

*Elstad ~ Highland Prairie Lutheran Parish
A Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
~ December 2013 ~*

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*Worship Schedule
December 2013*

Sunday, December 1

Highland Prairie 9:00 a.m.
Sunday School 10:00 a.m.
Elstad 10:30 a.m.
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.

Sunday, December 8

Highland Prairie 9:00 a.m.
Christmas Program during
Worship
Sunday School 10:30 a.m.
Elstad 10:30 a.m.
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.

Sunday, December 15

Highland Prairie 9:00 a.m.
Sunday School 10:00
Elstad 10:30 a.m.
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.

Sunday, December 22

Highland Prairie 9:00 a.m.
No Sunday school
Elstad 10:30 a.m.
No Sunday school

Christmas Eve Service

Christmas Eve @
Elstad 4:30 p.m.
Christmas Eve @
Highland Prairie @ 6:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 29

Highland Prairie 9:00 a.m.
No Sunday school
Baptism @ Highland Prairie
Elstad 10:30
No Sunday school



Highland Prairie News Corner...

HP WELCA will meet on December 11, at 9:30 for quilting. WELCA meeting at 1 p.m. to get the money allocated for the end of the year, if anyone wants to go to a day circle instead of a night one now is the time to change, we will be discussing some changes with the circles and planning our booklet for next year. If you want some input please come, or talk to Cathy Bakkum or Marian Dahl, circle chair people should be there.

***Highland Prairie WELCA will be collecting Food Shelf donations until**

Highland Prairie Financials Jan.-Oct.

YTD Income	\$ 72,164
YTD Expenses	\$ 85,537
Expenses exc. Income	\$ 13,373
YTD Budget	\$ 72J50
YTD Income	\$ 72,164
YTD Under	\$ 14



Elstad News Corner....

Elstad Prayer Partners

Elstad Lutheran Church Women...Call it what you like but it is time to turn over a new tea leaf!! Sunday, December 8th at 9:00 a.m. is the date and time for the annual Christmas Tea at which time we will reveal our prayer partners for 2013 and have opportunity to sign up for 2014. The Bible tells us that "you use steel to sharpen steel, and one friend sharpens another." (Proverbs 27:17 - Message). How good is that? We all have different and wonderful gifts and we are "sharpened" when we realize those gifts and have opportunity to see how God works in our lives. You will be offered an opportunity of sharing at this Christmas Tea, sharing with your prayer partner your story of faith and how you came to be the person of faith that you are today. Not to be frightened, just a sentence or two, a favorite verse or song, or if you so choose, a paragraph of heavy theological words!!! Listening to one another makes us stronger in our own faith life. Sharing a bit of personal journey experience will also better enable us to prize one another and praise God for one another. In the year 2000 the Gaither Vocal Band recorded a song that is fitting for our purposes come December 8th. A few of the words are as follows:

"I really need what you bring to the party"
"Differences here ain't no big deal"
"Cause all this rub just makes us better"
"We sharpen each other like steel on steel."

P.S. Tradition has it that we can also bring our favorite tea cup along to the party!!

Elstad budgeted for October

The Elstad Elizabeth circle will be meeting December 9th at 6:30 at Park Lane in Preston.

Budgeted	\$8074.17
Received	\$4458.00
Under for October	\$3616.17
Budget YTD	\$80741.70
Received YTD	\$54104.00
Under YTD	\$26637.00

Pondrings from the Parsonage....

“This is the day that God has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it.” (Psalm 118:24)

I begin each Sunday with this affirmation. It has transformed my way of looking at the world. It reminds me that happiness is a choice and that, despite the challenges of life and my own imperfections, we have the freedom to choose our attitude. We can live by love or fear, or abundance and scarcity, gratitude or self-indulgence. We can live in a meaningless world or see the hand of God touching each moment of the day.

We can live by God’s vision of abundant life. Each of us at Elstad and Highland Prairie matters. Each of us can make a difference in this place. By each of us working together, great things can happen.

God is a God who gives richly, his gifts are abundant....more than we could ever ask or imagine. However, we as people often get stuck in a scarcity mentality. Either we think we must hoard what we have or we start to believe in a world of competition rather than abundance.

Let me throw out an example. My home church is Bethlehem in Ulen, MN. A few years ago, a large church from Glyndon decided that 2 Lutheran churches in a town of 500 were not enough. They planted a third Lutheran church in town. I'm sure at the time many people were worried that the new church would "steal" many of our members. About a third of our members did join the new church.

But after a couple of years – we had a big surprise. All three churches had grown. My home church was back to the level of attendance and giving they had before the others left. There were now more people worshiping as Lutherans in Ulen than there had been in decades.

