



WWW.HALFWAYCREEK.ORG

# Halfway Creek

LUTHERAN CHURCH

## CURRENTS

JANUARY 2023

*Reach Out , Share Christ with All*

**FROM PASTOR CHRIS**

### A Light Shining in the Darkness

The first star of the night is always an incredible sight to see. At least for a child it invokes a reaction filled with excitement and wonder. "Look! I see a star!" the same as they do every time, day or night, "Look, I see the moon!" There is something new there, shining at us from up above. It looks important, or interesting, or mysterious. For some this one dot in the sky is captivating. And before long the sky darkens and millions more of them appear, becoming even more captivating.

Jesus' birth was announced with a star shining in the sky over the Bethlehem sky. That star the Magi followed to find him and pay him homage. That star calls to mind the imagery in John's gospel of the light that shines in the darkness which the darkness cannot overcome.

That light of John's gospel is, of course, Jesus. He is the "bright and morning star" the first star of the evening, the last shining in the morning. God shines light into the world through the Son, the Savior, Jesus Christ. He guides us and gives us a place to look when all around us is darkness or we feel lost and alone. His light is unable to be overcome by the darkness.

I love the imagery of a star shining in the sky, but maybe even more poignant is that of a candle. On Christmas Eve, when we hear John's gospel and get ready to sing "Silent Night" we begin with the light from the one candle, the Christ candle. From that one flame that shines in the darkness, all our candles are lit. The room comes alive as it is flooded with the lights of 100 candles. Jesus' light is shared, because that is what he meant to have happen, that is why he came.

It is such an amazing and inspiring idea that God's light is meant to be shared. Jesus doesn't just come to be the light, but he also sends his followers to be lights. He calls and chooses you, claims you at baptism, to be one of his lights in the sky, one of the candles shining the light that first came from him into the world.

Epiphany we look to the star, the star that leads us to the Savior born in Bethlehem. That one shines his light and teaches us about love. That one shows the extent of love in his death and resurrection. And he sends us as helpers, as lights, to the world.

Each of you is a little light which points to the one true light – Jesus Christ – in whom you are baptized, who has saved you, who came as one like you and who knows and loves you beyond what any of us can imagine. His light continues to shine, moving us ahead toward renewed hope, love, peace, and joy.

Walk today as a child of the light. May you experience the light of Christ shining brightly around you this new year, and may Christ shine brightly in your hearts for all to see.

Blessed Epiphany!



### **WHAT KEEPS US GOING?**

It's a new year! Here's hoping 2023 is filled with everything that "keeps you going!" Are you one to set goals for the new year, make a bucket list of everything you'd like to do, or perhaps just hope that this year will be a little easier than the past? Setting goals, creating lists and hoping for the best are all things that can keep you going and are attained even easier when you ask for help. And from whom should you ask for help? God! Yes, remembering that God is first in our lives and then truly spending time with him in prayer is a great goal to set for this year. Prayers of gratitude & thanksgiving, prayers of need, prayers for health, prayers for friends and family and prayers for yourself are all great starting points for conversations with our Lord. God only desires a relationship with Him, and however you want to do that is absolutely correct. There are no rules! May your prayers keep you going through the year, may they be answered as God wills and may you be blessed all the days of your life!

Happy New Year!  
Shari

### **CARING TREE THANK YOU!**

Blessings to All in This Season of Giving! Each year we are touched by the outpouring of support for the ministry of sharing Caring Tree gifts and care packages during the holidays with those less fortunate in the Holmen community. Whether you gave of your time, purchased a gift or gave a monetary donation, your contribution made a difference in brightening someone's Christmas. The number of families receiving care packages was 78 which totaled 346 recipients. There were 168 children that received gifts; each child received a clothing and fun item totaling 336 gifts. You all truly impacted some lives! As shared before "when you are blessed, you bless others!" Thanks to each of you for being a blessing to this ministry!

HLC Service Ministry Team

## VISION BOARD UPDATES

### Amendments to the HCLC Constitution and Bylaws

The purpose of this article is to inform and summarize the HCLC Congregation of amendments to the Model Constitution for Congregations of the ELCA as approved by the 2022 Church-wide Assembly. These changes were endorsed by the Vision Board on November 10, 2022. The next step is to communicate to the congregation at least 30 days prior to the annual meeting in February 2023, where we will seek approval. Follow this link if you want to review the specific recommended changes.

