OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE ELSTAD HIGHLAND PRAIRIE LUTHERAN PARISH



Pastor Jackie is typically be in the office on Wednesdays 8-4 pm.

Call or email to set up a time to connect.

You're Invited to Celebrate Christmas Eve with Us!

Join us for one or both of our Christmas Eve Services as we come together to celebrate the joy, hope, and love of the season.

Elstad

37784 Dogwood Rd,Lanesboro December 24th at 7pm

~ or ~

Highland Prairie

43267 Bowl Drive, Peterson December 24th at 5pm

Experience the beauty of carols, the warmth of community, and the wonder of the Christmas story. Whether you're a longtime member or visiting for the first time, **you** are welcome to come and make **this** Christmas Eve truly meaningful.

We can't wait to see you!



Pastor: Rev. Jackie Short
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THIS MONTH:

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Worship Time Changes

January 5

Highland Prairie will be
at 9:00 am

Elstad will be at
10:30 am

A note from your Pastor

As we step into December, the lights of Christmas illuminate our homes, and the joy of the season fills the air. More than the twinkling decorations or festive gatherings, this is a time to reflect on the heart of our faith—the arrival of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

The Advent season is a beautiful reminder of God's promises fulfilled. Centuries of longing and waiting for the Messiah culminated in the quiet, humble birth of Jesus in Bethlehem. It's a story that never loses its wonder: God stepped into our broken world to bring salvation, hope, and peace.

This Christmas, let us be reminded that Jesus is the true light of the world. His light shines into the darkest corners of our lives, offering redemption and new beginnings. As John 1:5 says, "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."

In the busyness of the season, it's easy to get caught up in the rush of shopping, decorating, and planning. Let us pause to focus on the deeper meaning of this season. Whether in the quiet moments of prayer or the joy of gathering with loved ones, let's make room in our hearts for Jesus. This month, our parish has many opportunities to celebrate together fellowship, Christmas programs, worship, in addition to community events! I encourage you to participate and invite others to join you so they too can experience the hope and love of Christ.

May this season draw us closer to the heart of God, deepen our faith, and inspire us to share the love of Christ with those around us.

I pray your Christmas is filled with peace, joy, and the wonder.

Merry Christmas and many blessings,

Pr. Jackie

Pastor Jackie will be out of the office December 25-January 2nd



MERRY
CHRISTMAS
FROM MY
FAMILY TO
YOURS!

Elstad

Dec.1: Tanya, Mike, Sawyer & Mason Dec.8: Carol Dixon/ Carol Fogal Dec.15: Aaron, Erin, Mila & Vance Topness Dec.22: Rodger's Family

Highland Prairie

Dec. 1: Family Needed
Dec.8: Olson Family
Dec.15: Pepin Family
Dec.22: Gellersen Family





Together In Faith PARISH NEWS

Elstad Worship @ 9:00 a.m. Sunday School: during worship





Highland Prairie Worship @10:30 Sunday School @ 9:30 a.m.

HP December Council Meeting

Sunday December 8 at 12:30 PM



Elstad Highland Prairie Parish is looking for a part-time Parish Administrative Assistant. We are seeking a detail-oriented and organized person to join our team. The ideal candidate will have excellent communication skills, be proficient in administrative tasks, and enjoy working in a faith-based environment. This role involves supporting our parish by managing schedules, handling correspondence, and performing various office tasks. Contact Pr. Jackie Short (507) 517-0769 for more information or to apply.



Join us at Highland Prairie for the 1st Sunday of the month Potluck! Bring your favorite dish or try a new recipe! Come share a Meal and fellowship!

6-6:30 snacks & chat

Meet @ Highland Prairie 3rd Monday of the month

December 16

Book Study

6:30-7.30

Book Study

UNAFRAID

ADAM HAMILTON

Meet @ Elstad 1st Monday of the month

December 2





What a blessing it was to be part of this training and to be gifted not one but 2 AED's!! We are so fortunate that Michelle connected us with Bill and the Peyton Walker Foundation! ELSTAD: You will find your AED on the shelf in the entry way in the red case. Highland Prairie: You will find your AED located in the white metal case out side the sanctuary.

