



Halfway Creek

LUTHERAN CHURCH

CURRENTS

DECEMBER 2021

Reach Out , Share Christ with All

From Pastor Chris

This month our worship calls us into renewed reflection on the coming of Jesus. I hope you are able to join us for study and learning after worship. This season we will encounter insights from scholars, historians, theologians, and archeologists as we use pastor and author Adam Hamilton's resource *The Journey: Walking the Road to Bethlehem*.

In this busy, hectic time of Advent—which is that season when we prepare for all the festivities of Christmas—it's easy to lose sight of the reason for the season: Jesus, and the hope he brings. So I pray that this series and education opportunity is a time of renewed reflection for you on Jesus and our walk as followers of him.

You probably know the Christmas story very well—you know the setting and the characters, you can recite the plot and sing all the songs. And yet, in that very familiarity we often lose sight of the depth of its meaning for the world and ourselves. This Advent we are slowing down, taking time to revisit and rediscover that story, in hopes of reclaiming some of that depth.

In Jesus Christ God comes to us, in the middle of this crazy world, to join by our side and walk with us in all we face in life: joys and sorrows, and everything in between. Jesus came bringing with him the kingdom of God, and starting a movement that truly is Good News to the poor. It is a movement of love and forgiveness that aggressively counters some the deeply ingrained ways we live that exclude, oppress, and marginalize some of our fellow human beings.

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Jesus proclaimed the Good News of God, that God's Kingdom has come near for all, and was put to death for living out that kingdom. But that's not the end of the story. God proved the steadfastness of the Good News when Jesus was raised from the dead, proving forever that nothing can take away the presence of our loving God in our lives! Now today, Jesus is alive and well as his followers continue to spread that radical message of love. We see him in ourselves as we embody his love for all, we see him as we encounter those most in need of this message, most in need of his kingdom on earth as it is in heaven, we see him in so many ways during this season of hope.

Join us this season, whether you can in person or online, as we rediscover the story of Christmas.

Jesus Christ be with you this season. May your Advent and Christmas journey bring you closer to Jesus, to his people, and enrich your walk with him.

-Pastor Chris

A Word of Thanks from the Flock

We are excited to announce that our Flocking Fundraiser was a huge success. 760 sheep in 43 flocks traveled around the community during October. One person purchased "flocking insurance" and we received 5 additional donations beyond our flocking donations.

We will sending \$1141.36 to Holmen's Hope this week for their backpack program. Many thanks to our Flocking Teams. We had 23 adults and youth participate on our Flocking Teams. Twelve members purchased flocks and seven-

teen non-members purchased flocks or made donations!

In addition, flocks were sent to eleven members yards and thirty-two non-members received flocks!

Watch for our flocks coming to a yard near you in spring of 2022!

Worship and Programming




As we continue our indoor worship and programming, it is important to remember why we gather as we do. Our mission is to Reach Out and Share Christ With All. In our worship, fellowship, and education that starts with creating environments where God's love for us and for our most vulnerable neighbors is strongly communicated. For us, that means creating spaces in worship and programming that are safe for anyone to gather when other spaces around us may not be so. It also means reaching out in new and creative ways to those who are not gathering in-person with us (and we will continue improving our methods of doing this).

As we continue forward together, let us do so with innovation, creativity, grace, and compassion. Let us be Christ's gathered and sent body at work in the world. Let us find creative ways of being church together safely, effectively, and for the sake of our neighbors.

Thank you all for your continued patience, prayers, diligence, and advocacy toward ending this pandemic. -Pastor Chris, and HCLC Vision Board.

Covid Mitigation Practices for Worship and Programming at Halfway Creek

Number of daily cases ➡ Our response

0-10	10-50	50+
		
Masked singing; communion options, coffee TBD	Masked singing SENDING song only, communion in pews	Leaders only singing, communion in pews

All procedures assume masking and distancing in worship or programming.
Numbers reflect La Crosse County daily covid cases/100k population (see covidactnow.org)



The Longest Night
A Service of Comfort and Healing.
Sunday, December 19 at 6:00 p.m.

LONGEST NIGHT SERVICE

On Sunday, December 19th at 6:00 pm we will be incorporating a “Longest Night Service” (also known as a Blue Christmas service) into our season of Advent.

This is a service for those who feel at odds with or estranged from the general feeling of joy and happiness typically associated with this time of year. These may be people who have suffered a personal loss: death of a loved one, divorce, illness, or job loss. This service is also for anyone struggling with isolation, anxiety, and frustration due to the pandemic. If you are not struggling but know someone who is, it is also a great opportunity for you to pray for others.

The service seeks to comfort all by reminding us we are not alone. The service will contain prayers, scripture readings, poems, a meditation and special music along with a releasing ritual.





Christmas Eve Candlelight Services

2:00—2:30 p.m.
3:30—4:00 p.m.

