

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

~ December 2018~

Pastor, Rev. Luther Mathsen

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Pastor's Page, December 2018

I think one of the most beautiful and moving hymns of the Christmas season is, "In the Bleak Midwinter." Some may suggest that the verses are sentimental. I think not. For the writer of the hymn, Christina Rosetti, is setting forth what the world would be without Christ. A world without Christ is simply "bleak."

In the bleak midwinter,
Frosty wind made moan,
Earth stood hard as iron,
Water like a stone.
Snow had fallen, snow on snow,
Snow on snow,
In the bleak midwinter,
Long ago.

Think about that third to the last line. Picture snow falling on snow. It's cold upon cold. Could Rosetti be thinking about the cold of the world that is behind the sigh of so many people heard to utter these words: "Same old. Same old. Nothing changes?"

Oh, but change did come. And Rosetti is not about to be stiff-lipped about it. "It" being the Gospel. The Good News is the Word made flesh come to dwell among us in the Lord Jesus who came long ago, in the royal flesh of a little child. Not in the world's wildest imagination could it come up with the change that God has brought to and for the world and us.

Heaven cannot hold him,
Nor earth sustain;
Heaven and earth shall flee away;
When he comes to reign.
In the bleak midwinter
A stable place sufficed
The Lord God incarnate,
Jesus Christ.

Some of you may remember how tenderly and beautifully this hymn about the little boy, Christ, the Son of God, born in a stable... (who rules at the right hand of the Father, no less)... was sung by Stela Burdt and Daniel Ekstrom at last years Advent Cantata. With God, the small and the grand combine in this little child, Jesus Christ. That's the gospel truth.

What to do? Well... Rosetti notes the response of a holy host, including his mother, Mary.

Angels and archangels
May have gathered there,
Cherubim and seraphim
Thronged the air;
But only his mother,
In her maiden bliss,
Worshipped the almighty
With a kiss.

What could be a more lovely and meaningful response than that of a mother kissing her child? And might Mary's response of intimacy (a kiss!) not point us to the essence of our worship? Rosetti has us thinking exactly about this simple and profound response in the face of such grace....such undeserved love.

What can I give him,
Poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd,
I would give a lamb;
If I were a wise man,
I would do my part;
Yet what can I give him,
Give my heart.

May the blessings of Christ's birth bring joy, comfort, and peace to you and yours this Christmas.

Pr. Mathsen+

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December Worship Schedule

+Sunday, December 2nd

9:00 a.m., Elstad

10:30 a.m., Highland Prairie

+Sunday, December 9th

9:00 a.m., Elstad

***Sunday School Christmas Program**

10:30 a.m., Highland Prairie

+Sunday, December 16th

9:00 a.m., Elstad

10:30 a.m., Highland Prairie

+Sunday, December 23rd

9:00 a.m., Elstad

10:30 a.m., Highland Prairie

+Monday, December 24th

5:00 p.m., Highland Prairie

7:00 p.m., Elstad

Tuesday, December 25th

A Service of Lessons and Carols

9:00 a.m., Elstad

Sunday, December 30th

9:00 a.m., Elstad

10:30 a.m., Highland Prairie

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PARISH NOTES

Confirmation Mentors Third Meeting with Confirmands

The third meeting of confirmation mentors and students will take place at the Creamery in Rushford, on **Wednesday, December 19th, 6:30 p.m. It will be our second annual Christmas party.** *NOTE TO CONFIRMATION STUDENTS: This will be our last Wednesday meeting day for 2018. Classes will resume on Wednesday, January 9, 2019, 6:30 p.m., at Elstad.*

December Parish Men's Breakfast

The next parish men's breakfast will be held on **Saturday, December 8th, 2018, 7:30 a.m., at Highland Prairie.** The breakfast will consist of scrambled eggs, cinnamon rolls, coffee, and orange juice. Our Sheriff-Elect, John DeGeorge, will join us for conversation about his new position. Please sign-up at the sanctuary entrance of either church.

Sunday Afternoon at the Movies

On Sunday afternoon, December 9, 4:00 p.m., parish youth and adults are invited to Highland Prairie to watch the movie, "The Mission." The Mission is "a powerful action epic about a man of the sword (Robert DeNiro) and a man of the cloth (Jeremy Irons) who unit to shield a South American Indian tribe from brutal subjugation by 18th century colonial empires. Bring your favorite movie treat to share!!!