In our Prayers...

Val Howe, Solveig Scroggins, Eric Johnson, Larry & Deb Topness, Mark Woodward, Glen Bakken, Donna Boyum, Laura Dahl, Lisa Gile, Ellen Highum, Amy Timmerann, Sharon Ehler, Emily Charlebois, Scott Bestul, Julian Highum, Marlys Paulson, Pete Kennedy, as well as for all who are ill, suffering or in need of prayers.

We had another very successful bake sale last Friday. Our tables were loaded with baked goods! Thank you to Nancy R. for publicity, Margo A., Kay D., and Pastor Jackie for being cashiers, to Mary G. and Joyce D. for the use of their tables. A special thank you to everyone who brought goodies and to everyone who bought goodies. It was a great





Thank you to Kate, Chellsey, Steph, Amiee, Shelly & Vicki for helping out with the first communion classes! You guys are rock stars!!











Women ELCA



WELCA Bake Sale Saturday, November 30 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Lanesboro Community Center
The Elstad WELCA will be hosting a bake sale at the Holiday Craft Show at the Lanesboro Community Center
We need workers to help that day & people who are willing to share their baking talents with us.Contact
Carolyn Smith or Ruth Abrahamson for more information or questions.



ELSTAD





Elstad Friends Mabel Floral is offering Red Poinsettias for \$16.50.

The sign-up sheet is on the usher's table.
The deadline for ordering is

Sunday December 15.

Highland Prairie



Highland Prairie WELCA would like to invite Elstad WELCA &

everyone to join us for a **Cookie Baking Day** Saturday, December 7 & Wednesday, December 11

ALL ARE WELCOME

HP WELCA will be hosting a cookie bake/treat making day beginning at 9:30 am each day.

Bring your ingredients, dough, baked cut-outs, or whatever stage you wish and we will finish them up together.

We will use some of the treats for our shut-in members baskets, and the rest we will take home or swap some with each other. If it sounds like fun to you, please join us either or both days! If you have any questions please contact Mary Gudmundson (H) 507 864 7776 (C)507 450 3177 or email: mgudmundson76@gmail

We added the Saturday date in hopes that it will allow folks who work during the week to join the fun!!

Here are some highlights of the hard work our **church** has been doing lately. Thank you to all who have contributed towards these projects.

- **WELCA:** Fall Dinner: \$ 1401.58
- **WELCA:** donation to the Church Parking lot: \$1500.00
- **Men's:** Pancake breakfast was: \$168.00
- Church: donation for World Hunger was \$471.00
- **WELCA:** to ELCA for Thankoffering \$200 & \$250.for shipping quilts
- Parish: donation to Lutheran Campus Ministry Easel, Wagon & \$165
- Parish Youth: donation to SEMCAC homelessness prevention fund \$1600





JULY 20 - JULY 25, 2025



LAKE TRAVERSE RESERVATION, SD

Mission Trip

All Middle & High School
Parish Youth and their parents
are invited to join us for an
informational meeting on
December 8 at
Elstad at 2:30

Let Pr. Jackie know if you are interested in going but cannot attend the meeting.



Please join us for some Holiday fun,
Food & Fellowship!
Bring the whole family
- invite a friend!!
ALL are WELCOME!
The Party Starts at 3:30 in the
fellowship hall at Highland Prairie!



- 3:00: Elf Creation Station Opens
- 3:30: Buddy Cupcake & Cookie Factory
- 4:00: Team & Individual Gingerbread Contest Begins

***per-registration for the Team Gingerbread contest is required

(text, call or email Pr. Jackie)

Teams of up to 6 people can be made up of multiple ages and skill level. Please share your team name when you register.

