

*Elstad ~ Highland Prairie Lutheran Parish*  
*A Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*

*~ December 2022 ~*

*Interim Pastor, Pr. Alma Buco*

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Dear Church-

It may be a bit weird-but this is my favorite time of year.

No not the cold weather, and the snow and the shorter days. But this church season we are entering now...Advent! I love Advent.

And in this time of year, I can pretty easily get on my soapbox when we skip from Halloween right to Christmas. Every time I have walked through Menard's in the past couple of months to see all of the Christmas inflatables up for sale, next to the ones for Halloween and Thanksgiving, I scoff a little and roll my eyes. "It isn't even November yet" (ok...it is now) I would think.

And I love Advent, because rather than jumping from holiday to holiday, from celebration to celebration, Advent asks us to acknowledge the challenge that is waiting. Advent asks us to acknowledge the "not yet's" of the world. I find peace in knowing a faith that is present both in the celebration and in the waiting, the known and the unknown, the now and not yet.

Dear ones, to me it feels like we are in the middle of long Advent as a church- the middle of celebrating and waiting, the known and the unknown, the now and not yet.

We are in the celebration of life returning to "normal" post-COVID but the waiting to see what our "new normal" will be. We are in the knowing that we have a strong faith community but the unknown of what that will continue to look like. We are in the now of my being your interim pastor but the "not-yet" of a permanent call.

We are in our own Advent time as a church. So perhaps this year more than any other, it is important to slow down right now and sit in the Advent-time and to remember God's presence in the middle of the waiting, unknowing and the not-yets.

I have a dear friend and mentor who's favorite day of the year is December 21<sup>st</sup>, the shortest day, the winter solstice. I thought it was odd when she shared this with me but then she explained that, encountering the shortest day, or put another way, the longest night, meant that the days were going to slowly start getting longer. That slowly there would be more light each day and each day would get brighter and brighter.

This is the promise of Advent as well. That the celebration will happen, the waiting will end, we will step into a greater known and our new "now".

As we find ourselves, unable to avoid the "Advent" time in our live, the waiting and the unknown, we also are people who trust this Advent promise is still present. That God's hope is not just present in the celebration of Christmas but in the waiting, in the promise that God's light comes into our world in unexpected ways.

We will get through this time of waiting. The days will start getting brighter. It may be a slow process and it won't happen all at once, but we will get there. We will get to the celebration of Christ's coming at Christmas, even if it looks a little different than expected.

That is the promise of Advent.

## **December Worship Schedule**

### **Second Sunday of Advent, Dec. 4th**

**Elstad—9:00 a.m.**

**Sunday school—during worship**

**Highland Prairie—10:30 a.m.**

**Sunday school—9:30 a.m.**

Isaiah 11:1-10

Psalms 72:1-7, 18-19

Romans 15:4-13

Matthew 3:1-12

### **Third Sunday of Advent, December 11th**

**Elstad—9:00 a.m.**

**Christmas Program**

**Highland Prairie—10:30 a.m.**

**Christmas Program**

Isaiah 35:1-10

Psalms 146:5-10

James 5:7-10

Matthew 11:2-11

### **Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 18th**

**Elstad—9:00 a.m.**

**Highland Prairie—10:30 a.m.**

Isaiah 7:10-16

Psalms 80:1-7, 17-19

Romans 1:1-7

Matthew 1:18-25

### **Christmas Eve, December 24th**

**Highland Prairie—5:00 p.m.**

**Elstad—7:00 p.m.**

Isaiah 9:2-7

Psalms 96

Titus 2:11-14

Luke 2:1-14 [15-20]

### **Christmas Day, December 25th**

**No Church Services**

Isaiah 62:6-12

Psalms 97

Titus 3:4-7

Luke 2:[1-7] 8-20

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## *Prayer Corner*

*Scripture tells us to pray without ceasing. Let's be known as a praying congregation. Please keep Carol Fogal, Ferne Brewster, Paul & Cindy Feind, Dennis McRaven, Naomi Wangen, Steve Howe, Marlys Paulson, Lisa Bakkum, the family of Kenneth Peterson and all others who are ill or in need of our prayers.*

Elstad Annual WELCA Christmas Tea - Sunday, Dec. 4th, 10 a.m. following worship. We will also reveal our Prayer Partners for those who took part in that and sign up for next year's Prayer Partners. Plan to join us!

Elstad members, if you are able, please consider more offerings to the church. Our Treasury is low at this time and we need more funds to meet our end of the year obligations.

