



WWW.HALFWAYCREEK.ORG

Halfway Creek

LUTHERAN CHURCH

CURRENTS

JANUARY 2024

Reach Out , Share Christ with All

FROM PASTOR CHRIS

In January we enter the liturgical season of Epiphany (technically, it's "ordinary time" described as the season after Epiphany... but for simplicity's sake, there you have it). In this season our Bible stories and our reflection center around the ways Jesus is revealed in the world.

Epiphany is a word that means "showing forth," or "revealing." One of the main symbols is that star the wise men followed to find Jesus. We celebrate Jesus being revealed to the world. Jesus is, as the star represents, the light breaking into our world, piercing our darkness, and "the darkness has not overcome it" (John 1:5).

In 2017 I had the opportunity to tour this little factory that made an Epiphany decoration.

In Germany there is a tiny little town called Herrnhut. The tiniest bit of a little town. It's name means "the Lord's hat" or perhaps something more like "under the Lord's protection."

In this town, for 160+ years, they have been making and distributing the Moravian star. This star has been purchased and adopted by so many, and spread literally across the globe. They were everywhere when I was in Germany, and we have several among our Christmas decorations at home.

The Moravian star recalls the Bethlehem star, that one that brought the wise men to the baby Jesus. It is also a symbol of the light of Christ. The Moravian Stars, being

Cont. on Page 2

Cont'd from page 1

spread across the world, show a symbol of how the light of Christ gets revealed to people and places all across the globe.

We bought our stars at the little factory where they are still made. They are still put together by hand, glued if they are the paper ones. I counted no more than 9 people working on them when we toured the facility.

The simple sale and distribution of a Christmastime decoration, originally an Epiphany decoration (and likely a geometry project for schoolchildren), continues to remind us of the light of Christ around the world.

That star made known the one who wise men of the east would come, worship, and bring gifts. It points to the one who brings the hope of God's kingdom on earth – a kingdom of everlasting peace, joy, and love.

You, in your own walks of faith, are like those stars. Each day you are given opportunities to share or experience the light of Christ. In your place of work, your family, or your friendships, Jesus shines through you, and to you, and calls you to shine his light and reveal his love to the world.

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.

Happy Epiphany!

-Pastor Chris



2023 VISION BOARD

Gaye Johnson, President

gayemj3@gmail.com, 608-780-5179

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

marty495268@gmail.com

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 January 11.***

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

November	Actual	Budget	Y-T-D Actual	Y-T-D Budget
General Fund	18,197.48	19,186.00	251,480.24	211,054.00
Expense	18,099.93	19,186.00	261,167.55	211,054.00
Debt Reduction	1177.00.00		54,667.00	

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 click or scan the QR code! Thank you for helping us further our mission.



Noisy offering for January will be collected for our HCLC quilters' group!

Vision Board Nominations are due January 14. Please consider nominating yourself or someone you think would make a good Vision Board member. Nomination forms are available in the Gathering Space or email assistant@halfwaycreek.org.

IMPORTANT: Vision Board members will be available between services on January 14 to talk about the proposed budget options included in this newsletter. Please take a moment to have a conversation with a member as your input is crucial. Thank you!

VISION BOARD MEETING

December 17, 2023

3:00 p.m.

Members: Pastor Chris Sesvold, Gaye Johnson, Kari Washburn, Mike Martin, Andrea Baxter and Patti Happel

Absent: Diane Jostad and Amy Noel

Item: Call to Order at 3:02 p.m.

Approval of the Agenda: Mike Martin made a motion to approve the agenda, Patti Happel 2nd, motion passed.

Actions since last meeting: Motion was made to approve the minutes of the November Vision Board meeting. Motion passed.

Pastor's Report:

1. Hymn & Pies was November 19th at Journey.
2. Sunday School Christmas program was today and included the confirmation students.

Financial Report: Andrea Baxter made a motion to approve the report, Patti Happel 2nd, motion passed. Noisy offering for December is Good Gifts, January is HCLC Quilters for supplies and February is Holmen's Hope.

