

Elstad – Highland Prairie Lutheran Parish

A Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

January, 2013

Pastor Dan Watland

Phone: 507-864-2309

email: dwatland@gmail.com

January, 2013

Worship Schedule

Sunday, January 6

Highland Prairie

9:00 Worship

10:15 Sunday School

Elstad

9:15 Sunday School

10:30 Worship

Sunday, January 13

Highland Prairie

9:00 Worship

10:15 Sunday School

Elstad

9:15 Sunday School

10:30 Worship

2-4 pm confirmation @
parsonage

Sunday, January 20

Highland Prairie

9:00 Worship

10:15 Sunday School

Elstad

9:15 Sunday School

10:30 Worship followed by
Annual Meeting

Sunday, January 27

Elstad

9:00 Worship

10:15 Sunday School

Highland Prairie

9:15 Sunday School

10:30 Worship followed by
Annual Meeting

2-4 pm Confirmation at
parsonage

Ponderings From the Parsonage

People keep asking me this question: "So, are you ready for the New Year?" What does this mean exactly? It could mean; "So, have you returned unwanted presents and then exchanged them for something different? Have you put away the Christmas decorations and taken down the tree? And have you also decided on some resolutions to work on in 2013?" Or does the question "So, are you ready for the New Year?" mean "So, are you fully prepared to receive the one who brings God to humans and humans to God by being both human and God?" The answer to the first is "No. I haven't had time" the answer to the second is "I'm not sure I really can be"

Am I prepared for the coming of the Christ into the world? No. Am I ready? Absolutely. Some things we are never prepared for. They happen anyway. Am I ready to pastor this worshipping community? YES! Am I prepared? Not at all. Oh yes, I've read all the books and have completed my seminary training and have spent endless hours in other churches collecting ideas, I have an amazing group of people here who are committed to doing ministry in this parish together etc, but I'm not prepared because I think prepared implies that I am aware of what will happen and know how to deal with it all. Seriously, I have no idea what will happen, which is as exciting as it is terrifying.

I'm ready for the New Year because during this season of Christmas (yes we are still in the season of Christmas on the church calendar) I really need to hear the story of Christ's birth again. I need to hear about how God enters fully into the messiness of our existence and brings new life. I'm ready for that because I know that I need it.

Pastor Dan

Prayer Corner

"The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective."

James 5:16

1. Thank God a new chance every moment to "begin again" to be close to Him.
2. Pray for these people: Dagny Anderson, Doris Matson, Elizabeth Larson, Stanley Mann, Lorraine Fann, Marge Abrahamson and others who are ill or in need.
3. Pray for hearts open to Him
4. Adore God for being the same yesterday, today and tomorrow.

Congregational Chatter

The birthdays and anniversaries in this newsletter are according to the records we have. If you spot an error, please let us know!

The best way to contact us with an announcement you want included in the bulletin or newsletter is via email with the topic in the subject line!

Please observe Pastor Dan's day off on Monday under normal conditions. He needs to have a day of rest just like we do!

Thanks very much for the many birthday greetings and Christmas cards. Your generosity to me is greatly appreciated. May Christ's presence continue to shine in all of you. Pastor Kay

If you are responsible for submitting a report for the annual meeting booklet, please email it to us by January 12. Our email address is helbluth@vahoo.com.

Pastor Dan now has permanent telephone numbers! It's another sign of settling in! His cell phone is 507-459-1141. The parsonage telephone number is 507-864-2309. Gayle will be using the former number we had.

Want to do something special for your spouse and show how much you care? Attend a Lutheran Marriage Encounter Weekend and focus on just the two of you. Engaging presentations by both lay and clergy leaders give you tools and information while exercises and conversations with your spouse in the privacy of your hotel room revitalize romance, deepen communication, and nourish the spirituality in your marriage. You'll spend two nights in a comfortable hotel and enjoy five delicious meals from Friday at 8:00 pm to Sunday at 5:00 pm.