God is a God of abundance. When we think there's a limited pool to draw from—God shows he is a God of the whole universe, not just our group of people.

With a theology of scarcity there is a belief that there is a finite level of resources and that if someone else gets some of those resources, then it means I have less. Everything is always a zero-sum game. This creates attitudes which allow us to justify accumulation and hoarding as a means of ensuring that we have enough.

It also has led to a fear of taking out loans for large projects like remodeling. Instead we cut back on what the church is supposed to be about: ministry, worship, education, fellowship and missions.

In the economy of God everyone has all that they need. There is always enough to go around. It is a theology of abundance, which believes that God has given us all that we need. We are called to share all that we have in order to ensure that all have a share in God's blessings. In the theology of abundance we are called to recognize our unique blessings from God. We find ways to give that call us into relationship with our brothers and sisters both inside and outside the local church. It is clear that Christ calls us to a radical way of relating to the world through our time, talents and treasures.

When we take to heart that God gives richly, we want to give richly to others as well. It's about trusting that when we give, God will provide for us in abundant ways.

Within each of us, from the smallest child to the oldest adult, God’s generosity is waiting to spring forth. Our calling is to expect God to provide generously through one another. The smallest action can set God’s love, generosity and beauty free in each of us. Stay awake. Look for the needs of your neighbor and make a commitment to bless them with your love and support. “This is the day God has made.” Today, you are called to bring God's abundance to the world and become abundant people in Jesus’ name. “Let us rejoice and be glad in it.” Let us give thanks for the chance to share God's abundance in blessing the world.

DECEMBER BIRTHDAY'S AND ANNIVERSARIES!

Happy Birthday!!

1~ Ruth Abrahamson

~ Sara Pederson

~ Isabella Eide

2~ Kathleen Wold

~ Christopher Drinkall

3~ Lorraine Anfinson

~ Margaret Zach

4~ Ellen Lawstuen

~ Kathy Kendhammer

5~ Carol Overland

~ Benjamin Johnson

6~ Madeline Rustad

~ Kristi Gudmundson

7~ Ann Fretland

8~ Hannah Pearce

11~ Peter Peterson

13~ Heidi Evenson

15~ Daniel Watland

~ Renee Ryan

~ Madison Smith

~ Isaac Ask

~ Chase Humble

16~ Christopher Freese

17~ Mavis Dragvold

~ Sue Larson

~ Tom Feine

~ Sandra Johnson

18~ Kaia Drinkall

19~ John Abrahamson

~ Rachel Bearbower

~ Lynn Ryan

~ Christopher Eide

20~ Noell Graham

21~ Clair Olson

~ Steven Ryan

~ Maddie James

~ Ethan Grimsrud

22~ Matthew Halvorson

23~ Nikol Rislov

24~ Gustav Hoiland

25~ Mary Lawstuen

~ Tristen Chiglo

26~ Allan Dahl

~ Julie Paulson

27~ Matthew Halverson

~ Stephanie Erickson

28~ Sarah Omodt

29~ Jimmie Wangen

30~ Ashley Johnson

~ Parker Storhoff

31~ Jesse Nelson

~ Jarod dybing

~ Tracy Lind

Happy Anniversary!!

11~ Keith & Julie Ekstrom

13~ Charles & Lynnette
Pederson

18~ Gordon & Arlene
Johnson

19~ Tom & Carolyn Smith

20~ Kent & Julia Jacobson

27~ Philip & Ruth
Abrahamson





What exactly is a Director for Evangelical Mission?

By Rev. Peter Reuss, Director for Evangelical Mission, Southeastern Minnesota Synod

In the current configuration of the staff of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod, three of us serve as assistants to Bishop Delzer.

Rev. Linda Gunderson works with congregations in the call process, with candidates as they work their way through the seminary system, with newly ordained pastors as they receive continuing education for the first three years of their ministry, and with planning the synod's Theological Conference for leaders. Her title clearly describes her role: Director for Rostered Leadership.

Karen Gieseke helps congregations rethink ways of passing on the faith between generations. She has wonderful conversations surrounding confirmation, Sunday School, Bible Studies, and family faith activities. Her title is also quite clear: Director for Family Ministry.

My title sounds a bit more obscure: Director for Evangelical Mission. Evangelical Mission sounds important, but what role does that play?

I have been called by the churchwide expression of the ELCA to serve on Bishop Delzer's staff. As a member of the churchwide staff, I provide a bridge between what happens on national and local levels. I serve under the supervision of both Bishop Delzer and the Congregational and Synodical Mission division of the ELCA. My position is not unique: nearly every synod in the ELCA has a Director for Evangelical Mission (DEM).