2024 Budget: Patti Happel made a motion to approve a four budget option, to be labeled as follows:

1. Bare Bones, no raises, budget cuts taken
2. Minimal Raises, 2% raise to employees, budget cuts taken
3. Dream Budget, 5% raise to employees
4. Actual

Mike Marin 2nd, motion passed.

Closing Prayer

Adjourned @ 5:10, motion to adjourn the meeting my Mike Martin, Patti Happel 2nd, motion passed.

FOUR BUDGETS?

I know what you're thinking, "Am I really getting 4 budgets to look at this year?"

Well, yes. Here's what's going on.

The past couple of years our congregation has had to use some of our reserve funds to meet our expenses. And we have no means to replenish these funds.

As we look to the next budget year, we've gotten to the point where we need to fund our mission without reserves. So, these 4 budgets are different pictures of how we operate, all are showing deficit. The vision board has some ideas on how to remedy our financial situation. We could continue as we currently operate, which would deplete our reserve funds. Or we could find ways to increase income, pay for repairs and pay off our debt, perhaps through a capital campaign or by selling property.

Now, rather than hash this all out in one drawn out annual meeting, we want a more inviting avenue. We have set aside a meeting time between services on January 14 to learn what's going on, hear ideas and concerns, and dream together about how we can support our mission and ministry. This will help take pressure off the decision-making of the annual meeting when we officially finish and approve our budget.

So today, two things for you to do:

- 1) Take a look at the numbers. Come to the meeting between services on January 14 to hear more about what is going on and share your thoughts and ideas.
- 2) Think about some ways you like to gather as church, things we can do together that can also support our mission by promoting generosity. Where will God provide opportunities for us to grow in generosity or share Jesus' love in ways that invite financial participation?

Thank you for your dedication, generosity, and most of all: your love of Jesus and living in his name.

Vision Board

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

Check out our Google Calendar now on the home page of our website!

January 2024

7—6 p.m. 4H meeting Heritage Hall

11—6 p.m. Vision Board meeting

14—Bishop Malpica at worship; 9:30 a.m. open invite to talk with Vision Board

18—9:30 a.m. Bible Study

21—Sugar Creek Sunday at HCLC; Sunday School sings at 10:30 a.m. service

28—Milestone lesson for Sunday School students and parents

February

4—Annual Meeting, Cemetery Meeting will follow

14—Ash Wednesday

LOOSE “NOISY” OFFERING MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Each Sunday, we ask you to put your change (and bills/checks) in the cake pan and to “Make some NOISE!” Over the past one and a half years, you have made a difference within our church, our community and throughout the world. Let us show you how.....

Within the church: We started our loose offering campaign by collecting for piano tuning, Sunday School/Youth Education, then later the Quilting Ministry.

Within our local community: We have supported a whole variety of causes. This includes LuMin Campus Ministry, Catholic Charities Warming Shelter, Holmen Lutheran Food Cupboard, Holmen’s Hope summer lunches and backpack programs.

Within the world: ELCA World Hunger and Water projects, disaster relief for hurricanes and Maui fires, shipping costs for World Relief and the Hope Centers for Children of Africa.

All of this generosity represents over \$3000! THANK YOU!!

As we begin 2024, the Vision Board would like to hear from you if there is an organization that you volunteer for or a cause that is important to you, that we should consider for our loose “NOISY” offering.

CHRISTMAS PROGRAM



2023

"Living Word"



Thank you Sunday School and Confirmation students along with parents and teachers for helping make this year's program a success. A big thank you to Lynn Wegner and Kathi Hagel for helping with music.



HALFWAY CREEK LUTHERAN CHURCH CEMETERY ASSOCIATION



Prayers continue for the Raymond Lee family during this difficult time. The cemetery trustees also ask for prayers as the association moves forward filling the vacancy on the cemetery board. Mark Witte and Dan Brudahl are working hard with the Scholze family organizing cemetery papers and digitizing maps. If you feel called to help, please talk to Mark (608-317-0183) or Dan (608-526-6950).

We will meet for the cemetery annual meeting following the regular church's annual meeting on February 4, 2024.

Thank you.
Ruth Scholze

BISHOP MALPICA AT HCLC

Bishop Malpica will be joining us for worship on **January 14** at both the 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. services! Let's offer him a warm HCLC welcome!

