

# CURRENTS

Reach Out, Share Christ with All

[www.halfwaycreek.org](http://www.halfwaycreek.org)

## March

(Sunday School meets at 9:00 AM each week)

- 1** - 10 AM Worship with Patti Happel
- 3** - 8:45 AM Quilters meet; **Easter Flowers order forms are due; Office Closed**
- 4** - 5:45 Lenten meal; 6:30 Worship  
7-730 Confirmation
- 8** - 10 AM Worship with Patti & Bishop Malpica
- 10** - 8:45 AM Quilters meet
- 10-12** - **Office Closed**
- 11** - 5:45 Lenten meal; 6:30 Worship  
7-730 Confirmation
- 12** - 6 PM Vision Board Meeting
- 15** - 10 AM Worship with Ron Christensen & Patti;  
General First Aid and Use of AED workshop after worship.
- 18** - 5:45 Lenten meal; 6:30 Worship  
7-730 Confirmation
- 19** - 9:30 AM Bible Study
- 22** - 10 AM Worship with Ron Christensen & Patti
- 25** - 5:45 PM Lenten Meal  
6:30 PM Lenten Service
- 29** - 10 AM Palm Sunday worship with Pastor Wayne

## **Dearest Halfway Creek Family,**

As we enter the season of Lent, we are invited into a slower, more intentional time of faith. Midweek Lenten services offer us sacred space in the middle of busy weeks — time to pause, to pray, to sing, to reflect, and to gather in fellowship as we share a meal.

In the ELCA, Lent is not about earning God's grace but returning to it. It is a season of honesty and hope — of naming our need and trusting God's mercy. Our midweek gatherings become touchpoints of renewal, grounding us in Word and prayer as we journey with Christ.

During our mid-week Lenten services, we will focus on different ways to pray. Prayer shapes us. It softens our hearts, steadies our spirits, and draws us deeper into God's ongoing work of reconciliation and love. Whether you have long observed Lent or are simply seeking quiet space in a noisy world, these services are an invitation — come as you are.

May this Lenten season be one of meaningful reflection, deep community, and abiding trust in the promise that even through the cross, God is bringing new life.

In Christ's peace,  
Patti Happel, Synod Authorized Minister

## VISION BOARD

### President

Bette Pedretti  
bettepedretti@yahoo.com  
608-526-3241

### Vice President

Nicole Stumlin  
bigfarmer053@yahoo.com  
608-769-3642

### Secretary

Michelle Olson  
michelle@abeeinc.com  
(608)780-9802

### Treasurer

Carrie Payne  
payne.carrie@hotmail.com  
608-790-4401

### Members

Wayne Atchley  
atchleyw@charter.net  
608-317-1638

Kent Kramer  
kentkramer7@gmail.com  
(608)317-8699

Nancy Holley  
5445nanh@gmail.com  
608-526-3418

### Synod Authorized Minister

Patti Happel  
pastor@halfwaycreek.org  
608-317-9525

## HOLY WEEK (Apr 2-5)

### Maundy Thursday &

**Good Friday:** Services will be held at 6:30 PM.

**Easter Sunday:** Worship at 10:00 AM, with Patti Happel presiding.

The office will be closed April 2-6

## HALFWAY CREEK LUTHERAN CHURCH

### VISION BOARD MEETING MINUTES

**FEBRUARY 12, 2026**

**ATTENDEES:** Patti Happel, Carrie Payne, Bette Pedretti, Nancy Holley, Nicole Stumlin, Michelle Olson, Wayne Atchley, Kent Kramer (welcome!)

**GUEST:** Jodi Anderson

**Call to Order:** 6:02pm

**Approval of Agenda / Timekeeper:** Carrie Payne (motion), Wayne Atchley (second), all in favor

Devotion / Prayer: Carrie Payne

Actions since last meeting:

- Approved 1/14/26 VB minutes via email
- Approved 1/24/26 motion to have 1 Easter service at 10am via text

Financial report:

- Noisy Offering
  - February: LuMin
  - March: Outreach HCLC
  - April: Gardeners HCLC
  - May: Holmen's Hope Summer Lunch Program

Ministry / Office Updates:

- SAMs report shared prior to meeting
  - Reviewed by VB – no questions

Old Business:

- Approval of Church policies as revised and printed for review: Wayne Atchley (motion), Michelle Olson (second), all in favor
- Follow up on church activity cancellation process as printed for review
- Sound System Update – Wayne Atchley
  - Wayne has walked through and found several cables and devices not in use
    - Will confirm usage / need with John Daily
  - Wayne can see that we have more system capabilities than he anticipated
  - Need to adjust stream to sound board (has been getting better)
  - Patti's headset is working very well with streaming