The Spring Lutheran Marriage Encounter Weekends in Minnesota are February 15-17 (think Valentines!) in Brooklyn Center, March 15-17 in Alexandria and April 5-7 in Duluth Please register several weeks in advance. For more information, contact Larry and Coke Guilfoile at 651-257-6960, Pete & Phyllis McMahon at 763-561-1575 or visit www.godlovesmarriage.org.

There are many little things that go into the smooth running of a church. Some contribute small touches that aren't noticeable but reduce distractions from worship on a Sunday morning. Others are more in the upkeep of our buildings. If you would be able occasionally to volunteer at Elstad in small ways, please call Dave Bakke, John Rein or Carol Overland to match your interests with jobs that can be done.

Annual Meeting Time!

This year's annual meetings will be on January 20 at Elstad and January 27 at Highland Prairie. For January 27 ONLY, Elstad will worship at 9:00 and Highland Prairie will meet at 10:30. This change will allow Pastor Dan to attend both meetings.

Elstad, on January 20, will have the annual meeting and potluck. For this meeting, WELCA group 1 will work, and everyone should bring food. The groups are the same as they were in 2012.

We need to have all the reports for the Annual Meeting booklet by January 12 so they can all be assembled and ready for the meeting.

ELSTAD PRAYER PARTNERS

You know the story well. Let's call them Fabio and Veronica. Two married people (each married to someone else) attracted to one another while desperately trying to hide their nasty little secret of a fascination for folly. Suddenly they find themselves at the wrong places at the wrong time. They both agree that they must stop meeting like this. But will they? Does that sound like a Harlequin Romantic Suspense, perhaps a good title "Cooper Lake Secrets"!!!

For our Elstad Prayer Partner program we have a much better little secret. We MUST keep meeting like this. December found us in a good place to say good bye to our prayer partner for the year of 2012...however do remember to keep her in your prayers until a new partner is assigned very soon. Another Christmas Tea is now history and true to standard it was a wonderful experience. An experience that even the food shelf will share from the generosity of our ladies. The tall and short of soup cans...did you ever suspect that there were so many Progresso and Campbell soups on the grocery shelves? The room was a delightful sight. Table settings were colorful and inviting but most of all every place was filled and an overflow table was also filled to capacity. Teas, juice, finger sandwiches, seasonal goodies and coffee were all on the menu. Delightful. Simply delightful. Colorful holiday apparel, colorful tea cups, colorful conversations and a joyful atmosphere which comes from just being together. Mark your calendars to do it all again come December of 2013.

If you have not already done so you might want to sign the list for a new partner. This is a good and painless thing to do. To paraphrase Archimedes: "Give me a lever and a place to stand and I shall move the world." We have the lever, the gift of prayer. We have a place to stand, prayer requires no geographical place or stance. And prayer moves the world. Our statement of purpose calls us to be appreciative people, motivate others and support one another. Being a prayer partner does all of this plus much more. Begin to see prayer as that lever and things will happen...normal people will wonder what we are up to!

WELCA Meetings

Elstad Esther circle will meet on Wednesday, January 9th at 1 o'clock at the home of Doris Dybing.

Elstad's Elizabeth Circle will meet on January 15 at 6:30 at Sylvan Manor.

ELSTAD WELCA HIGHLIGHTS

DECEMBER 9, 2012

The Elstad WELCA met on Sunday, December 9th following worship services.

Being our annual Christmas Tea, the serving committee had beautifully set tables and we all enjoyed great refreshments while enjoying coffee or tea from our special cups and saucers.

Kathy Abrahamson opened the meeting in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and read our Statement of Purpose.

The Secretary and Treasurer's reports were read and accepted.

Thank you notes were read from Camp Winnebago, Robins Nest and Plymouth Christian Youth Center.

The Sunshine Committee reported sending a card to Brenda Chiglo.

There was no Old Business.

New Business: Kathy reported that the officers will be working on the budget and the new WELCA program.

Officers for the coming year will be – Ruth Abrahamson, President; Marilyn Soland, Secretary; Darlys Storhoff, Treasurer and Carolyn Smith and Dorothy Evenson will be Comm/Growth.

