

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

~ January 2021 ~

Pastor, Rev. Luther Mathsen

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Lisa Chiglo, Parish Secretary/Administrator ~ Email: highlandprairie_elstad@ymail.com

December Worship Schedule

Worship Notes:

*While vaccines for COVID-19 are beginning to be delivered to the public, it will be some time before the general public will be vaccination eligible, so we continue to live with the virus' threat and effect. Worship on Sunday, January 3rd will be ONLINE ONLY. While normal worship times are listed below, circumstances may warrant a change in the manner in which worship is offered. On Monday, January 4th, the parish council will determine a path forward for our worship. You may keep informed of this and all subsequent decisions on the Facebook page and website of either congregation.

January Worship Schedule

+Sunday, January 3-ONLINE ONLY

The Epiphany of Our Lord

Isaiah 60.1-6

Psalms 72.1-7, 10-14

Ephesians 3.1-12

Matthew 2.1-12

+Sunday, January 10

Highland Prairie-9:00 a.m.

Elstad-10:30-a.m.

The Baptism of Our Lord

Genesis 1.1-5

Psalms 29

Acts 19-17

Mark 1.14-20

+Sunday, January 17

Epiphany 2

Highland Prairie-9:00 a.m.

Elstad-10:30 a.m.

Elstad Annual Meeting, 11:30 a.m.

1 Samuel 3.1-20

Psalms 139.1-6, 13-18

1 Corinthians 6.12-20

John 1.43-51

+Sunday, January 24

Epiphany 3

Elstad-9:00 a.m.

Highland Prairie-10:30 a.m.

Highland Prairie Annual Meeting, 11:30 a.m.

Jonah 3.1-5, 10

Psalms 62.5-12

1 Corinthians 7.29-31

Mark 1.14-20

+Sunday, January 31

Epiphany 4

Highland Prairie-9:00 a.m.

Elstad-10:30 a.m.

Deuteronomy 18.15-20

Psalms 111

1 Corinthians 8.1-13

Mark 1.21-28

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January 2021

Pastor's Page

"I was glad when they said to me,
"Let us go to the house of the Lord!"
(Psalm 122.1)

In the past nine months, time and again, I have heard these words uttered, "There's so much that is uncertain in these days. I just want to be back in church."

Why this yearning? We've had virtual church. That's something for which we can be grateful. But it's true, no? There's nothing like being "in the house of the Lord." There's something significant about being "in place", firmly.

Yes, the truth of the matter is we Christians seek a firm abode. We "want to be back in church." But let me suggest that there is something subtle and profound in those words. There's a hidden truth in those words. That is to say: We Christians seek an eternal dwelling place.

I believe that the year, 2020, has in singular manner, reminded us that we are strangers in a strange land. Furthermore, we are sojourners---pilgrims---making our way to our eternal dwelling place. And let me suggest that being "in church" ----being in place, firmly---is, for us, the most important step taken on our sojourn. It's "in church, firmly"---and being in the presence of the living Christ and his faithful, that we are assured that we are not mere isolated wanderers, rootless and directionless, mercilessly subject to the prevailing conditions of our time and world. It's "in church, firmly" ---where we are assured that we sojourn in the presence of the One, the Good Shepherd, our Christ, who is leading and guiding us in our earthly sojourn under any and all of its conditions. He is "the way." And , He is "the truth." And, He is the life." And what about the strength we are given by a host of sisters and brothers in whose presence we journey onward? Such a blessing!

Just so, we long to be "in church, firmly." For it is there that we are reminded that we Christians are not wandering through the wasteland of this world, isolated and alone. "In church, firmly", we acknowledge and affirm that it is the Lord God who has "called (us) to ventures we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. It is "in church, firmly, that the Lord God, through his Word and Sacraments, nourishes us and gives us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go. "In church, firmly", we sojourn into 2021 knowing that (the Lord God) is leading us and (his) love is supporting us, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Just so, the words of the Psalmist not only resonate in our minds. They ring joyfully true in our hearts.

