

2025



February



**The Official Newsletter of the
Elstad Highland Prairie
Lutheran Parish**

Pastor Jackie is regularly in the office
Wednesdays 8-4
as well as by appointment. Please Call
or email to set up a time that works
for you.

Courtney is in the office
Sundays 12-2p
as well as by appointment please
email to schedule a time

My name is Courtney Lee, and I am excited to be your new Parish Secretary. I am married to my Husband Mark and we have 2 wonderful boys Hunter and Hudson. I do work full-time as a nurse and I over see the medical needs for people that live in a group home setting. I am planning to work from the office on Sundays from 12-2p and I am available to meet at other times as needed. I will be responsible for helping with putting together the bulletin and the newsletter so please reach out if there is anything you need added. I look forward to building new relationships with you all.

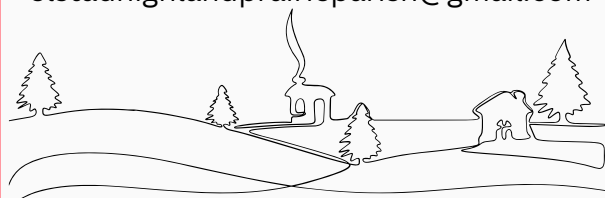
Pastor: Rev. Jackie Short
(507) 517-0769

pastor.highlandprairie.elstad@gmail.com

Parish Office:

(507) 864-2731

elstadhighlandprairieparish@gmail.com



THIS MONTH:

NOTE FROM THE PASTOR PAGE 2

PARISH NEWS PAGE 3

PRAYER LIST PAGE 4

WELCA PAGE 5

YOUTH & FAMILY PAGE 6

EDUCATION PAGE 7

COUNCIL REPORTS PAGE 9

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES PAGE 10.

PARISH CALENDAR PAGE 11

A note from your Pastor

Greetings, February is a month that often brings a mix of deep winter stillness and dreaming of the coming spring. In the life of the church, we find ourselves in a season of transition as well—moving from the celebrations of Epiphany into the solemnness as we journey through Lent.

Lent is a time of prayer, fasting, and reflection—a season to draw closer to God and renew our faith. It is a time to remember that we are dust, yet deeply loved; mortal, yet redeemed by Christ. This year, as we enter Lent, I invite you to consider what spiritual practices might help you grow in faith. Whether it's daily prayer, acts of service, or time spent in scripture, may this Lenten season be one of deepening your relationship with Christ.

February also reminds us of the power of love—not just the romantic love that fills store shelves with cards and candy, but the love of God that transforms and calls us to love our neighbors. In a world where division and strife often make headlines, we are called to be people of reconciliation and grace. As Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 13, love is patient and kind, bearing all things, believing all things, hoping all things. May we strive to embody that love in our words and actions. I encourage you to join us in worship, prayer, and fellowship this month. I pray that you will join us for Ash Wednesday service on March 5th, a Bible study, or Sunday worship this Lent so we may walk this journey of faith together, supporting and encouraging one another along the way.

Gods Blessings today and always,

Pr. Jackie

Where is Pastor Jackie this month....

Worship at Good Shepard: Thursday, February 13th

Conference Assembly Meeting: Sundy, February 16th

Meeting in Rochester: Thursday, February 27

Days off: Saturday February 15



Together In Faith

PARISH NEWS

Come Craft with us on the second Saturday of the February at **ELSTAD!!**
Grab whatever project you are working on and join us for a day of
Food, Fun and Fellowship!

Please bring a snack to share and we will see you there!

*** **ALL** are welcome bring a friend!!

9-3 on February **8th**
37784 Dogwood Rd, Lanesboro

Council Meetings

Sunday February 9th at
Highland Prairie



Highland Prairie WELCA is serving Fellowship on Sundays **after** worship.
Join us for a cup of coffee, a treat & great conversation!