- Individual Gingerbread Building
- 5:30: Supper Time!!
- Spaghetti , Garlic Bread, Salad



Sunday School

Highland Prairie

Pastor Jackie is busy teaching Parish First Communion classes on Nov. 17 and Nov. 24 We will have 26 parish students joining us at the Lord's Table to receive their first communion in the month of December. As Jesus says let the children come to me and do not hinder them, for they belong to Kingdom of God. The Highland Prairie & Elstad Youth Monthly Movie & Bible Study night will be Dec. 15 at 6 p.m. The movie will be Elf. We are getting ready for celebrating the birth of Jesus. We will be having an all-generational Christmas Program on Dec. 8 at the 10:30am worship service. Come and celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. Sunday School will be on break 12/15-1/12



ELSTAD

We are busy working toward the Christmas program, which will be held **Sunday, Dec 8,** during worship. We plan to have milk and cookies after the service that day. Come if you can!

We have had great attendance, with over 20 kids multiple Sundays! **Thank you for bringing** your children and grandchildren.

After the program, Sunday School will be on break Dec. 9th through Sunday Jan 12.

Merry Christmas!!



CONFIRMATION



DECEMBER

Dec. 4: Service Night

Dec. 11 Class @ HP

Dec. 18: Class @ HP

Dec. 25: No Class

Jan. 1: NO Class

SCHEDULE

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



DECEMBER MINISTRY FOCUS

BREAKFAST ITEMS

YOU CAN HELP BY PURCHASING YOUR FAVORITE BREAKFAST ITEMS AND ADDING THEM TO THE BASKET AT CHURCH



Stewardship

THE CAREFUL AND RESPONSIBLE MANAGEMENT OF SOMETHING ENTRUSTED TO ONE'S CARE

The Joy of Giving

Giving is more than just a financial contribution—it's an expression of our faith, our trust in God, and our love for one another. Each time we give, we participate in God's work, supporting ministries that make a difference and sharing Christ's love with the world.

In 2 Corinthians 9:11, we're reminded that "You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God." As a church, our generosity shines God's light into our community, showing His love in real and powerful ways.

Whether large or small, every gift matters. Thank you for being a part of this community of faith and for your faithful generosity. Together, we're building something truly lasting in God's kingdom.

ELSTAD COUNCIL MEETING REPORT

Sunday, November 10, 2024/ Elstad Lutheran Church

The meeting was called to order by President Gene Topness at 8:10 p.m.

Roll call: Pastor Jackie, Gene Topness, Kathy Abrahamson, Krissy Overland, Jennifer

Nepstad, Amber Arends, Tanya Wolfs and Christopher Nelson were present.

A Quorum was called.

The agenda was reviewed. A motion to approve was made by Krissy Overland, seconded by Amber Arends. Motion carried.

Congregation members present to address the council: None

Pastor's report: No additional pastor's report at this time

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer's report was reviewed. The council is actively seeking fundraising opportunities to help with budget concerns. Amber Arends made a motion to place the report on file for audit at a later date. Kathy Abrahamson seconded. Motion carried.

President's report: None Correspondence received:

Gene shared a letter from Lutheran Campus Ministries thanking us for our donation.

Old business:

● The council continued conversation about fundraising opportunities; ideas being considered include raffle tickets and bingo.

New business:

The council discussed updating the church constitution to be in compliance; the possibility of adding a children's corner in the back of the church and any traditions during the Christmas Eve service that Pastor Jackie should be aware of since this will be her first Christmas with the congregation. The secretary's report was given. Motion to approve was made by Jennifer Nepstad, seconded by Krissy Overland. Motion carried. Motion was made by Amber Arends to adjourn, seconded by Christopher Nelson. Meeting adjourned at 9:07 p.m. Next council meeting is at Highland Prairie Lutheran Church on Sunday, Jan. 12, 2024 at 5:30 p.m. Submitted by: Tanya Wolfs, Council Secretary



Elstad October Budget	\$8407.00			
Received October	\$6043.00			
Under for October	\$2364.00			
Floted Budget VTD	\$75633.00			
Elstad Budget YTD	\$75033.00			
Receved YTD	\$51748.00			
Under YTD	\$23915.00			

EHP-JOINT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING REPORT

Sunday, November 10, 2024

The meeting was held at Elstad Lutheran Church with Elstad's president, Gene Topness, calling the meeting to order at 6:43 p.m. Roll call was taken. Council members present were Amy Jacobson, Mike Pepin, David

Markegard, Robert Anfinson, Karen Bakken, Kyle Chiglo, Kristi Gudmundson, Val Howe, Kathy Abrahamson, Jennifer Nepstad, Christopher Nelson, Amber Arends, Tanya Wolfs, and Krissy Overland. A Quorum was called.