I have three major roles on the synod (and churchwide) staff. I am the point-person for working with new congregations. This is the portion of the position which I'd been a part of



Rev. Pete Reuss isn't new to synod staff, but he is new to this position and to having a full-time desk in the office. Welcome!

prior to coming onto Bishop Delzer's staff full time. I work with the New Ministry Table to identify new ministry areas and oversee & assist these ministries as they get started. The New Ministry Table is forming three sub-tables to do this work: African Ministry, Latino Ministry, and Area Mission Strategies (working with congregations in certain areas to determine the possibility of something new). In the past few years six

South Sudanese/Ethiopian ministries have emerged in our synod. Many other exciting conversations are underway!

I have the responsibility of working with congregations in times of renewal (and in this fast-changing world, every congregation is in a time of renewal!). I am a part of the Congregational Renewal Table, which promotes mission-minded congregations, encourages congregations to collaborate in ministry, and connects mentors and congregations. This table has led the Excelling in Mission events for the past few years and looks forward to working with congregations discerning God's call for the future.

It takes a lot of support to keep things moving forward in mission. The third role of a DEM is to work with the Mission Support table to help provide the resources to allow God's work to be done throughout the synod. The New Ministry and Congregational Renewal Tables abound in exciting stories of what God does throughout the synod. This passion for mission spills over to the Mission Support table as they bring people on board to support this great mission.

New Starts. Congregational Renewal. Mission Support. My title may not be as clear, but my role is quite specific.

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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DECEMBER 2013

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

1 Highland Prairie 9:00 a.m. SS @ 10:00 a.m. Elstad @ 10:30 a.m. SS @ 9:30	2	3	4 Bulletin Deadline	5	6	7
8 9 a.m. @ HP SS program 9:30 Sunday school @ Elstad 10:30 @ Elstad Elstad Christmas Program 7p.m.	9 Elstad Elizabeth Circle 6:30 p.m.	10	11 Bulletin Deadline HP WELCA 9:30 for quilting 1:00 p.m. Meeting	12	13	14
15 H.P. 9:00 a.m. SS @ 10:00 a.m. Elstad 10:30 a.m. SS @ 9:30 a.m. HP council mtg. @ 7:00 p.m.	16	17	18 Bulletin Deadline	19 Newsletter Deadline	20	21
22 Highland Prairie 9:00 a.m. Elstad 10:30 a.m.	23	24 Christmas Eve Service Elstad 4:30 p.m. Highland Prairie 6:00 p.m.	25 Merry Christmas! Bulletin Deadline	26	27	28
29 Highland Prairie 9:00 a.m. Baptism @ H.P. Elstad 10:30 a.m.	30	31				

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

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Peterson, MN 55962

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December Newsletter

HP Acolytes/ Readers/ Greeters

Sunday, December 1, 2013

Acolytes: Peyton Hoiness, Josie Bearbower

Readers: Peyton Hoiness

Greeters: Gordon & Arlene Johnson

Sunday, December 8, 2013

Acolytes/Readers/Greeters

Will be provided by 6-8 grade confirmation students

Sunday, December 15, 2013

Acolytes: Chealsy Eide, Josie Bearbower

Readers: Josie Bearbower, Arlene Johnson

Greeters: Jerry & Shannon Kopperud

Sunday, December 22, 2013

Acolytes: Riley Koop, Hans Lind

Readers: Riley Koop, Leah Jacobson

Greeters: Allen & Kay Howe

Christmas Eve Service

Acolytes: Hans Lind, Jack Kopperud

Readers: Hans Lind, Sharon Rustad

Greeters: Charles & Lynnette Pederson

Sunday, December 29, 2013

Acolytes: Jack Kopperud, Paula Howe

Readers: Jack Kopperud, David Larson

Greeters: Roger & Sarah Bearbower

Elstad Acolyte/Reader/Ushers

Sunday, December 1, 2013

Acolyte: Kody Bearbower

Reader: Vicky Topness

Sunday, December 8, 2013

Reader: Lori Bakke

Sunday, December 15, 2013

Acolyte: Caleb Gravos

Reader: Carol Eggert

Sunday, December 22, 2013

Reader: Tom Dybing

Christmas Eve Service

Acolyte: Chris Freese

Reader:

Sunday, December 29, 2013

Acolyte: Chris Freese

Reader: Carolyn Smith

Ushers: Mike Chiglo, John Abrahamson, Duane Bakke,
Richard Gullickson, Philip Abrahamson, Erik Nelson