NOTE TO PARENTS: This movie is rated PG, but I suggest you go to the internet to get the information you need to determine its appropriateness for your child. plm+

Summer Youth Mission Trip

A mid-school/high school youth summer mission trip to Kansas City, Missouri, from June 9-14, 2019, is being offered for 10 parish youth (grades-7-12). On this trip there will be opportunities to serve people of all ages through tutoring, assisting with reading programs, maintaining community gardens, and assisting at local community kitchens. An brief information meeting will follow confirmation class on December 5th 7:30 p.m., at Elstad. Register with Pr. Mathsen with a check of \$50 made out to Highland Prairie Church. Write "Mission Trip 2019" on the MEMO line. Deadline is December 9th. Friends are welcome to fill out the parish group.

Thank you

I extend my deepest gratitude to our musicians, secretary, custodians, church council members, WELCA women, ushers, greeters, acolytes, readers, communion set-up people, Sunday school teachers and aide, communion assistants, and the holy host of others who have given of their time and talent for the ministry of the church and the stewardship of our properties during 2018. You have blessed the life of our congregations and parish, richly. I am blessed to serve among you. Pr. Luther+

Elstad—Highland Prairie News

December WELCA Activites

- EL— Sunday, December 2nd, 10:00 a.m. after worship ~ Annual Christmas Tea
- HP— Wednesday, December 5th, 1:30 p.m. meeting/Bible study/potluck
- HP— Wednesday, December 12th, 9:30 a.m. quilting/projects/potluck

Highland Prairie Financials for October 2018

YTD Income	\$ 65,723
YTD Expenses	\$ 73,850
Expenses exc. Income	\$ 8,127
YTD Budget	\$ 77,593
YTD Income	\$ 65,723
YTD Under	\$ 11,870

Elstad-Highland Prairie Church Council Meeting Minutes

Sunday, November 11, 2018 ~ Elstad Lutheran Church

Highland Prairie President Kyle Chiglo called the meeting to order at 6:37 p.m.

Roll call was taken. Present members: Pr. Kay Wold, Rachel Bearbower, Jennifer Nepstad, Rita Kelly, Gordy Johnson, Karen Bakken, Nancy Rustad, Joyce Dahl, Chris Hoiland, Kyle Chiglo, Mary Gudmundson, Tim Stensgard and Pastor Luther Mathsen. Michelle Rein, Sarah Bearbower, Becky Halverson-Lind, Jodie Daniels and Dick Haight were absent.

A quorum was called.

Agenda was reviewed. Motion to approve was made by Tim, seconded by Chris. Motion carried.

Devotions were given by Pastor Kay.

Presidents report: Nothing to report

Pastor's report was given.

- The joint Thanksgiving Eve service will be held November 21, 7 p.m. at Highland Prairie Church. 4 p.m. will be Advent activities including making wreaths, receiving calendars and chili will be served. Sign-up sheets will be available at both churches.
- Pastor attended a continued education course entitled 'Patriarchy'. Pastor Luther was thankful for the opportunity to attend this course.
- Pastor Luther will be looking at ELCA, Red Cross contribution avenues toward world disaster relief.

Youth: A mission trip for June is being planned for middle-school through High School aged children.

Correspondence: May 2019, a new Synod Bishop will be elected. More information to be included in the newsletter.

Old Business/Committee Reports:

- Parsonage improvements: The Parsonage Committee will be getting together to discuss fixing the screened porch and deck and also the possibility of creating a fire ring with patio pavers. The estimated cost for each of the two projects is \$3,500.
- There is a crack in one of the Parsonage windows which The Board Store is in the process of replacing.

New Business: November 25th at 5 p.m. is the Elstad Cantata, pre-music is scheduled for 4:30.

- December 2, 2018 the Elstad Cantata will be performing at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Lanesboro at 7 p.m. This will be designated as a fundraiser for Scott Dixon and family.
- Calendar for 2019: Schedule was discussed, adjustments made, Lisa will make the corrections and email updated schedule for approval.
- Vintage Baseball: The team has opted to change their name from the 'Hayseeds' to 'Fillmore Fungi' The team will wear the Hayseed uniforms when playing at Highland Prairie on the scheduled dates.
- Pastor's salary 2019: Discussion was held to raise Pastor Luther's salary, Social Security and Home equity by 5%, as was approved in 2018. Motion to approve was made by Mary, seconded by Pr. Kay. Motion carried
- Secretary's salary 2019: Discussion was held to raise Lisa Chiglo's salary by 3%. Motion to approve was made by Gordy, seconded by Nancy. Motion carried.