Kathy thanked all the officers along and Joni Finnegan for the past year.

Leah Circle presented the program with a special reading on change. It was very meaningful. Carolyn Freese sang a solo.

We closed with praying the Lords Prayer.

The servers for our Christmas tea were Norine Ask, Rachel Bearbower, Jodie Daniels, Heidi Evenson, Kim Halvorson and Darcy Peterson.

Marilyn Soland, Secretary

Beginning Experience International Ministry, Inc.

Inc. offers a continuum of programs to help those who have lost a love relationship due to death, divorce or separation move through the experience of grief and loss into a future with hope renewed. Each program is presented by those who have suffered such losses themselves and are willing to share their experience to help others.

"Coping with Life Alone" meets from 7pm-9pm each week for ten weeks beginning on January 17, 2013 at Bethel Lutheran Church, 810 3rd Ave. in Rochester, MN . Intended for those whose loss is new, the sessions focus on such topics as the grief process, changes in family and other relationships, trust, and coping with life as a single person. Contact Beginning Experience Rochester by calling 507-261-8248 or emailing beminnnesota@gmail.com or visit www.beminnnesota.org to start an amazing healing process for your self or to encourage someone you love to step beyond their grief and pain.

MARRIED COUPLES - GIVE A GIFT FROM YOUR HEART

when you and your husband/wife attend the next Lutheran Marriage Encounter Weekend, Feb 15 - 17, 2013 in Brooklyn Center, Minnesota! The communication in your relationship will improve by leaps and bounds on this special Weekend. For more information or to apply, visit GodLovesMarriage.org, or contact Peter & Phyllis McMahon at mcmahonp@comcast.net or 763-561-1575. Weekends fill fast and applications are due soon - don't miss out!

Happy New Years from Grace Place

- *We will be continuing the Food Shelf sale during the month of January- bring in a non-perishable food item and receive 50% off 1 item in the store
- *Every Friday during January we are continuing buy 1 get 1 free in clothing
- *Adult soft and hard cover books 4 for \$1.

Life is a Gift from God- Share yours by volunteering your time

New Confirmation Process

Pastor Rich Melheim is the author of "Faith Incubators", our current confirmation curriculum. Here are some of his observations after doing confirmation for the last 21 years:

With confirmation it all starts with the question "What are we trying to accomplish?" and moves from there to

1. Who are the best people to help us accomplish it,
2. What are the best methods to accomplish it, and
3. What are the best times of the day, of the year, and in the child's life to accomplish it.

"We need to stop the parent-less "program/class" mentality and simply install a parent involved "community" based faith formation process. Please consider the end of confirmation as you know it and create a process that reinstalls the parents as the primary faith mentors with their own kids."

With this in mind confirmation will move from Wednesday evenings to the second and fourth Sundays of the month. We will meet at the parsonage from 4 to 6 pm. We will add the 6th grade to the 7th grade beginning in January. One parent or grandparent or designated adult will also be required to attend with each student.

I will also be sending a letter to each family describing the new approach for confirmation.

Pr Dan

Many persons have expressed a desire to offer assistance to the families and community impacted by the tragedy that occurred at the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn. In response to such offers, the following fund has been established to benefit families directly impacted by this tragedy. Donations may be sent to:

The New England Synod
Attn: Newtown Fund
PO Box 13
Worcester, MA 01614-0013

Highland Prairie Council Members

Glen Kopperud –864-2586,
glen@normanselectric.com
Gordon Johnson –864-2345, skippy@acegroup.cc
Sarah Bearbower – 864-7520 sbearbow@gmail.com
Sharon Ehler- 864-4191 csehler@acegroup.cc
Allen Howe - 864-2372
Lyle Meldahl - 864-2614 lmeldahl@acegroup.cc
Kay Eiken - C 507-951-5316 eikenskalet@me.com
Karen Bakken - 864-2536 gkbakken@acegroup.cc
David Larson – 864-2690 dslarson@acegroup.cc
Gerald Hallum - gha17827@acegroup.cc.