"I was glad---I rejoiced---when they said to me,
"Let us go to the house of the Lord."

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On Sunday, January 3, we will celebrate the Epiphany of our Lord. You may recall the story of the 3 Wise Men (Magi) who, following a star in the sky, were led to the place of the Christ-child. What follows is T. S. Eliot's narrative of the Epiphany event, told from the point of view of one of the magi. It is a provocative opening to the salvation that comes to us, under the conditions of our earthly sojourn and its historical details, in and through the Holy Child...and the rest of his saving life, death, and resurrection. I'd be interested to know what themes you notice in this beautiful piece. Pr. Luther+

Journey of the Magi

"A cold coming we had of it,
Just the worst time of the year
For a journey, and such a long journey:
The ways deep and the weather sharp,
The very dead of winter."
And the camels galled, sore-footed, refractory,
Lying down in the melting snow.
There were times we regretted
The summer palaces on the slopes, the terraces,
And the silken girls bringing sherbet.
Then the camel men cursing and grumbling
And running away, and wanting liquor and women,
And the night-fires going out, and the lack of shelters,
And the cities hostile and the towns unfriendly
And the villages dirty and charging high prices:
A hard time we had of it.
At the end we preferred to travel all night,
Sleeping in snatches,
With the voices singing in our ears, saying
That this was all folly.

Then at dawn we came down to a temperate valley,
Wet, below the snow line, smelling of vegetation;
With a running stream and a water-mill beating the darkness,
And three trees on the low sky,
And an old white horse galloped away in the meadow.
Then we came to a tavern with vine-leaves over
the lintel,
Six hands at an open door dicing for pieces of silver,
And feet kicking the empty wine-skins.
But there was no information, and so we continued
And arrived at evening, not a moment too soon
Finding the place; it was (you may say)
Satisfactory.

All this was a long time ago, I remember,
And I would do it again, but set down
This set down
This: were we led all that way for Birth or Death?
There was a Birth, certainly,
We had evidence and no doubt. I had seen
birth and death.
But had thought they were different; this
Birth was
Hard and bitter agony for us, like Death,
our death.
We returned to our places, these Kingdoms,
But no longer at ease here, in the old
dispensation.
With an alien people clutching their gods.
I should be glad of another death.

Annual Meeting News

The annual meeting of Elstad Lutheran Church will be held on Sunday, January 17th, 2021, at 11:30 a.m. The annual meeting of Highland Prairie Lutheran Church will be held on Sunday, January 24th, at 11:30 a.m. If changes are made to the schedule and/or manner in which these meetings are held, you will be notified on the Facebook pages and websites of either congregation. Please keep alert...

Mission Beyond Our Walls

ELCA Disaster Relief Fund-The need continues...

You are encouraged to make a gift to the fund. Please make your check out to your congregation and put ELCA Disaster Relief on the MEMO line.

Local Food Shelves-The need continues.

Shelf in either Rushford (113 E. Jessie St. Rushford), or Preston (515 Washington St. NW, Preston).

Confirmation Instruction, 2021

Confirmation instruction for 7th and 8th graders resumes on Wednesday, January 13, 2021, @ Elstad Church. Confirmation youth will receive an email concerning whether we will meet in Zoom session or in-person at Elstad.

Sunday School

Look for word on what Christian education will be offered in 2021 following the Sunday, January 10th parish council meeting. As you know, Sunday school has not been offered in the last 4 months because of COVID-19.

Adult Christian Education

**A 3-week adult Bible study on Epiphany scripture texts and hymnody will be held the following Thursdays, 10:00 a.m., at Elstad: January 14th, 21st, and 28th. Please let Pr. Luther know if you plan to participate. The texts for our first session are: 1 Samuel 3.1-20, 1 Corinthians 6.12-20, and John 1.43-51.