Elstad Worship @ 10:30
Sunday School: during worship

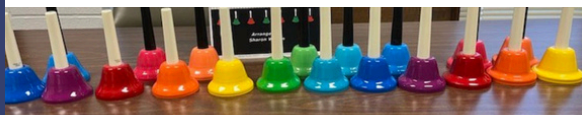


Highland Prairie Worship @ 9:00
Sunday School @ 10:00



ELSTAD WELCA is serving Fellowship on Sundays **before** worship.
Join us for a cup of coffee, a treat & great conversation!

Watch your email & bulletin
for Parish Bell
Choir Practice times.



Highland Prairie: We are looking for a handful of dedicated individuals to join our Ministry Committee. Your gifts and passion would be a wonderful addition to this team.

These committee's play a vital role in the ministry of our congregation. The **Worship Committee** works to "enhancing our worship services," The **Church Committee** cares for our church property. The **Grounds Committee** cares for the bowl, park and outside property. The **Education Committee** tends to the ongoing education of our congregation.

We are asking everyone to prayerfully consider joining the where their gifts and talents would be an asset.

Your presence and input is a blessing, and we'd love to invite each of you to be part of one of these important ministries.

If you're interested or have any questions, please feel free to reach out to any of our council members or Pr. Jackie

Thank you for all the ways you already contribute to our church family. We look forward to continuing to serving alongside you!

Pastor Jackie and her family would like to extend a heartfelt Thank You to both congregations for all the gifts and kindness shown to them this Christmas. We feel so grateful to be part of this parish and community.

Pastor Jackie, Jeff & Zowie Short



In our Prayers...

Alvin Paulson, Sheryl (Bakkum) Krahenbuhl, Dean Bakkum, Glen Bakken, Carol Overland, Valerie Askeland, Dave, Sue and Liz Larson, Val Howe, Eric Johnson, Mark Woodward, Laura Dahl, Lisa Gile, Ellen Highum, Amy Timmerann, Dave Bakke, Sharon Ehler, Emily Charlebois, Scott Bestul, Julian Highum, Pete Kennedy, as well as for all who are ill, suffering or in need of prayers.

Highland Prairie

Join us for Bible Study on
February 5th @ 1:30

WELCA invites you
to join
us for Quilting/DO
Day and potuck on
February 12th @
9:30

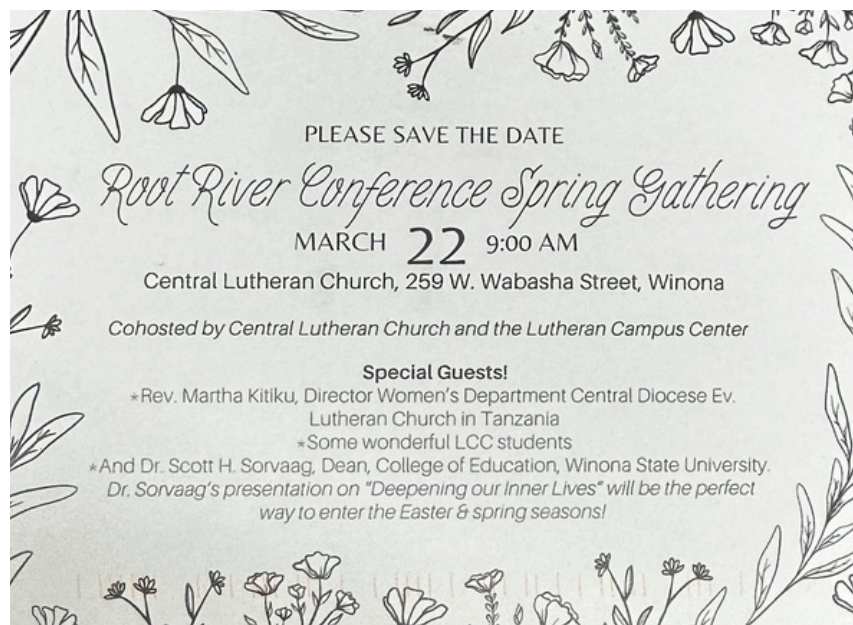
ELSTAD

Plans are under way for the March all
church birthday party. Date to be
shared a bit later.