Others present: Pastor Jackie Short and Lisa Chiglo. Agenda was reviewed. Motion to approve the agenda made by David Markegard, seconded by Amy Jacobson. Motion carried

EHP-Joint Parish Report cont.

Devotions were read by Mary Gudmundson.

Congregation members present to address the council: Lisa Chiglo was present and gave her letter of resignation as parish secretary. Her last day will be Dec. 10, 2024. On behalf of the parish council, President Gene Topness thanked Lisa for her 13 years of service. Motion made by Amber Arends to approve the resignation, seconded by Amy Jacobson.

President's report: President Gene Topness thanked Pastor Jackie for all her efforts and energy in engaging the youth and parish ministries.

Pastor's report: Pastor Jackie provided updates on meetings/programs she has and will be participating in. She announced First Communion classes will be held Nov. 17 at Highland Prairie and Nov. 24 at Elstad, as well as the dates for youth movie night.

Correspondence received: None

Old business/committee reports:

- 1. Church Windows software
- **a.** Pastor Jackie shared 3 options for a new parish computer based on recommendations by Sarah Bearbower of Highland Prairie; once a decision is made, they can go ahead and order the Windows software. Sarah has offered to handle the setup and installation.
- **b.** Jennifer Nepstad made a motion to let Sarah Bearbower choose the computer and proceed with the purchase; Mary Gudmundson seconded. Motion approved.

New business:

- 1. The council reviewed the synod recommendation for Pastor Jackie's total compensation in 2025. Karen Bakken made a motion to approve the salary package; Mary Gudmundson seconded. Motion carried.
- 2. The council reviewed the proposed parish calendar for 2025. Changes to the proposed calendar include:
- a. Confirmation will move to Oct. 26, 2025.
- b. There will be no joint service in September; Elstad and Highland Prairie will do their own Rally Sunday services on Sept. 14, 2025.
- c. Mary Gudmundson made a motion to approve the calendar with requested changes; Kathy Abrahamson seconded. Motion carried.
- 3. Garden of Eden Ministries
- a. Pastor Jackie presented an idea from Becky Dahl to tap maple trees and process/sell the maple syrup as a means of sustaining additional funds for both churches.
- b. Kyle Chiglo made a motion to bring this idea to the congregations for interest/volunteers; Amber Arends seconded. Motion approved.
- 4. Council reviewed the job description for the parish administrative assistant position. Pastor Jackie will post the job opening within the parish while the council finalizes the job description.
- 5. Mary Gudmundson and Marcia Randall have volunteered to participate in the parish personnel committee. They will advise on personnel reviews/job descriptions.
- 6. There will be no Thanksgiving Eve service this year.

The secretary's report was given. Motion to approve was made by Mary Gudmundson,

EHP-JOINT PARISH REPORT CONT.

seconded by Christopher Nelson. Motion carried.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mike Pepin, seconded by Krissy Overland. Meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m. Closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Next joint council meeting is at Highland Prairie on Sunday, Jan. 12 at 6:30 p.m.

Submitted by: Tanya Wolfs, Elstad council secretary

HIGHLAND PRAIRIE COUNCIL MEETING REPORT

November 10,2024

The meeting was called to order at 5:38 p.m. by President Kyle Chiglo. Council Members present were Robert Anfinson, Karen Bakken, Kyle Chiglo, Kristi Gudmundson, Mary Gudmundson, Val Howe, Amy Jacobson, David Markegard and Mike Pepin. Steve Howe was absent.