***Coming during Lent. You are invited to join in a 4-week study of Robert W. Jenson's little pamphlet entitled, "A Large Catechism." This little handbook on the 3 texts (10 Commandments, Creed, & Lord's Prayer) and 3 events (Holy Baptism, Holy Communion, & Return to Baptism or Penance) that are "simply to be installed in the mind" will provide ample material for discussion and spiritual edification regarding the faith we profess and practice. Please let Pr. Luther know if you are interested in the study by January 24th. He will order books for all participants at a cost of \$8.00, plus a bit for postage.

Provisional Concerns of Congregational Life

Your continuing consideration of your offerings that help the church meet its financial commitments is most appreciated. If you do not attend communal worship, you are encouraged to mail your offering to: Jennifer Nepstad (Elstad Treasurer), 20707 Co. 21, Lanesboro, MN 55949, or Karen Bakken (Highland Prairie, Treasurer), 713 Johnson Court, Rushford, MN. 55971 or Highland Prairie Church, 43267 Bowl Drive, Peterson, MN 55962.

Pastoral Care

Pr. Mathsen will make in-person home visits, if desired. He expects any visits will be under Covid19 precautions. If you, or anyone you know, is in need of pastoral care or conversation, please let Pr. Luther know. He wants the parish to know he is available for pastoral visits whether by telephone or other health safety means.

Highland Prairie Lutheran Church Council Zoom Meeting

December 13, 2020

The meeting was called to order at 5:32 p.m. by President Gordon Johnson via Zoom.

Council Members were all present except Nancy Rustad.

A quorum was determined and a motion to approve the agenda as presented was made by Tim Stensgard, Lyle Meldahl seconded. Motion carried.

Devotions were given by Pastor Luther.

There were no congregation members present.

The Treasurer's Report was given by Karen Bakken. Year to date information provided of income to date of \$80,597, expenses \$80,545. Income exceeds expense \$57.00. A motion to approve as presented was made by Lyle Meldahl, Tim Stensgard seconded. Motion carried.

The President's Report given by Gordon Johnson. Christmas services will be held at Highland Prairie in the lower parking lot at 4:30 Thursday Christmas Eve and 10:00 Friday Christmas Day.

The Pastor's Report given by Pastor Luther reiterated Christmas service information, Sunday service, morning prayer and close of the day continue to be recorded and shared online. January 3rd service will also be offered online. Advent Bible study is finishing up, Confirmation has been meeting on zoom. Concerns for Sunday school and planning going forward by the Education Committee. Funeral services were held for Kay Howe this past Friday at Highland Prairie and a service for Glen Peterson will be held this coming Friday.

Annual reports will need to be submitted in the coming weeks or as soon as possible. Pastor Luther was contacted by an anonymous donor who would like to provide seed money for the preservation of the building at the bottom of the bowl. Home visits have been done as requested, with prior contact information provided upfront, as well as following COVID protocols. Pastor will be on vacation December 26th through January 2nd. The December 27th services will be recorded prior to vacation.

Correspondence received: None

Committee Reports: None

Old Business: 2021 Council meeting dates: Plan to continue to meet on 2nd Sunday except for Mother's Day in May.

New Business: 2021 Ballot: Nancy Rustad and Lyle Meldahl will be going off, Executive officers may offer to continue. Committee member replacements needed. Discussion on how to hold the annual meeting whether to try a Zoom or possibly social distancing will be continued to January meeting, but will remain in person for the time being.

The Secretary's report was read and a motion to approve was made by Chris Hoiland, seconded by Tim Stensgard. Motion carried.

A motion to adjourn was made by Lyle Meldahl, seconded by Chris Hoiland. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted, Mary Gudmundson

Next meeting will be in person on January 10th 7:30 pm at Highland Prairie.