Everyone who has a pet is asked to bring
a picture of the pet and Pastor Jackie
will offer a blessing
over the animals. Another presenter will
be coming to share in her dog business.
Followed by
a traditional Elstad potluck noon meal.

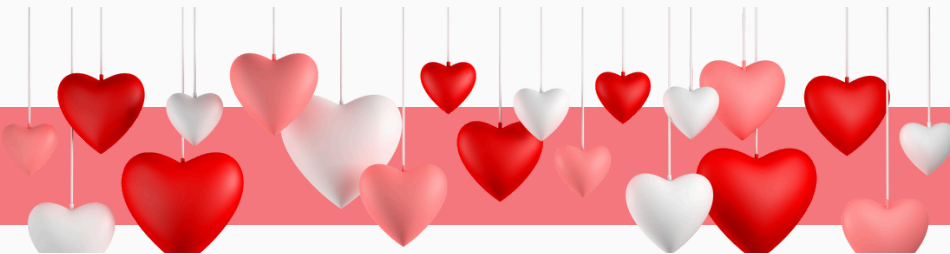
Registration is due March 6th

Highland
Prairie
Women
Wanting
to attend
please
contact
Cathy



Elstad
Women
Wanting
to attend
please
contact
Carolyn
or Ruth

Youth & Family



JULY 20 - JULY 25, 2025



LAKE TRAVERSE RESERVATION, SD

Mission Trip

Planning meeting

February 23rd

@ 2pm

Highland Prairie



CONFIRMATION

Bring your
BIBLE
to class!



We will be meeting at
Elstad for the rest of the year.

This month in Confirmation we will continue
focusing on **HEROS** in the Bible!

February

Feb.05: Class @ Elstad

Feb.12: Class @ Elstad

Feb.19 : Class @ Elstad

Feb.26 : Class @ Elstad



SCHEDULE

Sunday School

Highland Prairie

Currently in Sunday school the 5th & 6th graders are learning about John The Baptist. John prepared the way for Jesus, saying "Repent! Turn around! Share!" "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming." - Luke 3:16
His message : Jesus will save all of us.

Elstad

The Sunday school continues to follow the Spark Lectionary series. We are learning stories from Jesus's life and ministry. We appreciate all the support from the families! Everyone has been very helpful in leading classes. We will continue to use to need additional help through the winter and spring. Please let us know if you would like to lead a class or 2. We are so grateful for the love and welcome you offer our youth.

Michelle Rein

January 19 ,2025

President Gene Topness called the meeting to order at 11:50 a.m. and declared a quorum. The agenda was reviewed. Motion made by Duane Bakke and seconded by Amber Arends to approve the agenda. Motion passed.

Pastor's report: Pastor Jackie reflected on her first year as the leader of this congregation. Though it wasn't without challenges, 2024 was a year full of growth and blessings. Our mission remains clear: to glorify God by making disciples, serving our community, and sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ. We do this through our various ministries, which have flourished thanks to the dedication of our leaders and volunteers. Our Sunday School classes continue to thrive. Many families participated in special events held throughout the year, including the Easter Egg Hunt, Rally Sunday Picnic and Movie Night. Twenty-six children participated in First Communion class in 2024. The parish youth remained active in their service by hosting and serving a Lenten soup supper and a post-worship picnic at the bowl. The first cardboard box city raised more than \$1,600 for SEMCAC's homelessness prevention program. Pastor Jackie looks forward to building a strong youth ministry program in the year ahead as we seek opportunities to serve in outreach projects both locally and away.

Looking ahead, Pastor Jackie's goals include expanding opportunities to gather in order to foster deeper connections across the generations; increase visitation ministry to the homebound; and explore opportunities to ensure that our church is able to continue to do the ministry we are called to do in this community.