### **Elstad Budget for October 2022**

Budget October	\$ 6545.17
Received October	\$ 5879.10
Under October	\$ 666.17
Elstad YTD budget	\$ 65451.70
Received YTD	\$ 53171.17
Under YTD	\$ 12280.53

### **Highland Prairie Budget for October 2022**

YTD Income	\$ 61,818
YTD Expenses	\$ 82,070
Expenses Exceed Income	\$ 20,252
YTD budget	\$ 82,000
YTD Income	\$ 61,818
YTD Under	\$ 20,182

As the church is reaching the end of the year, please remember to include our church in your financial commitments. If you aren't able to attend church services, we encourage you to mail your offering to Karen Bakken (Highland Prairie Treasurer), 713 Johnson Court, Rushford, MN 55971 or Highland Prairie Church, 43267 Bowl Drive, Peterson, MN 55962.

**Please Note:** If you reach out to the office and don't receive an email back, please either send a follow-up email or call and leave a message. This will ensure your message is received as there have been some difficulties with the office email. The voice mail at church is checked daily. Thank you.

Elstad-Highland Prairie Lutheran Church Council Meeting Minutes  
Sunday, November 13th, 2022  
At Elstad Lutheran Church

The Meeting was held at Elstad Lutheran Church with Elstad's president, Gene Topness calling the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

Roll call was taken. A Quorum was called. Missing members include Krissy Overland and Christopher Nelson

Others present: Pastor Alma

Agenda was reviewed. Motion to approve agenda made by Steve Howe and second by Dave Markegard. Motion carried.

Devotions were given by Pastor Alma.

Congregation members present to address the council include: none.

Communication received none.

There is no additional President's report in addition to Elstad or Highland Prairie council meetings.

Pastor's report:

There will be a hymn sing on Sunday, January 1st, 2023 which is the Sunday after Christmas day. This service will be considered a pajama day with fellowship following.

Joint Parish Youth:

There are 10 confirmation members. The spark bibles have been available to anyone that wants one for free will donation.

Old Business/Committee Reports:

Computer/iPad - The computer and ipad have been paid for, but they have not been received yet. Gordon Johnson has been in communication with Chris on this matter.

New Business:

A) Call Committee: The call committee will be discussed in both council meetings.

If you would like to participate in the call committee, please contact one of your fellow council members.

B) Land rent approval - A bid for \$10,987 was accepted for rent on the 34.88 acres on a 3 year term from Doug Lind. The motion to approve the rental agreement was made by Amber Arends and second by Robert Anfinson. Motion carried

C) Secretary Salary 2023- The current salary is \$753/month. The motion was made by Amber Arends to give a \$20/month raise including an annual review. Motion was second by Mary Gudmundson. Motion carried. The Council Presidents and Pastor Alma will review the current job description and update it as needed.

D) Preliminary Calendar for 2023 - The calendar was reviewed and corrections were noted. The calendar will be updated and reviewed at a later date.

E) Church Directory - The directory will be submitted by the end of November.

F) Parsonage- The gutters are a safety hazard for cleaning. A new quote was requested from Latch Island and will be reviewed when it is received. The heat in the parsonage is on. There are a lot of dead flies on the floor that will be cleaned up. There are 3 bad blinds on the windows in the parsonage that do not work.

Secretary's report was given. Motion to approve by Gordon Johnson, and second by Jennifer Nepstad. Motion carried.

Motion to adjourn the meeting by Joyce Dahl and second by Sharon Ehler. Meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:52pm.

Submitted by Aimee Rodger, Elstad Council Secretary

Next Meeting is Sunday January 8th, 2023 at Highland Prairie. 3

Elstad Lutheran Church Council Meeting Minutes  
Sunday, November 13th, 2022  
Elstad Lutheran Church

The meeting was called to order by President Gene Topness at 6:58 p.m.

Roll call: A Quorum was called. Missing members include Krissy Overland and Christopher Nelson

The agenda was reviewed. A motion to approve the revised agenda was made by Amber Arends second by Kathy Abrahamson. Motion passed.

There are no congressional members present to address the council.

No Pastor's report at this time.

The treasurer's report was reviewed and placed on file for audit at a later date.

The offering plate will start being passed around on December 1st, 2022.

Luther and Patsy Magelssen donated \$5,000 for Christian Ministry needs for members and youth if there is an opportunity and church support if needed.

The motion to place the treasurer's report on file was made by Amber Arends and second by Kathy Abrahamson. Motion carried.

No President's at this time.

Correspondence received:

- The Midwest Surface Coating provided a quote for \$10,000 to seal the church. President Gene Topness will speak to Tyler Clement from Midwest Surface Coating in more detail.