JANUARY 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*

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

*Happy
Anniversary*

1~ Darrellyn Barrett

2~ John Smith

4~ Michelle Rein

6~ Sandy Kiel

~ Bricker Dahl

7~ Angel Bakke

8~ Mark Dahl

9~ Nathan Bakke

10~ Philip Dragvold

~ Nancy Rustad

~ Sawyer James

12~ Kay Dahl

13~ Steve Chiglo

~ Joshua Dahl

~ Daniel Sjarpe

~ Tyler Berg

~ Darren Stockton

14~ Michelle Ryan

~ Colton Horning

15~ Carolyn Smith

~ Kasten Klug

16~ David Bakke

~ Owen Dammen

17~ Jennifer Nepstad

~ Stacy Mensink

~ Shane Jacobson

~ Lucas Redalen

18~ Barb Lee

~ Brenda Chiglo

~ Peter Stensgard

~ Ann Hoiland

19~ Easton Grabau

23~ Katherine Chiglo

~ James Bearbower

24~ Martha Stensgard

~ Deborah Mensink

25~ Ellen Feine

~ Sarah Freese

~ Paula Howe

26~ Arden Nepstad

27~ Michael Oian

~ Dave Lawstuen

~ Stephanie Erickson

29~ Freda Kiel

7~ Dan & Erika Lind
15~ Jerry & Julie Dragvold

28~ David & Sue Larson

JANUARY

2021

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

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 <i>Happy New Year!</i>	2
3 Worship online only	4	5	6 Bulletin Deadline	7	8	9
10 HP—9:00 a.m. EL—10:30 a.m. Council Meetings EL—5:30 p.m. Parish—6:30 p.m. HP—7:30 p.m.	11 Deadline for Annual Reports!	12	13 Confirmation 6:30 p.m. Bulletin Deadline	14 Bible study 10:00 a.m.	15	16
17 HP—9:00 a.m. EL—10:30 a.m. Elstad's Annual Meeting	18	19 Newsletter Deadline!	20 Confirmation 6:30 p.m. Bulletin Deadline	21 Bible study 10:00 a.m.	22	23
24 *Time Change EL—9:00 a.m. HP—10:30 a.m. HP Annual Mtg.	25	26	27 Confirmation 6:30 p.m. Bulletin Deadline	28 Bible study 10:00 a.m.	29	30
31 HP—9:00 a.m. EL—10:30 a.m.						

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

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Permit No. #6



January 2021 Newsletter

HIGHLAND PRAIRIE ACOLYTES/READERS/GREETERS

SUNDAY, JANUARY 3, 2021

ONLINE WORSHIP ONLY

SUNDAY, JANUARY 10, 2021

ACOLYTES: LARISSA RYAN, CHEYANNE DAHLE

READERS: LARISSA RYAN, BECKY LIND

GREETERS: LYLE & ANN MELDAHL

SUNDAY, JANUARY 17, 2021

ACOLYTES: CHEYANNE DAHLE, KENNA GUDMUNDSON

READERS: CHEYANNE DAHLE, SHARON EHLER

GREETERS: ALLAN SKALET & KAY EIKEN

SUNDAY, JANUARY 24, 2021

ACOLYTES: KENNA GUDMUNDSON, LINDSEY HOINESS

READERS: KENNA GUDMUNDSON, SCOTT BESTUL

GREETERS: GORDON & ARLENE JOHNSON

SUNDAY, JANUARY 31, 2021

ACOLYTES: LINDSEY HOINESS, DANA DEGEORGE

READERS: LINDSEY HOINESS, SYLVIA PASSOW

GREETERS: SHARON & PAUL EHLER

ELSTAD ACOLYTES/READERS/USHERS

SUNDAY, JANUARY 3, 2021

ONLINE WORSHIP ONLY

SUNDAY, JANUARY 10, 2021

ACOLYTE: SARI REIN

READERS: INDY QUALY, JOHN ABRAHAMSON

SUNDAY, JANUARY 17, 2021

ACOLYTE: JENSYN STORHOFF

READERS: LIZ HAGEMAN, LORI BAKKE

SUNDAY, JANUARY 24, 2021

ACOLYTE: MILEY KNUTSON

READERS: SARI RYAN, VICKY TOPNESS

SUNDAY, JANUARY 31, 2021

ACOLYTE: AUBREY DANIELS

READERS: JENSYN STORHOFF, CAROL OVERLAND

USHERS: DAVID LAWSTUEN,
ROBERT KNUTSON,
WAYNE FINNEGAN, RICH NEPSTAD