Secretary's report was given. Motion to approve made by Gordy seconded by Nancy. Motion carried.

Motion to adjourn made by Tim, seconded by Nancy. Motion carried.

Meeting was closed with The Lord's Prayer.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:55 pm

Submitted by Rita in Michelle and Becky's absence.

Next council meeting will be held at Highland Prairie with Elstad meeting at 5:30 p.m., Parish meeting at 6:30 p.m., Highland Prairie meeting at 7:30 p.m. on January 13, 2019.

Elstad Lutheran Church Council Meeting Minutes
Sunday November 11, 2018 ~ Elstad Lutheran Church

The meeting was called to order by Vice President Pr. Kay at 8 p.m.

Roll call: Present members were Kay Wold, Rita Kelly, Jennifer Nepstad, Rachel Bearbower and Pastor Luther Mathsen. Michelle Rein, Dick Haight and Jodie Daniels were absent. A Quorum was called.

The agenda was reviewed and a motion to approve was made by Jennifer second by Rachel. Motion passed.

No Congregation members were present to address the council.

The Pastor's report was given.

- Pastor Luther expressed how appreciative and blessed he felt with the musical history and talent that the Elstad church has to offer.
- November Thanksgiving Eve joint worship will be held at Highland Prairie Church at 7 p.m., 4 p.m. Advent activity: making wreaths, receiving a calendar and chili feed. Sign up sheets available at both churches.
- The Confirmation class is studying the Old Testament. Four WSU student athletes beared witness of their faith to the Confirmands. Pastor Luther's intentions are to invite an adult once every month to witness their faith.
- A second men's breakfast was held which is planned to continue.
- The book study is 'The Little Way of Ruthy Lemming'. Good conversation has occurred with this study.
- Pastoral visits occur daily.
- Pastor Luther attended the 'Patriarchy' convention which he was very thankful for the ability to attend.

The treasurer's report was given and will be placed on file to be audited. Finances are falling short of the ability to fulfill commitments. A notice will be placed in the newsletter and bulletin to inform the congregation of this concern.

President's Report: In Dick Haight's absence, Pr. Kay announced that Dick will not be seeking re-election for the President's position in 2019.

Mission: Working on obtaining commitments from youth to attend upcoming Mission trip in June.

There was no correspondence.

Old Business:

- Updates from Dick Haight regarding the updates on Church repairs, will need to received.

New Business:

- Cantata: The Cantata group will be making the decision on whether or not to conduct a fundraiser for the Scott Dixon family at the Cantata on 3 November 25 at Elstad.

Discussion was held regarding worship ideas.

2019 Elstad Salaries: Discussion was held to keep salaries at the current rate. Motion to approve was made by Rachel, second by Rita. Motion passed.

2019 Ballet: There are numerous Council positions available for the 2019 season. The Trustees will attempt to fill these positions.

Secretary's report was given. Motion to approve was given by Jennifer second by Rachel. Motion passed.

Motion to adjourn was made by Rachel, second by Jennifer. The meeting was adjourned at 9 p.m.

Secretary's report submitted by Rita in Michelle's absence.

Next meeting to be held at Highland Prairie Church, Sunday January 13, 2019 at 5:30 p.m.

**Highland Prairie Lutheran Church
Council Meeting
November 11, 2018**

The November 11, 2018 Council meeting was called to order at 5:34 pm by President Kyle Chiglo with Mary Gudmundson as acting secretary.

Roll call was taken with Becky Lind and Sarah Bearbower absent. A quorum was established. Devotions will be given at the joint council meeting.

Approval of the agenda with the addition of item B to Old Business. Boiler room was moved by Gordon Johnson, Tim Stensgard second, motion carried.

There were no congregation members present.

The Treasurer's report was given by Karen Bakken. Gordon Johnson moved to accept, Tim Stensgard second, motion carried.

President had no report.

Pastor Mathsen reported that he prepares for Advent, Confirmation continues, the book study just finished up. Pastoral care continues weekly and worship is regular and we worship well. There have been two recent funerals and one burial. Parish Advent event next Sunday at Elstad. He recently attended a conference on Patriarchy.

Correspondence was a letter on Bishop Election in May.

Church Committee reported that the AED machine was installed. Men's breakfast was held October 27th at Elstad.