Pastor Jackie expressed her gratitude for all of the support, prayers and hands that make this ministry possible. As we embark on a new year, let us remain steadfast in our faith and commitment to God's work.

President's report: President Gene Topness thanked everyone for venturing out and attending the meeting today despite the sub-zero temperatures. He reflected on 2024 with the excitement of our new pastor, Jackie Short. We are blessed that God sent Pastor Jackie to lead our congregation. Gene noted some projects that were planned in 2024 did not get completed for various reasons. However, he is hopeful that with new contacts, we will complete those projects this year. Gene expressed his gratitude to several people in the congregation who serve in various positions, ministries, and committees that help keep this church going. He thanked Pastor Jackie for all the work she has done in her first year with us, as well as those who continue to worship with us. Gene noted what a blessing it is to see so many children attend our worship service and see our Sunday School program thriving. May God continue to bless Elstad Lutheran Church.

The secretary's report was given by Tanya Wolfs. The motion to accept the report made by Philip Abrahamson and seconded by Glee Clausen. Motion carried.

The treasurer's report was given by Jennifer Nepstad. She reviewed the 2024 year-end report and said money was very tight, but we were able to end the year with a balance of just over \$1,500. Jennifer noted that the Elstad General Fund still owes the Memorial Fund \$3,600 for contracted fuel. The drive-thru dinner on Sept. 7, 2024 netted a \$2,500 profit - which was a great fundraiser for the church, considering there is not much work involved.

The treasurer's report has been audited and placed on file. Motion made by Dick Haight to accept the treasurer's report, seconded by Lori Bakke. Motion carried.

Full reports from the pastor, council president, treasurer, cemetery board, WELCA and other ministry leaders are printed in the annual report.

Old Business: No old business to discuss.

New Business:

1) 2025 Worship Schedule

a. The proposed 2025 worship schedule is enclosed in the annual report. Jennifer Nepstad noted that Elstad and Highland Prairie will do their own Rally Sunday services in 2025, which means one less joint bowl service. Motion by Vicky Topness to accept the 2025 proposed worship schedule, seconded by John Rein. Motion carried.

2) 2025 Budget

a. Treasurer Jennifer Nepstad reviewed the proposed 2025 budget and estimated expenses. No significant changes to the budget were made. However, a few voluntary contributions to outside organizations were lowered for 2025 due to budget constraints. Insurance costs continue to rise, which adds to our 2025 expenses. A copy of the proposed budget is enclosed in the Annual Report. Motion made by Glee Clausen to accept the 2025 proposed budget, seconded by Shelly Nelson. Motion carried.

3) Election of Officers

a. The 2025 officer ballot was reviewed. There were no additional nominees from the floor.

b. A copy of the Elstad Lutheran Church Official Ballot is summarized below.

Names in bold were voted on and approved at this year's meeting.

i. President (1 year): Gene Topness

ii. Vice President (1 year): Matt Nelson

iii. Secretary (1 year): Tanya Wolfs

iv. Treasurer (1 year): Jennifer Nepstad

v. Trustees (3 years): Morgan Knutson (2028), Kathy Abrahamson (2027), Amber Arends (2026)

vi. Board of Education (3 years): Michelle Rein (2028), Morgan Knutson (2027), Krissy Overland (2026)

vii. Altar Gild (3 years): Krissy Overland (2028), Byron & Aimee Rodger (2027), Dick and Diane Haight (2027), Darlys Storhoff (2026)

viii. Synod Assembly Voting Members: Dick and Diane Haight

ix. Synod Assembly Alternates: Gene and Vicky Topness

x. Auditor (2 years): John Abrahamson (2027), Tom Dybing (2026)

xi. World Hunger Representatives: Philip and Ruth Abrahamson

xii. Head Ushers: Gene and Vicky Topness, Dick and Diane Haight, Erik and Kallee Nelson

xiii. Cemetery Board (3 years): David Lawstuen (2028), Duane Bakke (2027), Rich Nepstad (2026)

With no other nominations from the floor, Duane Bakke made a motion to unanimously approve the nominations as presented on the ballot, seconded by John Abrahamson. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Lori Bakke to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Jodie Daniels. Motion carried.