Newsletter Moves Into the 21st Century!!!

This is the last paper copy of the newsletter that we will be sending to members who requested email distribution. There are **40** households that have requested an email newsletter. Please send email to helpluth@yahoo.com if you would like to add your name to this list.

Elstad Council Members

Marv Eggert, President
Robert Knutson, Vice President
Lori Bakke, Secretary
Jennifer Nepstad, Treasurer
David Bakke
Carol Overland
John Rein

Highland Prairie Financials for November

Highland Prairie Financials

YTD Income-----\$73,670.51
YTD Expenses-----\$64,929.92
Inc. Exceeds Expenses-----\$ 8,740.59

YTD Budget-----\$77,891.00
YTD Income (Jan.-Nov.)-----\$73,670.51
YTD Under-----\$ 4,220.49

Elstad & Highland Prairie January Birthdays and Anniversaries

May God Bless You on Your Birthday!

- 1 – Darellyn Barrett
- 2 – John Smith
Curtis Paulson
- 4 – Michelle Rein
- 5 – Melissa Engelby
- 6 – Sandra Kiel
William LaFleur
- 7 – Angel Bakke
- 9 – Nathan Bakke
- 10 – Philip Dragvold
Nancy Rustad
Sawyer James
- 11 – Rebecca Lombard
- 12 – Kay Dahl
Ingrid Pape
- 13 – Tyler Berg
Steve Chiglo
Daniel Sjarpe
Darren Stockton
- 14 – Michelle Ryan
Colton Horning
- 16 – Irving Abrahamson
David Bakke
Owen Dammen
- 17 – Shane Jacobson
Jennifer Nepstad
Stacy Mensink
Lucas Redalen
- 18 – Brenda Chiglo
Ann Hoiland
Barb Lee
Peter Stensgard
- 19 – Robert Lawstuen

- 21 – Courtney Nelson
- 23 – James Bearbower
Brianna Dybing
Aubre Dybing
August Mention
Darcy Peterson
Merwood Storhoff
- 24 – Martha Stensgard
Deborah Mensink
- 25 – Ellen Feine
Sarah Freese
Paula Howe
- 27 – David Lawstuen
Mike Oian
Eleanor Peterson
- 28 – Linda Paulson
- 29 – Freda Kiel
- 30 – Jason Dahl
Richard Lombard



Happy Anniversary to all of you!

- 7 – Daniel & Erika Lind
- 15 – Jerry & Julie Dragvold
- 28 – David & Sue Larson





Bishops have many responsibilities as outlined by the synod constitution. Bishops are pastors, leaders, uniters, and ambassadors. For more specifics, visit semnsynod.org/election-of-a-bishop/ for relevant excerpts from the synod constitution and the "Bishop Profile" publication.

Preparing to Elect a Synod Bishop

"Electing a bishop is one of the most important responsibilities in the life of a synod and a key responsibility of the synod assembly," according to Ann Peterson, Vice-President of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod.

At the 2013 Southeastern Minnesota Synod Assembly, to be held June 7-8 in Rochester, Minn., voting members will elect the third bishop of this synod. In this synod, bishops are limited to two terms so Bishop Usgaard's time as bishop will come to an end.

When a congregation calls a new pastor, they go through careful self-study, prepare a congregational profile, and evaluate potential pastors based on the particular gifts the congregation seeks. The synod's Committee on the Election of a Bishop is working to guide the synod through a similar process.

The process of electing a bishop is very different than most other elections. As Rev. Mark Boorsma, chair of the election committee, explains, "Unlike secular elections for leadership roles, the church does not wait for qualified women and men to 'toss their hat in the ring.' Instead, praying constantly for the Spirit's guidance, congregations search proactively for persons with the gifts and vision necessary for leading God's people well."

Through January 2013, congregations have been asked to hold discussions on the qualities they thought were important in a future bishop of this synod. They have also been asked to raise up names of potential candidates for bishop and submit them to the committee.