BIBLE STUDY

The Bible Study group will resume on Thursday, January 18 at 9:30 a.m. We'll be discussing chapter 8 of Unafraid by Adam Hamilton.

SUGAR CREEK SUNDAY

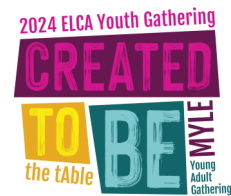
Plan to attend one or both worship services on Sunday, January 21 as the Sugar Creek Bible Camp Program Director, Deacon Stephanie Engel, shares information about Sugar Creek and helps lead worship!! What a great opportunity for everyone and especially the kids!!

COOKIE WALK SUCCESS

Thank you to everyone who helped support the Youth Gathering Cookie Walk fundraiser this year! We appreciate all of the cookie donations along with all you buyers!! We hope you enjoyed the tasty treats! We were able to raise \$358 for the Youth Gathering trip in July! Thanks again and stay tuned for our next creative fund raiser!

YOUTH GATHERING UPDATE

Three adults and 5 youth have registered for the Youth Gathering in July! There is still time if you are interested in going along! Thank you for supporting our fundraisers so far! We really appreciate all your prayers and help as we prepare for the Youth Gathering. Anyone wishing to support our youth on their Youth Gathering trip can send donations to church or find the giving tab on our website at halfwaycreek.org.



fb.com/youthgathering

elca.org/gathering

[@elcagathering](https://twitter.com/elcagathering)

MERRY CHRISTMAS

What beautiful Christmas Eve services we had at HCLC! Thank you to Lynn and the worship team for sharing their talents at both services. Thank you to the worship volunteers for helping ensure that everything flowed well. Thank you to Bette Pedretti for baking the communion bread and all the behind-the-scenes help. A huge shout out to our custodian, Rich (and his helpers), for all his hard work in getting everything set up. We also thank Nancy Holley, Rachel Hauser and Diane Jostad for decorating the sanctuary. Blessings to everyone who helped with worship, attended worship, and prayed for our community. Happy New Year!



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

If your birthday is missing, please notify the office.

1	10	18	26
Tuck Kinsman	Dewey Crocker	Joy Jandt	Erica Nichols
4	Lonnie Oines	Jordyn Stasiak	Matt Rink
Carrie Payne	Edward Scholze	19	Camden Thiele
5	Jordyn Schreiber	Tammy Howe	27
Mia Bartnik	11	20	Bristol Pralle
6	Matthew Barbour	Donna Anderson	28
Keith Casberg	12	22	Corey Hendrickson
Petra Nedoba	Robert Lee	Rylend Tuquero	
7	13	23	
John Stasiak	Zachary Mueller	Kathie Severson	
9	14	25	
Paula Hammes	Mary Jane Nelson	Chance Brandau	
Noah Lepsch	Trevor Plomedahl	JJ Ouellette	



We pray for ... Marjorie Lee, Jean Latham, 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

Thank You

On behalf of the Raymond Lee Family, thank you for your prayers, support, phone calls, hugs, food, cards, memorial gifts, and visits during this difficult time. Please keep the visits, calls, and prayers coming. The Lee Family truly appreciates the extra help from area neighbors and friends. Have a blessed 2024. Marge & Family

SERVING AND WORSHIP

		SEXTON	ALTAR GUILD	OFFERING COUNTERS
JAN 7	8:30	Mike Martin	Carrie Nicole	
	10:30			Rhonda Sonja
JAN 14	8:30	Stan Schwier	Bette P	
	10:30			Bette P Susan J
JAN 21	8:30	Archie A.	Nancy H.	
	10:30			Jodi Eide
JAN 28	8:30	David Chase	Barb H Bette P	
	10:30			Diane Mike

Volunteer to help at Worship

Use [Sign-up Genius](#) button on the website or E-News; call the office or email 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!

Thank you!

Acolytes play an important role at worship from lighting candles to helping Pastor with communion! We'd love to have you join our team of volunteers!



Halfway Creek Lutheran Church
608-526-3701
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—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

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