The 2025 annual meeting was adjourned at 12:14 p.m. and closed with the Lord's Prayer. Submitted by: Tanya Wolfs, Elstad Lutheran Church Council Secretary.

January 26, 2025

Highland Prairie Lutheran Church Annual Meeting of the Congregation

The meeting called to order at 12:21 p.m. by President Kyle Chigo with twenty-eight members present, a minimum of ten percent of voting, contributing members required. (Two hundred estimated) A quorum was determined and a motion to approve the agenda with the addition of New Business made by Gordon Johnson, Mike Pepin seconded. Motion carried.

Opening Liturgy

The Pastor's Report by Pastor Jackie Short is in the packet to review.

The President's Report by Kyle Chiglo is in the packet to review.

The Secretary's Report from the 2024 annual meeting is in the packet to review.

The Treasurer's Report given by Karen Bakken. A motion to approve as presented by Kenneth Bakkum, Val Howe seconded. Motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Endowment Report reviewed by Val Howe. There is interest of approximately \$3,300.00 which is for education needs, repairs to the church and grounds, missions, and at the committee's discretion.

Worship: No report submitted.

WELCA report in the packet.

Board of Education report given by Val Howe.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: Approve the 2025 Worship Schedule – A motion to approve as presented made by Gordon Johnson, Lisa Chiglo seconded. Motion carried.

Approve the 2025 Proposed Budget – A motion to approve as presented made by Lisa Chiglo, Chelley Lind seconded. Motion carried.

Election of Officers – The ballot completed was for Val Howe, President; Gordon Johnson, Vice President; Mary Gudmundson, Secretary; Courtney Lee, Treasurer; 3 year Trustees Chellsey Lind and Amy Jacobson; Synod Assembly Voting Members, Sharon Boyum and Lynette Pedersen; Kay Eiken and Allan Skalet as Synod Assembly Alternates; Mike Pepin for 3 year Treasurer of Endowment Committee; Jackie Short for 2 year Endowment Committee; Good Shepherd Delegates Mary Gudmundson and Chellsey Lind; Auditor Brenda Markegard. A motion to cease nominations and to approve a unanimous white ballot made by Cathy Bakkum, Larry Dahl seconded. Motion carried.

Accessibility – Concerns addressed with Gordon Johnson recommending that the Council investigate and propose a Congregational meeting be held to discuss using the Memorial Funds toward a handicapped accessible bathroom on the sanctuary level, moving the Pastor's and Parish Administrative Assistant offices to the unused Sunday school rooms.

The Secretary's report read by Mary Gudmundson and a motion to approve made by Kristi Gudmundson, Gary Rustad seconded. Motion carried.

A motion to adjourn at 1:45 p.m. with the Lord's Prayer made by Brenda Markegard, Chellsey Lind seconded. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted, Mary Gudmundson, Secretary

A note from your Highland Prairie Council

President Report: Val Howe

Vision outline for this year for Highland Prairie Lutheran Church is as follows:

1. Update and review all church policies (funeral, wedding, job discretion, ect...).
2. Form committees with 1 to 2 council members and 2 to 3 church members.
3. Write up procedures/job duties for each committee and Welca, Council and put them in binder so everyone will know the procedures and what is expected.
4. Update our church constitution with Bylaws.
5. Proceed and gather information about putting the ADA Bathroom upstairs.
6. ADA access in church sanctuary.
7. Keep building and working with youth.

Please pray and consider being on a committee and being involved. We will be asking for input in writing up these procedures/job duties for committees, we value your opinions. I am excited to be working with everyone at Highland Prairie and keep growing our church family and faith and mission work.



