland Prairie W: 9 am Elstad W: 10:30 am-SS: 10:45am	Book Study @ Elstad 6pm	Newsletter Items Duel	Confirmation @ Highland Prairie 6:30-8 pm	Bulletin Items Duel		
Elstad Annual Meeting & Potluck after worship	Bible Study @ Bethlehem 9:30am		Pr. Jackie Office 8-4	22	23	24
ATTENTION WORSHIP TIME CHANGE!!!	26	Naomi Bible Study @ HP 6:30pm	Pr. Jackie Office 8-4	29	30	31
Elstad W: 9 am - SS: 9:45am Highland W: 10:30 am HP Annual Meeting & Potluck after worship	Bible Study @ Bethlehem 9:30am		Confirmation @ Highland Prairie 6:30-8 pm	Bulletin Items Duel		

*Elstad Highland Prairie Lutheran Parish*

*43267 Bowl Drive*

*Peterson, MN 55962*



**Highland Prairie  
Acolytes/Readers/Greeters**

**Sunday, January 4, 2026**

**Acolyte:** Slade Pepin

**Readers:** Slade Pepin

**Greeters:**

**Sunday, January 11, 2026**

**Acolyte:** Joey Evenson

**Readers:** Joey Evenson

**Greeters:**

**Sunday, January 18, 2026**

**Acolytes:** Dominic Humble

**Readers:** Dominic Humble

**Greeters:**

**Sunday, January 25, 2026**

**Acolytes:** Jaxy Dahl

**Readers:** Hunter Lee

**Greeters:**

**Elstad  
Acolytes/Readers/Ushers**

**Sunday, January 4, 2026**

**Acolyte:** Quentin Daniels

**Readers:** Quentin Daniels

**Greeters:**

**Sunday, January 11, 2026**

**Acolyte:** Mason Wolfs

**Readers:** Mason Wolfs

**Greeters:**

**Sunday, January 18, 2026**

**Acolytes:** Norah Eide

**Readers:** Norah Eide

**Greeters:**

**Sunday, January 25, 2026**

**Acolytes:** Nolan Eide

**Readers:** Nolan Eide

**Greeters:**