[https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Amendments to the Model Constitution for Congregations 2022.docx?\\_ga=2.214444820.266612240.1665060521-470733265.1665060521](https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Amendments%20to%20the%20Model%20Constitution%20for%20Congregations%202022.docx?_ga=2.214444820.266612240.1665060521-470733265.1665060521)

If you have questions email Amy Noel at [noelprairie@icloud.com](mailto:noelprairie@icloud.com) or call 608-386-0299.

The significant summarized changes are highlighted below:

Chapter 4: Statement of Purpose \*C4.02. D. Serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity, ~~and~~ justice, ADD "and equity" for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, ADD "caring for the marginalized, embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations", and standing ADD "in solidarity" with the poor and ~~powerless~~ ADD "oppressed" and committing itself to their needs. Changed to similar language in Chapter 9: Rostered Minister of Word and Sacrament \*C9.03.a.8 and Rostered Minister of Word and Service \*C9.23.c.

\*C6.05. A + B under Church Affiliation - Delete he or she and replaces with "the bishop and/or the bishop designees". Rationale: Inclusive language.

Chapter 9 Rostered Minister: \*C9.13 + \*C9.14 + \*C9.31 - Delete he or she. Rationale: Inclusive language.

C\*15.02. Panel of five members (three laypersons and two "ADD: rostered" ministers of ~~Word and Sacrament~~). Rationale: Change for inclusion of both rosters

3. \*C9.05 The provision for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Sacrament.... **Delete the words physical and mental.** "When allegations of ~~physical~~ disability or ~~mental~~ incapacity of the pastor.... Similar changes were made to \*C9.25. As it relates to the mutual relationship between a Minister of Word and Service.

4. Chapter 10: Congregation Meeting and Chapter 12: Congregation Council (Vision Board)  
a. C10.08 This congregation may hold meetings by remote communication, including electronically and by telephone conference, as long as there is an opportunity for

simultaneous aural communication “ADD: or its equivalent” . Rationale: This change recognizes that there are other means of providing for simultaneous communication, for those with hearing disabilities, for example.

b. Similar language in C12.13 for Vision Board and Committee meetings.

c. ADD C10.09 . “Ex officio ” as used herein means membership with full rights of voice and vote unless otherwise expressly limited . Rationale: Often confusion around the term.

5. C12.05. E. The Congregation Council shall ascertain that the financial affairs of the congregation are being conducted efficiently giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations and to the regular forwarding of mission support monies to the synod treasurer. Rationale: Synods have different systems, this allows for greater flexibility.

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## 2023 ANNUAL MEETING

Mark your calendars for the 2023 Annual meeting scheduled after worship on Sunday, February 5. All committee and ministry updates or reports should be submitted by January 9, 2023. Nominations for Vision Board are due January 8. Thank you in advance for your prompt response.

## NOISY OFFERING

The Noisy Offering December supported our **quilting ministry**. You donated \$159.27. Thank you so much!! In January, the noisy offering will go to LuMin La Crosse Campus Ministry. Let's make some noise!

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

<b>November</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Y-T-D Actual</b>	<b>Y-T-D Budget</b>
General Fund	18,748.24	18,686	179,006.21	207,551
Expense	16,744.44	18,844	200,399.94	207,576
Debt Reduction	470.00		8,580.00	

HALFWAY CREEK LUTHERAN CHURCH  
VISION BOARD MEETING MINUTES

November 10, 2022  
6:00 PM

MEMBERS: Pastor Chris Sesvold, Gaye Johnson, Amy Noel, Mike Martin, Kari Washburn, Andrea Baxter, Diane Jostad. Absent: Jessica Cook

TIME:	ITEM:
6:00	Call to Order – by Gaye Johnson at 5:59 p.m.  Approval of Agenda – motion passed
6:05	Gaye – Chapter 4 “How to Lead When You Don’t Know Where You’re Going” Gaye suggested a pause in the discussion of chapter 4. Discussed need for VB nominations, handout “Looking for Vision Board Nominations” from chapter 4. Qualities of Spiritual Leaders (pg. 78)
6:10	Approval of October Minutes – motion passed  Action by VB since October meeting - none
6:15	Pastor’s Report – vacation update; pastor suggested VB members contact confirmands by mail to introduce, support and mentor them. VB members were then assigned confirmands for contact.
6:20	ELCA/HCLC Constitutional Changes – Amy N reported changes to Constitution. VB endorsed these changes. Changes will be presented at the Annual Meeting.
6:40	Treasurer’s Report – Mike. Amy motioned for approval. Seconded motion by Andrea Baxter. Motion passed.  Property Report: Discussion of the elevator inspection. Contract with Schindler Co. – they failed to perform the necessary test for elevator to pass inspection. Contact poor. Wisconsin State Inspector okayed the elevator operation until the end of November. VB will contact Schindler Co. via lawyer concerning default in the contract.  Worship & Liturgy - Word of God – no report  Educational Team – no report  Evangelism Team – no report  Discipleship – Learn & Follow – no report  Stewardship Team – no report