- 1: Noah Carlson, Glenn Thomas, Ellen Highum, Brady Stensgard
- 2: Pr. Jackie Short, Jeff Mueller, Avery Rodger, Briella Rodger
- 3: Trent Eide, Sylvi Olson
- 4: Megan Fox, Kaylee Peterson
- 6: John Stadtmueller
- 7: Murton Boyum, Delane Horning
- 9: Allan Skalet, Robert Knutson, Andrew Howe, Courtney Dahl, Cooper Hovland
- 10: Patty Olson
- 13: David Markegard
- 14: Val Gudmundson, Kristen Peterson, Soren Eisner
- 5: Michael Halverson, Emily Johnson, Michael Rein
- 16: Jennifer Yonts
- 17: Rylee Nelson
- 18: Ava Paulson
- 19: Gracie Johnson

- 20: Gerald Hallum, Michael Evenson Jr, Joseph Evenson
- 21: Wayne Finnegan, Sandra Kenney, Erick James, Marissa Grimsrud, Ryan Maschka
- 22: Brandon Sjarpe, Kenna Gudmundson, Lilah Bakke
- 23: Ann Meldahl, Linda Hundorf, Tye Anderson
- 24: Stephanie Evenson
- 25: Richard Gullickson, Michele James
- 27: Dorothy Evenson
- 28: Sharyl Bergen



- 16: Randy and Kari Drinkall
- 20: Pr. Jackie & Jeff Short

FEBRUARY 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2 Highland Prairie W: 9 ~ SS: 10 Elstad W: 10:30 ~ SS: 10:45	3 Bible Study @ Bethlehem 9:30	4	5 Elizabeth Circle 8:30 Parish Office 8-4 HP Bible Study 1:30 Confirmation @ Highland Prairie 6:30-8	6 Bulletin Items Due Esther Circle 9:30	7	8
9 Highland Prairie W: 9:00~ SS: 10:00 Elstad W: 10:30 ~ SS: 10:45	10 Book Study Elstad 6-7:30 pm Bible Study @ Bethlehem 9:30	11 Leah Circle 2:00	12	13 Bulletin Items Due	14	15
16 Highland Prairie W: 9:00~ SS: 10:00 Elstad W: 10:30 ~ SS: 10:45	17 Bible Study @ Bethlehem 9:30	18	19 Parish Office 8-4 Confirmation @ Highland Prairie 6:30-8 Synod Assembly Planning Meeting @ 1	20 Bulletin Items Due	21	22
23 Highland Prairie W: 9:00 ~ SS: 10 Elstad W: 10:30 ~ SS: 10:45	24 Book Study Highland Prairie 6-7:30 Bible Study @ Bethlehem 9:30	25 Newsletter Items Due	26 Parish Office 8-4 Confirmation @ Highland Prairie 6:30-8	27 Bulletin Items Due	28	



Lent Begins with Ash Wednesday Service
on March 5th.
Elstad :5pm
Highland Prairie: 7pm

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

Address Services Requested

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Peterson, MN 55962
Permit No. #6



Highland Prairie

Acolytes/Readers/Greeters

Sunday, February 9, 2025

Acolyte: Hunter and Hudson Lee

Readers: Hunter and Hudson Lee

Greeters:

Sunday, February 16, 2024

Acolytes: Mathew Gudmundson, Caiden Dahl

Readers: Paula Howe

Greeters:

Sunday, February 23, 2024

Acolytes: Caiden Dahl, Clara Hoiland

Readers:

Greeters:

Elstad ~ Highland Prairie Lutheran Parish
Visit our websites at...
elstadlutheranchurch.org
highlandprairielutheranchurch.org

Elstad

Acolytes/Readers/Greeters

Sunday, February 9, 2025

Acolyte:

Readers: Vicky Topness

Greeters: Carol Fogal, Carol Dixon

Sunday, February 16, 2024

Acolytes:

Readers: Marcia Randall

Greeters: Tom and Carolyn Smith

Sunday, February 23, 2024

Acolytes:

Readers:

Greeters: Andy, Amber, Thea Arends