Devotions will be given at Parish meeting. A quorum was determined, and a motion to approve the agenda was made by David Markegard, Mike Pepin seconded. Motion carried.

Kay Dahl from the congregation addressed the council regarding pest control options. Bob the Bug Man was contacted and an estimate presented.

The Treasurer's Report was given by Karen Bakken. The year-to-date information provided was income of \$72,224.00 expenses of \$82,434.00; Expenses exceed income by \$10,210.00. A motion to approve as presented made by Val Howe, Kristi Gudmundson seconded. Motion carried.

President's Report - None Pastor's Report will be given at the joint Parish meeting.

Correspondence shared Committee Reports: Church –Grounds Committee – Worship Committee, Youth & Education Committee –Box City was a success raising \$1,600.00. Fall Fest, Movie Night, Communion class Nov17th & 24th, Pajama Sunday, Christmas Program scheduled for December 8th. Old Business: Vice President position - As per the church constitution C12.01, a position is declared

vacant when four successive meetings have been missed without cause. Following discussion Amy Jacobson moved to leave it vacant until the January Annual Meeting, David Markegard seconded. Motion carried.

Bylaws – Since no bylaws have been located and we are currently out of compliance with the Synod, we will need to update our constitution and include the bylaws in the constitution.

Garbage situation update - S & S Sanitation gave a quote of \$57.00/month, tabled until next month. **New Business:** Mission Budget - \$1,000.00 was budgeted for 2024 - Kristi Gudmundson moved to donate the funds three ways to Fillmore County Christmas, Food Shelf, and Lutheran Campus Ministry, Amy Jacobson seconded. Motion carried. Constitution Update given in Old Business.Fall Festival – A success. Christmas traditions should be shared with Pastor Jackie.

The Secretary's report was read and a motion to approve was made by Val Howe, Amy Jacobson seconded. Motion carried. A motion to adjourn with the Lord's Prayer at 6:39 p.m. was made by Kristi Gudmundson, David Markegard seconded. Motion carried. Respectfully submitted Mary Gudmundson. Next Meeting is December 8th 12:30 pm at Highland Prairie.



HIGHLAND PRAIRIE FINANCIALS FOR OCTOBER 2024						
YTD INCOME\$	72,224					
YTD EXPENSES\$	82,434					
EXPENSES EXCEED INCOME\$	10,210					
YTD BUDGET\$	92,920					
YTD INCOME\$	72,224					
YTD UNDER\$	20,696					

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

1~ Ruth Abrahamson

~ Sara Pederson

~ Vance Topness

~ Leonidas Amberg

2~ Kathleen Wold

~ Christopher Drinkall

3~ Erin Topness

4~ Kathy Kendhammer

5~ Carol Overland

6~ Kristi Gudmundson

~ Ian Anderson

7~ Ann Fretland

~ Quinn Short

8~ Hannah Pearce

11~ Peter Peterson

13~ Heidi Fishbaugher

~ Boe Rein

15~ Renee Ritter

~ Madison Smith

~ Isaac Ask

~ Chase Humble

16~ Christopher Freese

17~ Sue Larson

~ Tom Feine

~ Sandra Johnson

18~ Kaia Drinkall

19~ John Abrahamson

~ Rachel Bearbower

~ Lynn Ryan

20~ Noelle Graham

21~ Clair Olson

~ Steve Ryan

~ Josh Rein

~ Maddie James

~ Ethan Grimsrud

22~ Matthew Halvorson

23~ Nikol Rislov

24~ Gustav Hoiland

24~ Mary Lawstuen

~ Tristen Chiglo

26~ Julie Paulson

~ Zowie Short

~ Hew Johnson

27~ Matthew Halverson

~ Stephanie Erickson

28~ Sarah Stensgard

~ Elin Rein

29~ Jimmie Wangen

30~ Ashley Johnson

~ Parker Storhoff

31~ Jesse Nelson

~ Jarod Dybing

Mappy Anniversary

13 ~ Charles & Lynnette
Pederson
18 ~ Gordon & Arlene
Johnson
19 ~ Tom & Carolyn Smith
27 ~ Philip & Ruth
Abrahamson

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!