Seating is limited to 50 people per service.
RSVP by December 12 via our website.

Masks are required indoors.

Arrive early for Candlelight Service to carol and enjoy a hot beverage before being seated.



Christmas Blessings from HCLC office staff to you and your family!
Rejoice in the glory of the birth of Christ and celebrate
the Miracles and Blessings of the Holy Spirit.

VISION BOARD MEETING MINUTES FROM OCTOBER 14, 2021

MEMBERS: Pastor Chris Sesvold, Patti Happel, Mike Martin, Gaye Johnson, Jessica Cook, Carolyn Bjerke, Diane Jostad
Absent: Mike Nedoba

TIME:

Call to Order @ 6:02pm

Approval of Agenda : **Jess C. made a motion to approve the agenda, Gaye 2nd, motion passed**

Approval of September minutes : **Mike M. made a motion to approve to approve the minutes, Carolyn B. 2nd, motion passed**

Devotions – Chapter 1 Beaumont, *How To Lead...* *Patti shared her thoughts on the 1st chapter. Following chapters will be shared by the rest of the members. 2-Jess, 3-Carolyn, 4-Diane, 5-Gaye, 6-Mike M, 7-Mike N.*

REPORTS

Pastor's Report : **We need to check into rodent control.**

Financial Report : **Mike M. presented the Financial report. A few questions about the report were asked and Mike was going to check into it. Jess C. made a motion to approve the report, Carolyn 2nd, motion passed**

NEW BUSINESS

Mounting the TV : **Jess is going to call Jeff about his comment about being able to have the TV mounted.**

Sunday School : **Table Sunday School**

Youth Director?: **VB will try to reach out to the confirmation parents for the ELCA youth gathering.**

Review covid procedures (monthly check): **In the red zone so staying with current protocols.**

OLD BUSINESS

OTHER REPORTS/UPDATES

Update - 165th Anniversary of HCLC – 14th of October: **Possibly cupcakes and coffee on October 31 to celebrate.**

Closing Prayer

Adjournment: @ 7:41pm

Next meeting(s):

Thursday November 11, 2021, 6:30pm – Regular Vision Board Meeting

**Mark your calendars: HCLC Annual Meeting is scheduled for
Sunday, February 6, 2022.**

HCLC—PayPal

Giving has been made easier!! You may now donate to Halfway Creek Lutheran Church and it's ministries using PayPal! Read the QR code here, or find us on PayPal with the email address treasurer@halfwaycreek.org. *Thank you for your continued support and for making a difference!*



Your giving helps with our mission-*Reaching Out to Share Christ with All*

October	Budget	Actual	Y-T-D Budget	Y-T-D Actual
Expense	15,811	15,307.93	158,361.00	141,014.56
General Fund	15,833	16,225.67	152,334.00	161,709.71
Debt Reduction		1,645.00		5,489.00

2021 FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

All contributions must be received in the office by December 30, 2021 by 12:00 noon in order for them to be included in your 2021 financial contribution statement.

Vision Board Nomination Form

Halfway Creek Lutheran Church ELCA

DUE DECEMBER 12, 2021

During this season of Advent we ask for your prayers. All voting members, please ask God to help you identify a person that you can nominate for the Vision Board. A person that has the gifts, skills and vision to be one of our spiritual leaders and serve one to four terms. Pray that this person might be given the wisdom to know whether or not this is the right time for them to serve as a Vision Board member.

Vision Board members meet monthly, make decisions for the direction of the church, and prepare the annual budget.

Please consider this important roll and active interest in the future of the congregation and in moving Halfway Creek Lutheran Church forward.

I nominate: _____

Please mail or e-mail your nomination form to the church office; W6016 County Rd W, Holmen, WI 54636 by December 12, 2021. assistant@halfwaycreek.org



ELCA Youth Gathering 2022 July 24-28
Minneapolis, MN

Calling all 8th to 12th graders at HCLC! Are you interested in attending?? Every **three** years, 30,000 high school youth and their adult leaders from across the ELCA gather for a week of faith formation known as the ELCA Youth Gathering. Through days spent in interactive learning, worship, Bible study, service and fellowship, young people grow in faith and are challenged and inspired to live their faith in their daily lives. HCLC youth that may be interested in attending this year should email Shari at assistant@halfwaycreek.org by January 15, 2022. Adults over 21 interested in chaperoning should also email the office.

What's Happening in December

Sunday Worship 9:00 a.m. and Sunday School 9:45 a.m.—UNLESS noted otherwise.