Grounds Committee reported that the outside water supply has been shut down, plowing to be done by Atkinsons, sidewalks by members. The parsonage downspouts need to be cleaned out. One cracked window has yet to be replaced.

Worship Committee presented the 2019 worship schedule to be discussed at the joint meeting.

Youth & Education Committee reported that changes had been made to the Sunday school program and that after the New Year will go back to before or after worship. A small Christmas program will be held.

Old Business included a copy of one local church's scholarship policy was given to review and discussion will continue with a policy in place by May 2019. Boiler room concrete will need to be hauled away.

New Business was the 2019 salaries of the Pastor, Secretary, Custodian and Treasurer with discussion and motion by Gordon Johnson, second by Joyce Dahl to remain as is. Motion carried. The 2019 Ballot was discussed, there will be two open council seats and the executive officers. Discussion to be continued at December meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:32 with the Lord's Prayer on the motion by Chris Hoiland, second by Tim Stensgard, motion carried.



THE BRIDGE

A Monthly Resource from the Southeastern Minnesota Synod



An Interview with Rev. Mark Boorsma, Chair of the Committee on the Election of a Bishop

What is the Committee on the Election of a Bishop? What is your role and purpose?

In those years this synod elects a bishop, a “Committee on the Election of a Bishop” is also elected in anticipation of their work beginning much later – five years into their terms. This selection of the committee so far in advance of the need is meant to keep them neutral and reduce the chances of packing the group with people representing particular agendas or allegiances.

The committee’s name is not precisely accurate, since this committee does not actually oversee or manage the actual election of a bishop, conducted by ecclesiastical ballot every six years at Synod Assembly. Instead, this committee is tasked with facilitating the pre-assembly discernment process by which congregations lift up names of potential nominees. These names are put before the conference assemblies in February, at which the conferences choose those whom they want to be invited to open forums in May. The entire process is designed to help participants in this synod get better acquainted with pastors whom they might wish to nominate for bishop at the Synod Assembly.

How long have you served as chair? What about it do you find most life-giving?

I have chaired this committee since April 2012. What I find most life-giving and energizing about serving via this committee is the chance to engage in synod-wide conversation about leadership, hope, and the future into which Jesus leads.

If a congregation has never participated much in the process before, how should they get involved?

The design of this process deeply trusts the wisdom and insight present in every congregation, and we the committee trust congregations to hold thoughtful discussion as we together prepare to call a bishop. Please try to refrain from jumping too quickly to naming a particular person. Instead, please listen deeply to one another as you discuss the skills and outlook you desire in your next bishop. going too fast to “who do we know” runs the risk of missing the richer conversation around the particular gifts you seek in your next bishop.

Your congregation has been sent a packet full of resources to inform great conversation. Please use these resources, hold forums, conversations over coffee, and finally a meeting to vote upon a name.

What do you think is most unique and noteworthy about the way our synod elects its bishops?

This process is unique in that it recognizes and holds space for divergent ingredients in a successful call to the office of bishop. First, the process trusts congregations as the primary venue in which the Holy Spirit leads and guides the Church. Second, this process remains open to the will and wisdom of God’s people gathered together in assembly.

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@ymail.com



- 18~ Kaia Drinkall
- 19~ John Abrahamson
 - ~ Rachel Bearbower
 - ~ Lynn Ryan
- 20~ Noelle Graham
- 21~ Clair Olson
 - ~ Steven Ryan
 - ~ Josh Rein
 - ~ Maddie James
- ~ Ethan Grimsrud
- 22~ Matthew Halverson
- 23~ Nikol Rislov
- 24~ Gustav Hoiland
- 25~ Mary Lawstuen
 - ~ Tristen Chiglo
- 26~ Allan Dahl
- 27~ Matthew Halverson
 - ~ Stephanie Erickson
- 28~ Sarah Stensgard
- 29~ Daryl Thompson
- 30~ Ashley Johnson
 - ~ Parker Storhoff
- 31~ Jesse Nelson
 - ~ Jarod Dybing
 - ~ Tracy Lind



- 1~ Ruth Abrahamson
 - ~ Sara Pederson
- 2~ Kathleen Wold
 - ~ Christopher Drinkall
- 3~ Lorraine Anfinson
 - ~ Margret Zack
- 4~ Ellen Lawstuen
 - ~ Kathy Kendhammer
- 5~ Carol Overland
- 6~ Kristi Gudmundson
- 7~ Ann Fretland
- 8~ Hannah Pearce
- 11~ Peter Peterson
- 13~ Heidi Evenson
- 15~ Renee Ritter
 - ~ Madison Smith
 - ~ Isaac Ask
 - ~ Chase Humble
- 16~ Christopher Freese
- 17~ Mavis Dragvold
 - ~ Sue Larson
 - ~ Tom Feine
 - ~ Sandra Johnson

