



## **CURRENTS**

NOVEMBER 2023

***Reach Out , Share Christ with All***

**FROM PASTOR CHRIS**

Being that it's November, if you haven't already thought of Thanksgiving, you probably will soon.

There's a connection between thankfulness and generosity, thankfulness and giving. Did you know that it is actually physically beneficial to the giver to give? Studies have shown that when we do something nice for someone else, particularly if it was a spur-of-the-moment thing, our body reacts by sending out chemicals in our brain that cause us to feel good (dopamine, serotonin, and endorphins for those of you who know what those are). It's actually the same chemicals that cause a "runner's high", that feeling of happiness and strength after running for a pretty good distance. Having that runner's high, or giver's high in this case, is good for all kinds of things from mood to immune support, and can help you heal faster from injuries, or naturally ease pain.

So, maybe if you don't run or exercise vigorously all that often, you can support your health (and that of others) by being kind and generous!

For us as followers of Christ, the practice of giving is also good because there is a very small line between having things and idolizing things. There is a good reason that the Ten Commandments start with God being God, and us having no other gods. We tend to put a lot of value on things that provide us with wealth, security, power – things outside God that give us a sense of value and worth if we have it. Martin Luther talks about how we are built to worship something – we just are. If

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someone were to look at you, see how you lived your life, what would they suppose was most important to you? Luther says, that shows you what your god is, it shows you the thing you worship.

Giving, for us as faithful people, does have a lot to do with sharing our resources for the greater good and for the furthering of Jesus' mission among us. But as a spiritual practice, it also fights against our inclination to worship things other than God. As I said, there's a small line between having things and idolizing things. Each time we give we make that line just a little bigger.

By practicing kindness and generosity, we are putting our relationship with others and with God above our relationships with stuff. When that happens, we are able to be more thankful and realize what blessings and gifts we have from God.

Thanksgiving gives us a moment to pause and reflect on what is most important in our lives. It helps us reframe the relationship we have with others, with ourselves, and with our stuff into more life-giving relationships. It reminds us that kindness and generosity have a foundational place in our lives.

God's kindness and generosity toward us know no bounds. That very fact is how we even have the gift of life in the first place. All the blessings we have in life are first from God, and all eventually go right back to God. How we use what we have been given is a product of our baptism and call in Christ.

Do something good for yourself and others today. Show kindness. Be generous. It's good for you, for others, and it tells the love of Jesus. But best of all, it's a lot easier than running a marathon.

-Pastor Chris

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*Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. James 1:17*

## 2023 VISION BOARD

**Gaye Johnson, President**

gayemj3@gmail.com

**Kari Washburn Vice President**

kari.washburn@yahoo.com

**Andrea Baxter, co-Secretary**

baxtera42@gmail.com

**Amy Noel, co-Secretary**

noelprairie@icloud.com

**Mike Martin, Treasurer**

michaelmartin49@charter.net

**Diane Jostad**—608-526-3597

**Patti Happel**—patiszoo@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 November 9***

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

<b>September</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Y-T-D Actual</b>	<b>Y-T-D Budget</b>
General Fund	14,473.16	19,186.00	149,755.27	172,682.00
Expense	14,565.47	19,186.00	161,747.78	172,682.00
Debt Reduction	185.00		3,325.00	

## FINANCIAL STATE OF OUR CHURCH

In late October, the Vision Board mailed a letter to each household registered at Halfway Creek Lutheran Church. This letter explained the financial status of our church and outlined a few ways we have cut costs while offering a challenge to each of us to increase our giving to meet our current needs and our vision in 2024. Vision Board members will be available at both services on November 5th and 12th to hear your thoughts about the future of HCLC. Thank you for prayerfully considering all the points addressed in the letter you received.

HALFWAY CREEK LUTHERAN CHURCH  
VISION BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
October 1, 2023

**ALL MEMBERS Present:** Pastor Chris Sesevold, Gaye Johnson, Amy Noel, Mike Martin, Kari Washburn, Diane Jostad, Patti Happel, Andrea Baxter

Call to Order @ 6:00

Devotion: Gaye shared devotion from “Christ in Our Home”.