Old Business:

- Church Repairs- Christopher Nelson will follow up with updates from Yoder Masonry on repairs to the outside of the church that need to be completed. President Gene Topness will follow up Tom Dybing about lights and Duane Bakke about filters for the reverse osmosis system.
- Youth and Mission

Noisy Offering - An idea to collect and raise money for a mission chosen by the youth starting during advent and the first collection taking place during the Christmas program.

New Business:

A. Staff Salaries

- Mowing- \$260 per mowing
- Custodial- \$4,500 per year
- Organist - \$2,000 per year
- Treasurer - \$600 per year

A motion to approve the staff salaries was made by Kathy Abrahamson and second by Amber Arends. Motion carried.

- Positions for 2023 - Looking to fill church committee positions for 2023
- Call Committee Members - Marcia Randall, John Rein, Jodie Daniels, and Thea Arends

The motion to approve the 4 members of the call committee was made by Kathy Abrahamson and second by Amber Arends.

Secretary's report was given. Motion was given to approve the secretary's report by Jennifer Nepstad, second by Amber Arends Motion passed.

Motion was made by Amber Arends to adjourn, second by Kathy Abrahamson. The meeting was adjourned at 7:45pm.

Secretary's report submitted by Aimee Rodger.

Next Meeting is Sunday, January 8th, 2023 at Highland Prairie.

## **Highland Prairie Lutheran Church Council Meeting**

**November 13, 2022**

The meeting was called to order at 6:55 p.m. by President Gordon Johnson.

Council Members present were Robert Anfinson, Karen Bakken, Joyce Dahl, Sharon Ehler, Mary Gudmundson, Steve Howe, Val Howe, Gordon Johnson, David Markegard and Lyle Meldahl.

Devotions were given at the joint council meeting.

A quorum was determined, and a motion to approve the agenda as presented was made by Val Howe, David Markegard seconded. Motion carried.

The Treasurer's Report was given by Karen Bakken. The year-to-date information provided was income of \$61,818.00 expenses \$82,070.00; expenses exceed income by \$20,252.00. A motion to approve as presented was made by Lyle Meldahl, Steve Howe seconded. Motion carried. Mission funds have not been allocated yet, Joyce Dahl moved to send \$500.00 to Christmas in Fillmore County and \$500.00 to Rushford Food Shelf, Sharon Ehler seconded, Motion carried.

No President's Report

Pastor's Report given at joint council meeting.

Correspondence - None

Committee Reports - None

Old Business: None

New Business: Electrical items, no power to yard light and freezer outlet needs repair.

- Weather-stripping needed on new doors
- Quote for last two door replacements is \$4260.00
- Budget ideas needed in light of current deficit
- Budget cuts to consider in light of current deficit
- Shelter doors have been sealed up for winter, water lines have been winterized
- Taping of church worship services is pending delivery of new iPads
- Call Committee - Mary Gudmundson, Kyle Chiglo, Kristi Gudmundson, and Amy Jacobson have submitted their names. Joyce Dahl made a motion to approve them for the Call Committee, Steve Howe seconded. Motion carried.
- Dirt has been spread over foundation of old church furnace room

The Secretary's report was read and a motion to approve was made by Val, Karen seconded. Motion carried.

A motion to adjourn at 7:37 p.m. was made by Steve Howe, David Markegard seconded. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted, Mary Gudmundson

Next Meeting is December 11<sup>th</sup> at Highland Prairie.

# DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES!

All Birthdays & Anniversaries are listed according to the information on file. If you see an error please contact Lisa Chiglo ~ Email: [highlandprairie\\_elstad@gmail.com](mailto:highlandprairie_elstad@gmail.com)