*Continued*

- 6:50 New Business
- 2023 HCLC Budget – Amy Noel discussed increasing mission support from 4% to 4.5% (monthly payments would be \$660). Discussed increase of 3% to employees' salary. Final approval for Budget at December meeting.
- Visioning Ideas: Sanctuary Changes – removal of back pews for more room for audio/sound computer system and to make it more user family. Discussed placement of Pray Ground area. Contact David Gates for placement of the center rail to staircase (safety concerns). Pastor Chris to meet with SIMS for update on audio.
- 7:55 Closing Prayer
- 8:00 ADJOURN – motion passed at 7:32 p.m.

Visioning items: Pray Ground, SIMS & Audio Corner, Pew Removal, Stairway Railing. Tabled.

Next meeting December 8, 2022 at 6:00 pm.

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## **VISION BOARD**

Gaye Johnson, President—gayemj3@gmail.com  
Amy Noel, Vice President—noelpairie@icloud.com  
Jessica Cook, Secretary—jcook5410@gmail.com  
Mike Martin, Treasurer—michaelmartin49@charter.net  
Andrea Baxter—baxtera42@gmail.com  
Diane Jostad—608-526-3597  
Kari Washburn—kari.washburn@yahoo.com

Please contact the vision board with any input you may have. Vision Board meetings are scheduled for the second Thursday of each month. **Next meeting: January 12 at 6:00 p.m.**

## **FINANCIAL CHALLENGE UPDATE**

Thank you for your contributions to our Financial Challenge. Your gracious donations of \$13,920 have allowed us to start paying back our Dedicated Funds. Our debt to our Dedicated Funds ended the year at \$2,172.

### **REVELATION STUDY**

Pastor Chris will be leading a Revelation Study this winter. We will meet in the sanctuary after worship on the following days: January 8 & 23; February 12 & 26; and March 5. Join us for this intriguing study of a book often misunderstood.

### **BIBLE JOURNALING**

Join us for monthly Bible Journaling! We begin the New Year after worship on January 15 in the Gathering Space. Bring your Bible or a journal, pencils & markers and anything else you'd like to have for journaling. We'll be following the reading for January 15: Matthew 4:1-17. All are welcome!

### **#MAILITMONDAY MINISTRY**

Stop by and pick up a card or two to mail to a friend, family member, someone from church you haven't seen in a while! What better way to share Christ's love with all than by reaching out and letting someone know you care? Our next card making day is January 17, 2023 at 1:30 p.m. Evening times are also available (and we can make January 16—Holmen no school day—work, too! Just let Shari know if you'd like to join the fun. No experience needed.

### **CHRISTMAS PROGRAM A HUGE SUCCESS!**

Thank you Sunday school teachers, children and worship team for taking us on the journey to Bethlehem and Jesus' birth. What a beautiful program that touched the hearts of everyone there. Thank you to everyone who shared photos and videos!

### **SUNDAY SCHOOL PJS AND PANCAKES PARTY**

Sunday School will resume in style on Sunday, January 8 after worship with a Pajamas and Pancakes Party! See you there!

### **BIBLE STUDY**

Bible Study meets the third Thursday of the month at 9:30 a.m. All are welcome!

### **CONFIRMATION DIRECTORY HELP NEEDED**

Have you ever seen the extensive and comprehensive directories at other churches? We have pictures of confirmands dating back to the 1920s. How fascinating would it be to have those displayed at HCLC? Would you be interested in helping put this together? Contact Gaye at 608-780-5179.



## CHRISTMAS PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



*"Glory to God in the  
highest heaven, and on  
earth peace among  
those whom he favors!"  
Luke 2:14*



**JANUARY BIRTHDAYS**

*If your birthday is missing, please notify the office.*

**1**

Tuck Kinsman

**4**

John Noel

Carrie Payne

**5**

Mia Bartnik

**6**

Keith Casberg

Petra Nedoba

**7**

John Stasiak

**9**

Paula Hammes

Noah Lepsch

**10**

Dewey Crocker

Lonnie Oines

Edward Scholze

Jordyn Schreiber

**11**

Mathew Barbour

**12**

Robert Lee

**13**

Zachary Mueller

**14**

Mary Jane Nelson

Trevor Plomedahl

**18**

Joy Jandt

Jordyn Stasiak

**19**

Tammy Howe

**20**

Donna Anderson

**22**

Rylend Tuquero

**23**

Kathie Severson

**25**

Chance Brandau

JJ Ouellette

**26**

Erica Nichols

Matt Rink

Camden Thiele

**27**

Bryistol Pralle

**28**

Corey Hendrickson



*We pray for ... Pat Krause, Thelma Severson, Lisa Herrera Evans, Katie Wier, Phoebe Kitzke, Ayla Humphrey, Gayle Kuespert, Mark Sanders, Beulah Sanders, Cary Heyer, Eric Erdman, Dawson Reed, Jenny Lee, Mary Dokkebaken, Karla Johnson, Alice Fonfara, Zach Mossman, Marie Jezova, Coats family*