Approval of the Agenda: **Kari made motion to approve revised agenda. Amy 2nd, motion passed.**

Actions since the last meeting: **Kari made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 14, 2023 VB meeting, Andrea 2nd. Motion passed on September 27, 2023.**

**Recommendation** that we set up a separate meeting to discuss just vision, using the document that Pastor shared with us at the September 14th meeting. Gaye will set up date and communicate to the VB.

**Pastor’s Report**

1. 17 kids in confirmation with a lot of energy. Several activities planned for the next several months. Each VB member took 3-4 names and will regularly touch base with a confirmant.
2. Sunday School off to a great start. Gave out Bibles last week. 13 kids attended this week. We have a new curriculum this year that we are adjusting to.

**Discussion:** Andrea asked if we can get a new table and chair set more appropriately sized to kids. **Action:** Will use dedicated funds for Sunday School and Children and Youth.

**Financial Report**

1. September Report not yet available. Mike will ask Jodie to send to all VB members when it is available.
2. Covering operating cost variance: Through the course of the year, we have taken \$10,000 out of our Thrivent accounts, leaving a balance of ?\$28,000 at the end of August. We have also borrowed \$7862.06 from Dedicated funds. This money will need to be paid back.
3. VB members appreciated meeting with Jodie after the September VB mtg to better understand the budget and where we are at financially. Several ideas were generated.

4. **Next Step** in addressing operating budget shortfall. Current measures (Thrivent funds, borrowing from Dedicated funds, expense reduction) is not a long term solution in meeting our expenses. **ACTION:** Plan in place to have a communication out to the congregation by November 1, 2023. VB will make themselves available between and after services that first couple of weeks of November to answer questions. Will consider a short temple talk or announcement at each of the four services during those weeks.

5. Gaye will set up a separate meeting in November to begin work on 2024 budget.

#### **Property Team**

1. New contract with Schumacher Elevator out of La Crosse for elevator preventive maintenance, diagnostics and yearly certifications. Cost is 1/2 of previous contract with Schindler and better plan for service. Thanks Mike for all your work and due diligence on this issue over the past year and a half.
2. Mike will follow-up with Raymond Lee to confirm date for lift for tree and gutter clean up. We will communicate to the congregation the need to help on that day.

#### **New/Other Business:**

##### **Discipleship - Cultivating Relationships:**

1. Shari Ireland and Jodi Anderson to host a weekend scrapbooking event on October 13 and 14th.
2. Enjoyed reading the bio on the new family that has moved into the parsonage that was in the October newsletter.

**Next meeting November 9, 2023 @ 6pm. Special meetings will be scheduled for Visioning and Budget.**

**Patti made motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:50pm. Diane 2nd, motion passed.**

**Closed with the Lord's Prayer**

**Giving at HCLC** has been made even easier. You can now go directly to Paypal and search for Halfway Creek Lutheran church. You may also scan the QR code!

Thank you for helping us further our mission.



## **ALL SAINTS SUNDAY**

At worship on November 5, we remember those saints of God whom we have known and loved and who have died in this past year, as well as celebrate the new saints among us who are newly baptized this year.

O God of the pilgrim's way, we give thanks for those in generations past who have been examples for us of God's love at work in the world.

Carol 'June' Gordon	Joyce Urbanek
Lyle Gordon	John Noel
Doris Lord	Mark Sanders
Katherine Stasiak	Gladys Albers

Join us on All-Saints Sunday at 8:30 a.m. or 10:30 a.m. as we celebrate the love of God in Christ Jesus for all us saints.

Almighty God, you have knit your people together in one communion in the mystical body of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Grant us grace to follow your blessed saints in lives of faith and commitment, and to know the inexpressible joys you have prepared for those who love you, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

## **PRAYING FOR YOU ON VETERAN'S DAY**

On November 11, we celebrate Veteran's Day. Thank you to all our HCLC members and community members that served our country during wartime and peacetime. May God bless you and keep you.

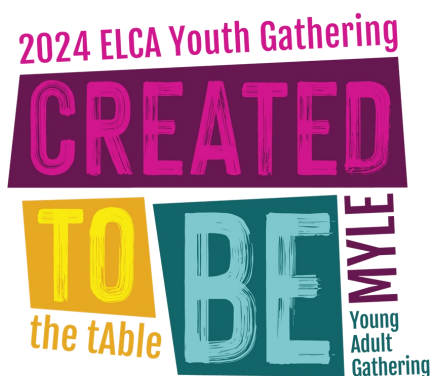
## **NOISY OFFERING**

Each month we have an additional collection during the offering at worship. In October we collected money and food for Holmen's Hope Backpack Program. In November our collection will benefit LuMin La Crosse Campus Ministries. Thank you for your support!