- |                        |                       |                                |
|------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1~ Ruth Abrahamson     | 20~ Noelle Graham     |                                |
| ~ Sara Pedersen        | ~ Brode Vickerman     |                                |
| 2~ Kathleen Wold       | 21~ Clair Olson       | 13~ Charles & Lynette Pederson |
| ~ Christopher Drinkall | ~ Steven Ryan         |                                |
| 3~ Margaret Zack       | ~ Josh Rein           | 18~ Gordon & Arlene Johnson    |
| 4~ Kathy Kendhammer    | ~ Maddie James        |                                |
| 5~ Carol Overland      | ~ Ethan Grimsrud      | 19~ Tom & Carolyn Smith        |
| 6~ Kristi Gudmundson   | 22~ Matthew Halverson |                                |
| 7~ Ann Fretland        | 23~ Nikol Rislov      | 27~ Philip & Ruth Abrahamson   |
| 8~ Hannah Pearce       | 24~ Gustav Hoiland    |                                |
| 11~ Peter Peterson     | 25~ Mary Lawstuen     |                                |
| 13~ Boe Rein           | ~ Tristen Chiglo      |                                |
| 15~ Renee Ritter       | 26~ Julie Paulson     |                                |
| ~ Madison Smith        | ~ Hew Johnson         |                                |
| ~ Isaac Ask            | 27~ Matthew Halverson |                                |
| ~ Renee Ritter         | 28~ Sarah Stensgard   |                                |
| ~ Chase Humble         | ~ Elin Rein           |                                |
| 16~ Christopher Freese | ~ Jimmie Wangen       |                                |
| 17~ Sue Larson         | 30~ Ashley Johnson    |                                |
| ~ Tom Feine            | ~ Parker Storhoff     |                                |
| ~ Sandra Johnson       | 31~ Jesse Nelson      |                                |
| 18~ Kaia Drinkall      | ~ Jarod Dybing        |                                |
| 19~ John Abrahamson    |                       |                                |
| ~ Rachel Bearbower     |                       |                                |
| ~ Lynn Ryan            |                       |                                |

# December

**Elstad ~ Highland Prairie Lutheran Parish**  
 Visit our websites at...  
[elstadlutheranchurch.org](http://elstadlutheranchurch.org)  
[highlandprairielutheranchurch.org](http://highlandprairielutheranchurch.org)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4 9:00 a.m.—Elstad EL SS (during worship) 10:30 a.m.—H.P. 9:30 a.m. HP SS 10:00 a.m. Elstad Christmas Tea	5	6	7 HP WELCA Confirmation 6:30 p.m. Bulletin Deadline	8	9	10
11 9:00 a.m.—Elstad Christmas Program 10:30 a.m.—H.P. Christmas Program	12	13	14 HP WELCA Quilting—9:30 a.m. w/potluck Confirmation 6:30 p.m. Bulletin Deadline	15	16	17
18 9:00 a.m.—Elstad No SS 10:30 a.m.—H.P. No SS	19	20	21 Confirmation 6:30 p.m. Bulletin Deadline	22	23	24 Christmas Eve worship HP—5:00 p.m. EL—7:00 p.m.
25 No Worship Services  Merry Christmas!	26	27	28 No Confirmation  Bulletin Deadline	29	30	31

*Elstad ~ Highland Prairie Lutheran Parish  
43267 Bowl Drive  
Peterson, MN 55962*

*Address Services Requested*

Non-Profit Organization

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Peterson, MN 55962

Permit No. #6



**HIGHLAND PRAIRIE**  
**ACOLYTES/READERS/GREETERS**

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2022**

**ACOLYTE:** CREIGHTON HOINESS  
**READERS:** CREIGHTON HOINESS, LYNNETTE PEDERSON  
**GREETERS:** LYLE & ANN MELDAHL

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2022**

**CHRISTMAS PROGRAM**  
**GREETERS:** ALLAN SKALET & KAY EIKEN

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2022**

**ACOLYTE:** CARSON JOHNSON  
**READERS:** CARSON JOHNSON, ARLENE JOHNSON  
**GREETERS:** GORDON & ARLENE JOHNSON

**CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE, DEC. 24, 2022**

**ACOLYTE:** TAHVEN PEPIN  
**READERS:** TAHVEN PEPIN, SHARON EHLER  
**GREETERS:** SHARON & PAUL EHLER

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 2022**

**ACOLYTE:**  
**READERS:** , SCOTT BESTUL  
**GREETERS:** LYLE & ANN MELDAHL

**ELSTAD**  
**ACOLYTES/READERS/USHERS**

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2022**

**ACOLYTE:** MILEY KNUTSON  
**READERS:** AUBREY DANIELS, TOM DYBING

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2022**

**CHRISTMAS PROGRAM**

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2022**

**ACOLYTE:** SAWYER WOLFS  
**READERS:** THEA ARENDS, JOHN ABRAHAMSON

**CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE DEC. 24, 2022**

**ACOLYTE:** THEA ARENDS  
**READERS:** PARKER STORHOFF, LORI BAKKE

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 2022**

**ACOLYTE:** SARI REIN  
**READERS:** MAKENZIE KNUTSON, GLEE CLAUSSEN

**USHERS:** DIANE HAIGHT, DICK HAIGHT,  
STEVE STORHOFF, RICH NEPSTAD,  
JT REIN