## CONFIRMATION

### *Bethlehem Event at English Lutheran*



### *Christmas Party*



Halfway Creek Lutheran Church  
W6016 County Road W  
Holmen, WI 54636

Halfway Creek Lutheran Church  
608-526-3701  
[www.halfwaycreek.org](http://www.halfwaycreek.org)

### **WORSHIP**

9:00 a.m. **Sundays**

### **OFFICE HOURS**

**Monday, Tuesday, Thursday**

9:00 a.m.—1:30 p.m.

**Friday**

9:00 a.m.—Noon

For Wednesday or after  
hours appointments please  
call the office or email:  
[assistant@halfwaycreek.org](mailto: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

@halfwaycreekluththeranchurchholmen  
#halfwaycreekluththeranchurch  
#reachoutsharechristwithall



# Calendar

Join us for Worship each Sunday at 9:00 a.m. Sunday School and Fellowship at 10:00 a.m.

January 2023													
January 2023		January 2023		January 2023		January 2023		January 2023		January 2023		January 2023	
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
29	30	31					26	27	28				
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY							
Jan 1, 23 New Year's Day 9:00am Worship	2 5:15am Jazzercise	3 5:15am Jazzercise	4 5:45pm Confirmation @ Journey	5	6 5:15am Jazzercise 10:00am Visitation & Funeral - Doris Lord	7							
8 9:00am Worship 10:00am Sunday School Party 10:00am Revelation 6:00pm Union Mills 4H	9 Vision Board Nominations & Annual Reports Due 5:15am Jazzercise	10 5:15am Jazzercise	11 5:15am Jazzercise 5:45pm Confirmation - Service Day/Activity	12 6:00pm Vision Board Meeting (Halfway Creek Lutheran Church)	13 5:15am Jazzercise	14							
15 9:00am Worship 10:00am Bible Journaling 10:00am Sunday School - Milestone 3 - Lord's	16 Currents Deadline Martin Luther King, Jr. Day 5:15am Jazzercise	17 5:15am Jazzercise	18 5:15am Jazzercise 5:45pm Confirmation @ Journey	19 9:30am Bible Study	20 5:15am Jazzercise	21							
22 9:00am Worship 10:00am Sunday School 10:00am Revelation Study - Sanctuary 10:00am Milestone	23 5:15am Jazzercise	24 5:15am Jazzercise	25 5:15am Jazzercise 5:45pm Confirmation @ Journey	26	27 5:15am Jazzercise	28							
29 9:00am Pastor Ben - LuMin La Crosse 9:00am Worship 10:00am Brunch 10:00am Sunday School	30 5:15am Jazzercise	31 5:15am Jazzercise 5:00pm Holmen's Hope monthly dinner at American Legion	Feb 1	2	3	4							

## SERVING AND WORSHIP

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		SEXTON	ALTAR GUILD	OFFERING COUNTERS
JAN 1	9 0 0	Mike Martin	Carrie Payne Nicole Stumlin	Rhonda Britton Sonja Nelson
JAN 9	9 0 0	Stan Schwier	Diane Jostad	Bette Pedretti Susan Jostad
JAN 15	9 0 0	Archie Achterkirch	Nancy Holley Diane Jostad	Jodi Eide
JAN 22	9 0 0	David Bringe David Chase	Barb Hale Bette P	Diane J Mike M
JAN 29	9 0 0	Archie Achterkirch	Diane Jostad	Mike M John Daily

### Volunteer to help at Worship

Use [Sign-up Genius](#) button on the website or E-News; call the office or email [assistant@halfwaycreek.org](mailto:assistant@halfwaycreek.org).

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

**Thank you so much for sharing your time and talents!**

### Volunteer Roles

Acolyte  
Greeter  
PowerPoint  
Usher  
Reader  
Communion Assistants

These volunteer roles are needed at each service. The duties for each of these roles may be found in the Gathering Space. If you have any question, please contact the office.