## LUMIN COOKIES ON CAMPUS

Speaking of LuMin La Crosse Campus Ministries, we are supporting their Cookie on Campus ministry this year. We are supplying 500 (about 42 dozen) cookies for Pastor Paul to handout on Wednesday, November 15. If you'd like to back a couple dozen cookies, please sign-up and drop them off at church by Sunday, November 13. We'll be taking the cookies to LuMin on Monday, November 14. Thank you for supporting this important mission in the lives of our Young Adults!

## YOUTH GATHERING MEETINGS SCHEDULED



Our first meeting for the Youth Gathering was a success. So far, we have 5 youth and 3 adults registered for the Gathering in July 2024!

We'll continue our month meetings on the following dates: **Sundays at 9:45 a.m.—November 5, December 3**

There is still time to join the group if you are interested! At our next meeting, we'll secure some fundraising dates and talk about what to expect at the Gathering.

Approximate cost per participant will be around \$1600. Anyone wishing to support our youth on the Youth Gathering can send donations to church or find the giving tab on our website at [halfwaycreek.org](http://halfwaycreek.org). Thank you in advance for your support of our youth!

## EDUCATION UPDATES

**Sunday School** students had their singing debut in October! They sang with full voices the “B-I-B-L-E—BIBLE!” song. This year all ages meet in the Fellowship Hall for the lesson of the day and a quick video on our new TV!! The next Milestone lesson is November 19. Note a change in the schedule: Students will be singing November 12 at 10:30 a.m. service!!



### HIP HOP WORSHIP SERVICE!

PIE AND ICE CREAM SOCIAL  
2024 NATIONAL YOUTH GATHERING  
FUNDRAISER

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 1

#### Next Faithful Move

Tools for Intercultural  
Development and Antiracism



6:00PM SPECIAL WORSHIP SERVICE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC  
6:45 PIE AND ICE CREAM SOCIAL ALSO OPEN TO THE PUBLIC  
7:15 SPECIAL PRESENTATION OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Join us for a unique style of Worship as we welcome Joe Davis and David Sherer from Minneapolis.

Help our youth going to The 2024 National Youth Gathering by purchasing some delicious slices of pie and ice cream after Worship!

**Confirmation students** had the opportunity to build relationships at Jump Start last month! On November 1st, we'll be at Holmen Lutheran for a special worship service and program with Joe Davis and David Sherer! Won't you join us?!

Bring some money for pie & ice cream between the service and presentation!





Jump Start is always a fan favorite! Thanks to the mentors and Pastor Chris for taking on this adventure!

## SCRAPBOOK CRAFT EVENT A SUCCESS

“Wow, what a great space!” said Erin as she entered our church building with all her scrapbook supplies. “When is the next one?”, exclaimed Shirley, “I’ll be there!” We had 13 crafters join us October 13-14 for our first scrapbook/craft event. We collected over 4 bags of food for the Holmen Lutheran Food Cupboard and \$317 for the HCLC general fund. Thank you to Rich for helping us set up and clean up! Thank you HCLC for sharing your beautiful building with us all! -Shari & Jodi





## CHRISTMAS SERVICES PLANNED

The youth and Sunday School students will be planning our Christmas Program for Sunday, December 17. We'll have only **one worship service that day at 10:00 a.m.**

This year Christmas Eve falls on the 4th Sunday of Advent. This gives us an unique opportunity to worship in the morning and in the afternoon. Mark your calendar now for our Christmas celebrations on **Sunday, December 24 at 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.**

We'll have a special Christmas Message via video for Christmas Morning, Dec. 25.

And then plan on only one **New Years Eve service for Sunday, December 31 at 10:00 a.m.**

## LET'S FILL THE CHURCH



Poinsettia orders will be due again right before Thanksgiving. At press time, we did not have price for the

plants. Last year they were \$20. You can plan about that same amount this year. Please take a moment to order your Poinsettias soon, so we can fill the church with memories of loved ones, in celebration of upcoming events and in honor of special occasions.

Email the office to place your order today.



## NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

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

<b>1</b> Les Kolbo	<b>12</b> Kari Washburn	<b>23</b> Kathy Johnson
<b>2</b> Sue Bramwell Noel Jandt Jean Latham	<b>14</b> Ema Nedoba Olivia Nedoba	<b>25</b> Marjorie Lee
<b>3</b> Bob Bandoli Brian Rosenow Jayden Tuquero	<b>16</b> Sammy Nedoba	<b>27</b> Steve Lee
<b>6</b> Masen Harper	<b>17</b> Elisa Moss	<b>29</b> Zach Gordon Coleton Lee
<b>8</b> Carmon Jostad	<b>18</b> Joe Fredrickson	<b>30</b> Gavin Bramwell Rylan Hendrickson Jill Noel Chesney Plomedahl
<b>10</b> Kari Hendrickson	<b>20</b> Shannon Given Hadleigh Lohrentz Connor Mihm	
<b>11</b> Angela Balow	<b>21</b> Aspen Balow Hannah Noel-Bouchard	




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*We pray for ... Pat Krause, Marna Holley, Ed Scholze, Bob Loper, Joan Vaughn, Bridget Ferk, Thelma Severson, Lisa Herrera Evans, Katie Wier, Phoebe Kitzke, Gayle Kuespert, Beulah Sanders, Cary Heyer, Eric Erdman, Dawson Reed, Jenny Lee, Mary Dokkebakken, Karla Johnson, Alice Fonfara, Marie Jezova, Coats family*



## SERVING AND WORSHIP

		SEXTON	ALTAR GUILD	OFFERING COUNTERS
<b>NOV 5</b>	8:30	Mike Martin	Carrie Nicole	Rhonda Sonja
	10:30			
<b>NOV 12</b>	8:30	Stan Schwier	Diane	Bette P Susan J
	10:30			
<b>NOV 19</b>	8:30	Archie A.	Nancy H. Diane	Jodi Eide
	10:30			
<b>NOV 26</b>	8:30	David Chase	Barb H Bette P	Diane Mike
	10:30			

### 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.



## WANT TO JOIN THE FUN AT HCLC?

There are many ways to experience all the good that is happening at HCLC! Join an activity, participate in a ministry, volunteer at worship service, help the youth with fundraising for the Youth Gathering, or perhaps start a new ministry or program. The opportunities are endless!

Check out what is happening ...

**All month:** Collecting money for LuMin La Crosse Campus Ministries! Planning fundraisers for the Youth Gathering.



### November

- 1** – 6:00 p.m. Hip Hop Worship & program at Holmen Lutheran
- 5** – All Saints Sunday: 9:45 a.m. Youth Gathering meeting
- 9**—Vision Board Meeting
- 11**– Veterans’ Day
- 12** - Blessing of the Hunters & Quilts; Sunday School sings at 10:30 a.m. service
- 15** – HCLC Cookies on Campus —drop off your cookies at church by November 13.
- 17**—1 p.m. Mail it Monday card making
- 19** – 9:30 a.m. Sunday School Milestone lesson & Bible Journaling
- 6:00 p.m. Hymns & Pies at Journey Lutheran (a special Thanksgiving gathering)
- 23**—Happy Thanksgiving
- 26**—4H Goat Project meeting at Heritage Hall
- 29**—Confirmation help decorate for Christmas

### December

- 3** – 9:45 a.m. Youth Gathering meeting
- 17** - 10:00 a.m. Christmas Program. One Service Only
- 24** – 9:00 a.m. worship and 4:00 p.m. worship
- 25**—Merry Christmas
- 31**—10:00 a.m. worship. One Service Only





**Holmen Area ELCA Churches**  
*invite you to*

## **Hymns & Pies**

**Sunday, November 19**

**6:00 p.m.—6:45 p.m.**

**at**

**Journey Lutheran Church**

**2703 Sand Lake Rd.**

**Onalaska, WI**

Let's share the gift of song and  
delicious pies as we gather in  
thanksgiving!

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

**WORSHIP**

8:30 and 10:30 a.m.  
Education Hour 9:30 a.m.

**OFFICE HOURS**

**Monday—By Appointment**

**Tuesday—9:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.**

**Wednesday—9:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.**

**Thursday—9:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.**

**Friday—Closed**

**Saturday—Closed**

**Sunday—9:00 a.m. Worship**

**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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