Pecember 2024

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

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
EL—9:00 a.m. SS—during worship EL—Christmas Tea	Book Study— Unafraid @ EL 6:00 p.m.	3	4	5	6	7 9:30 a.m.—HF WELCA Baking Day
HP–10:30 a.m. SS–9:30 a.m. HP Potluck	9:30 a.m.— Bible Study @		Service Night			
R Christmas Programs @ both congregations EL-9:00 a.m. HP-10:30 a.m. SS-9:30 a.m. HP Council- 12:30 p.m.	9:30 a.m.— Bible Study @ Bethlehem	2:00 p.m.—Leah Circle	8:30 a.m.—Elizabeth Circle 9:30 a.m.—HP WELCA Baking Day 6:30—Confirmation Bulletin Deadline	9:30 a.m.— Esther Circle	13	Craft Day @ Elstad 9:00-3:00
15 EL-9:00 a.m. HP-10:30 a.m. SS-9:30 a.m. 6:00 p.m.—Youth Movie Night @ HP	Book Study— Unafraid @ HP 6:00 p.m. 9:30 a.m.— Bible Study @ Bethlehem	17	9:30 a.m.—HP WELCA Quilting with Potluck 6:30—Confirmation Bulletin Deadline	Newsletter Deadline	20	21
22 EL—9:00 a.m. HP–10:30 a.m. SS—9:30 a.m.	6:00 p.m. Book Study— Highland Prairie 9:30 a.m.— Bible Study @ Bethlehem	24 Christmas Eve Worship 5:00 p.m.—HP 7:00 p.m.—EL	Merry Christmas! NO Confirmation Bulletin Deadline	26	27	28
29 EL—9:00 a.m. HP–10:30 a.m. SS—9:30 a.m.	30 9:30 a.m.— Bible Study @	31				

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

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Peterson, MN 55962

Permit No. #6



Highland Prairie Acolytes/Readers/Greeters

Sunday, December 1, 2024

Acolyte: Hunter Lee, Hudson Lee

Readers: Hudson Lee, Kristi Gudmundson

Advent Family:

Greeters:

Sunday, December 8, 2024

Acolyte: Hudson Lee, Caiden Dahle

Advent Family: Olson Family

Greeters:

Sunday, December 15, 2024

Acolytes: Hunter Lee, Mathew Gudmundson

Readers: Mathew Gudmundson, Jeff Short

Advent Family: Pepin Family Greeters: Kristi Gudmundson

Sunday, December 22, 2024

Acolyte: Mathew Gudmundson, Clara Hoiland

Advent Family:Brody Gellersen, Mary Gudmundson

Greeters:

Christmas Eve Service: December 24, 2024

Acolytes: Clara Hoiland Readers: Caiden Dahle Greeters: Short Family

Sunday, December 29, 2024

Acolytes: Brody Gellersen, Caiden Dahle

Readers: Hudson Lee,

Greeters:

ELSTAD Acolytes/Readers/Ushers

Sunday, December 1, 2024

Acolyte: Readers:

Advent Family: Tanya, Mike, Sawyer, Mason

Greeters:

Sunday, December 8, 2024

Acolyte:

Readers: Glee Claussen

Advent Family: Carol Dixon, Carol Fogal

Greeters: Gordon & Glee Claussen

Sunday, December 15, 2024

Acolyte:

Readers: Kendra Hageman, Vicky Topness

Advent Family: Aaron, Erin, Mila, Vance Topness

Greeters: Arends Family

Sunday, December 22, 2024

Acolyte:

Readers: Marcia Randall

Advent Family: Rodger's Family

Greeter: Marcia Randall

Christmas Eve Service: December 24, 2024

Acolyte: Readers: Greeters:

Sunday, December 29, 2024

Acolyte:

Readers: Tanya Wolfs

Greeters:

Ushers: Gene & Vicky Topness