The next step in the process takes place on February 10. The synod's five conferences will hold their assemblies and there will continue the conversation on gifts needed in this new leader, expectations for our synod's bishop, and expectations for our congregations.

Bishop Harold Usgaard describes the conferences assemblies as, "The 'grassroots' of our synod at work and...integral to the process of the election of a bishop."

At these assemblies, voters will have access to names and biographical information from the individuals whose

names were lifted up by congregations. They will select up to three candidates to participate in forums around the synod leading up to the 2013 Synod Assembly. The Committee on the Election of a Bishop will select up to nine of the names raised up to participate in forums around the synod in March and April. The forums will be an opportunity for the members of the synod to meet the nominees and learn their gifts and perspectives.

Our synod's 2013 election of a bishop comes as we mark the 25th anniversary of the ELCA and of our synod – a time to look back on where our journey together has taken us, but also a time to look to the future. Martin Luther wrote: "Faith is a living, daring confidence in God's grace so certain that you could stake your life on it one thousand times." Ann Peterson reflects on Luther's statement saying, "As we prepare for the election and the transitions that will follow, we are called to consider prayerfully what God is calling us to do together as a synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in southeastern Minnesota, and to move ahead with that living, daring confidence in God's grace."

About Our Synod

The Southeastern Minnesota Synod is a faith community of 124,000 baptized people in 176 congregations as well as related institutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). Its geographic area includes 15 counties in the southeastern corner of Minnesota.

The Bridge is a monthly publication of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod, ELCA. For more information, contact the synod office:

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Rochester, MN 55901-2551
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semnsynod.org

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HP READERS/ ACOLYTES/ GREETERS

January 6

Acolytes: Brianna Koop, Nicole Bladsvedt
Readers: Brianna Koop, Kaye Howe
Greeters: Arlene and Gordon Johnson

January 13

Acolytes: Nicole Blagsvedt, Treyten Chiglo
Readers: Nicole Blagsvedt, Norma Halverson
Greeters: Charles and Lynette Peterson

January 20

Acolytes: Treyten Chiglo, Cody Ryan
Readers: Shannon Kopperud
Greeters: Gary and Nancy Rustad

January 27

Acolytes: Cody Ryan, Noah Carlson
Readers: Cody Ryan, Sharon Ehler
Greeters: Shannon and Jerry Kopperud

ELSTAD READERS/ ACOLYTES/ USHER

January 6

Acolyte: Kody Bearbower
Reader: Peter Holm

January 13

Acolyte: Chloe Peterson
Reader: John Overland

January 20

Acolyte: Christopher Freese
Reader: Cindy Sveen

January 27

Acolyte: Kody Bearbower
Reader: Lori Bakke

Ushers: Mike Ask, Robert Knutson, David
Laustuen, Wayne Finnegan, Rich Nepstad



January 2013



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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***NOTICE THE WORSHIP
SERVICE TIME
CHANGES!***

		1	2	3	4	5
				Bulletin Deadline		
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
9:00 HP worship 9:15 Elstad Sunday School 10:15 HP Sunday School 10:30 Elstad Worship				Bulletin Deadline 10:00am El Esther Circle @ Doris Dybing's home		Annual Reports Due
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
9:00 HP worship 9:15 Elstad Sunday School 10:15 HP Sunday School 10:30 Elstad Worship Confirmation 4-6 pm at parsonage		6:30 pm El Elizabeth Circle at Sylvan Manor		Bulletin Deadline		
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
9:00 HP worship 9:15 Elstad Sunday School 10:15 HP Sunday School 10:30 Elstad Worship followed by Annual Meeting and potluck	Newsletter Deadline			Bulletin Deadline		
27	28	29	30	31	<i>ELSTAD HIGHLAND PRAIRIE LUTHERAN PARISH 43267 BOWL DRIVE PETERSON, MN 55962 507-864-2731</i>	
9:00 Elstad worship 9:15 HP Sunday School 10:15 Elstad Sunday School 10:30HP Worship followed by Annual meeting Confirmation 4-6 pm at parsonage				Bulletin Deadline		