Sunday, Dec. 5—9:45 a.m. The Journey—2nd Sunday of Advent;
11:00 a.m. Third session of First Communion instruction

Thursday, Dec. 9— 6:00 p.m.—Vision Board Meeting

Sunday, Dec. 12 —9:45 a.m. The Journey—3rd Sunday of Advent;
RSVP for Christmas Eve worship services

Friday, Dec. 17— January Currents articles due

Sunday, Dec. 19—9:45 a.m. The Journey—4th Sunday of Advent;
6:00 p.m. Longest Night Service

Friday, Dec. 24 - Christmas Eve

2:00 p.m. Worship (caroling and hot cocoa before service)

3:30 p.m. Worship (caroling and hot cocoa before service)

Saturday, Dec. 25 —Merry Christmas

No in person service. Virtual worship service

Sunday, Dec. 26—No Sunday School, No in person service. Virtual worship service.

Saturday, Jan. 1—Happy New Year

Sunday, Jan. 2 — Resume worship. No Sunday School.



Office Hours—December 20-24

Monday through Thursday

8:30 a.m.—1:30 p.m.

Friday—Closed

Office Hours—December 27-30

Monday, Tuesday, Friday: Closed

Wednesday & Thursday

8:30 a.m.—1:30 p.m.

Confirmation

Confirmation classes meet each Wednesday at 6:00-7:15 p.m.

Thank you to those who've volunteered to walk with our youth in this amazing ministry as small group leaders. If you'd also like to help or contribute, contact Shari at assitant@halfwaycreek.org or 608-526-3701.

Worship Team Rehearsals:

Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m.

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

If your birthday is missing, please notify the office.

1	8	15	22
Justin Happel	Mason Dokkebaken	Mark Thompson	Alayna Ruhbusch
2	Trent Gander	16	23
Maddy Arendt	9	Cami Hill	David Erdman
Karsen Nelson	Troy Fiers	17	Ben Heiser
3	Jon Halverson	Lindsay Tuquero	24
Matthew Payne	Megan Sacia	18	Rebecca Moss
4	10	Daniel Daily	27
Alice Jackson	Patty Brandau	Michelle Olson	Emily Arnold
5	Brooklyn Cook	19	28
Rita Johnson	11	Owen Bringe	Otillia Kinsman
Cameron Legrave	Rick Shisler	20	29
6	Katie Yahnke	Chad Brandau	Elsie Barbour
Laura Oines	12	Shannon Jandt	31
7	Kelly Hanson	21	Jacob Thornton
Jodi Eide	14	Kelly Anderson	
Adam Thoma	James Bringe		



We pray for Roy Ackermann, Katie Wier, Phoebe Kitzke, Ayla Humphrey, Ted Latham, Gayle Kuespert, Mark Sanders, Beulah Sanders, Cary Heyer, Eric Erdman, Dawson Reed, Jenny Lee, Mary Dokkebaken, Karla Johnson, Alice Fonfara, Ruth Scholze, Mildred Schwanebeck, Kathy Johnson

Holiday Party for Faith+Full+Life.

Holmen area ELCA women and friends join us

Tuesday, December 7 at 6:30 p.m. at Journey Lutheran Church for holiday cheer and activities.

SERVING AND WORSHIP

		SEXTON	ALTAR GUILD	OFFERING COUNTERS
D E C 5	9 0 0	Mike Martin Morgan Jostad	Carrie Payne Nicole Stumlin	Rhonda Britton Sonja Nelson
D E C 12	9 0 0	Stan Schwier VOLUNTEER	Karla Johnson Diane Jostad	Bette Pedretti Susan Jostad
D E C 19	9 0 0	Archie Achterkirch VOLUNTEER	Nancy Holley Diane Jostad	Jodi Eide Mike Nedoba
D E C 26		Virtual Service		

Christmas Eve Candlelight worship volunteers may sign-up via Sign-up genius and will also be coordinated by office staff. Thank you!!

Volunteer to help at Worship

Use Sign-up Genius button on the web-site or E-News; call the office or email assistant@halfwaycreek.org .

Gifting of your time is important to help meet the needs of this congregation at each service.

Thank you to those that serve the church!

Stewardship

ADVENT - A season of expectation and preparation for the birth of Jesus Christ. It is a time we prepare our hearts and souls for the coming birth of Christ. It is a time of hope, of watchfulness, and a time of self-examination. We examine our stewardship of time, abilities and money and consider how we are using all three for showing our appreciation of God's love and grace. Thank you for your offering as it will go toward building God's kingdom.



Halfway Creek Lutheran Church
608-526-3701
www.halfwaycreek.org

OFFICE HOURS

The office will be open Monday, Tuesday,
Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Friday 8:30 a.m.—Noon. Leave a message on
the answering machine or e-mail at
assistant@halfwaycreek.org.

PASTORAL CARE

If the need arises for Pastoral Care, please
contact Pastor Chris at 608-526-3701 or
608-397-1578 .

SOCIAL MEDIA

Find us on Facebook, Instagram,
YouTube and our website

@halfwaycreeklutheranchurchholmen
#halfwaycreeklutheranchurch
#reachoutsharechristwithall

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