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

DECEMBER 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 EL-9:00 a.m. SS-10:00 a.m. HP-10:30 a.m. EL- Annual Christmas Tea	3	4	5 HP WELCA 1:30 p.m. meeting/Bible study Confirmation 6:30 p.m. @ HP	6	7	8 Men's Parish Break- fast 7:30 a.m. @ HP
9 EL-9:00 a.m. -EL- Christmas program HP-10:30 a.m. *Afternoon @ the Movies 4:00 p.m. @ HP	10	11	12 HP WELCA 9:00 a.m. projects Confirmation 6:30 p.m. @ HP Bulletin Deadline	13	14	15
16 EL-9:00 a.m. SS-10:00 a.m. HP-10:30 a.m.	17	18 Newsletter Deadline	19 Confirmation 6:30 p.m. w/ mentors Bulletin Deadline	20	21	22
23 EL-9:00 a.m. SS-10:00 a.m. HP-10:30 a.m.	24 Christmas Eve HP - 5:00 p.m. EL- 7:00 p.m.	25 Christmas Worship @ EL- 9:00 a.m. Merry Christmas!	26 Bulletin Deadline	27	28	29
30 EL-9:00 a.m. SS-10:00 a.m. HP-10:30 a.m.	31	<p><i>Elstad ~ Highland Prairie Lutheran Parish</i> Visit our websites at... elstادلutheranchurch.org highlandprairielutheranchurch.org</p>				

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

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Permit No. #6



*December
2018
Newsletter*

**HIGHLAND PRAIRIE
ACOLYTES/READERS/GREETERS**

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2018

ACOLYTES: KRISTINA STENSGARD, LACI SIEVERS
READERS: HALE STENSGARD, SYLVIA PASSOW
GREETERS: GORDON & ARLENE JOHNSON

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2018

ACOLYTES: DANA DEGEORGE, CADEN JOHNSON
READERS: DANA DEGRORGE, ARLENE JOHNSON
GREETERS: SHARON & PAUL EHLER

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2018

ACOLYTES: LARISSA RYAN, KENNA GUDMUNDSON
READERS: KRISTINA STENSGARD, BECKY LIND
GREETERS: ROGER & SARAH BEARBOWER

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 23, 2018

ACOLYTES: LINDSAY HOINESS, ANDREW HOINESS
READERS: NIKKI DAHLE, SHARON EHLER
GREETERS: DOUG LIND FAMILY

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2018

ACOLYTES: KRISTINA STENSGARD, DANA DEGEORGE
READERS: JENS LIND, SCOTT BESTUL
GREETERS: LYLE & ANN MELDAHL

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2018

ACOLYTES: CADEN JOHNSON, LARISSA RYAN
READERS: ANDREW HOINESS, MICHELE THOMPSON
GREETERS: ALLAN SKALET & KAY EIKEN

**ELSTAD
ACOLYTES/READERS/USHERS**

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2018

ACOLYTE: LIZ HAGEMAN
READERS: MACKENZIE KNUTSON, VICKY TOPNESS

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2018

ACOLYTE: PARKER STORHOFF
READERS: MICHAEL REIN, GLEE CLAUSSEN

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2018

ACOLYTE: MACKENZIE KNUTSON
READERS: KYLE DANIELS, CAROL OVERLAND

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 23, 2018

ACOLYTE: MICHAEL REIN
READERS: LIZ HAGEMAN, CAROLYN SMITH

CHRISTMAS EVE, DECEMBER 24, 2018

ACOLYTE: KYLE DANIELS
READERS: PARKER STORHOFF, TOM DYBING

CHRISTMAS DAY, DECEMBER 25, 2018

ACOLYTE: LIZ HAGEMAN
READERS: J.T. REIN, GENE TOPNESS

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2018

ACOLYTE: PARKER STORHOFF
READERS: ALISON FREESE, JOHN ABRAHAMSON

USHERS: LARRY TOPNESS, JOHN OVERLAND,
TOM SMITH, DAVID BAKKE,
RICHARD GULLICKSON, ERIK NELSON