- Consider purchase of another headset for the presiding pastor on a given day
    - Wayne to reach out to SIMS for further guidance
  - Safety Meeting follow up
    - Next steps:
      - Michelle to touch base with Jodi to review insurance policy and contact information to ensure what coverage requires from a safety perspective (medical emergency, fire, and active intruder) and whether they have an emergency plan templates
        - Patti informed that insurance is through Tricor (Joe)
      - Next would be to meet with Carrie again and determine equipment needs for safety (door stops, tape for floors, signage)
      - Next would be writing out a draft emergency plan
  - Blood Drive signs
    - Next Drive is April 10th
    - Nicole and Wayne to work on signage
  - Committee / Team updates
    - Building committee noted that rewiring is needed for the stoves in the kitchen area
      - Will be moving the stoves to a different location for this

#### New Business:

- Election of officers:
  - President = Bette Pedretti
  - Vice President = Nicole Stumlin
  - Secretary = Michelle Olson
  - Treasurer = Carrie Payne
- Orientation for new VB members
  - Welcome Kent!
- Council Development Retreat
  - Saturday, March 14<sup>th</sup> from 9:00am – 12:00pm at Journey Lutheran
  - Bette / Patti need to know who wants to attend ASAP to give JL numbers

#### **Closing Prayer**

#### **Adjournment:**

- Carrie Payne (motion), Nicole Stumlin (second), all in favor
- Meeting adjourned at 7:09pm

#### **Next Meeting:**

- Thursday, March 12<sup>th</sup> at 6pm

## **INTERVIEW WITH OUR NEWEST VISION BOARD MEMBER**

Welcome, Kent Kramer, to Halfway Creek Lutheran Church Vision Board! Let's get to know Kent a little through a brief interview!

Here are a few questions we had for Kent and his answers:

### **How did you first find your way to Halfway Creek, and what made you stay?**

After exploring different church options, we liked the "feel" of Halfway Creek. It has very good leaders, a place that makes you comfortable and welcomed. There is also a chance for volunteer opportunities and giving people a chance to share your time and talents.

### **How can the congregation best pray for you as you step into this role?**

We can all ask in our prayers to "do the right thing". I am grateful to join the vision board and be a part of building up our congregation in many different ways. The current board members have made me feel very welcome and they are leading our church in a godly direction.

### **If you could have dinner with any figure from church history (besides Jesus!), who would it be?**

If I could have dinner with anyone from church history I think I would choose Goliath. Even when the odds were against him, he did not back down and rose up against the odds. Sometimes I feel that small churches are underdogs against the big challenges facing them, but I feel that we have a unique niche to fill. We need to progress optimistically and when challenged, do what we are meant to be doing to the best of our ability.

### **Do you have a "hidden talent" or a hobby that might surprise people?**

I am a retired school teacher and military officer in the Army National Guard. I have learned a lot from these 2 organizations and hope to transfer some of these to the Vision Board and keep it moving in a positive direction. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve.

Thanks for taking the time to answer these questions, Kent. And thank you for serving HCLC so faithfully.

## **NOISY OFFERING**

Throughout February, our noisy offering supported LuMin Campus Ministry with a total of \$226.06. Thank you to Pastor Kathryn Thompson of LuMin for your message on February 8<sup>th</sup>!

Throughout March the Noisy Offering will support our HCLC Outreach Ministries! Keep making some noise!

## **LENTEN WORSHIP SERIES — Teach Us to Pray**

This year, our Lenten worship series, *Teach Us to Pray*, will focus on the spiritual practice of prayer. Each week, our 30-minute service will include an interactive experience exploring different forms of prayer and different ways to pray. Services will be held Wednesdays at **6:30 PM**. This series is designed to deepen your prayer life and is appropriate for all ages—from **3 to 93!** Prior to worship we'll share a meal beginning at 5:45 PM. Skip the cooking and join us for a simple meal and meaningful worship as we journey together through Lent.

### **Weekly Meal and Worship Themes include:**

- **March 4:** Soup & Sandwiches; Praying with Jesus (The Lord's Prayer)
- **March 11:** Baked Potato Bar; Praying for the World God Loves (Intercession)
- **March 18:** Casseroles & Dinner Rolls; When Words Fail (Journaling or Art as Prayer)
- **March 25:** Pizza; Prayer Around the Cross (Meditative Prayer)
- **March 29 (Palm Sunday):** *Into Your Hands — Prayer as Trust and Surrender*

## **OUTREACH MINISTRY**

### **Care Packages for our 1st year College Students**

We are sending care packages this spring to our college students. We had very positive feedback from those who received them last fall. It is important for our students to feel supported during this transition year into the next chapter of their life. We want them to know that they are important, we are proud of them and that we continue to pray for them.

**We are asking for donations of Easter Candy, Pretzels, Trail Mix, Goldfish crackers, Cheez Its, protein bars, gum, gift cards (Starbucks, Target, Kwik Trip, Culvers).**

Please have all donations to church by Sunday, April 12th as we will be assembling and mailing these around April 15th.

### **Card Ministry**

We will be meeting on Wednesday, April 15th, 11am-1pm, for our card ministry. This is a fun time to write out cards of well-wishes and prayerful thoughts to those on our prayer list, befrienders list and others in the congregation/community. We have prompts for writing and provide all the supplies. We also have a delicious lunch! Please consider joining us for all or part of the time!!

### **Holmen's Hope Backpack Program**

The weekend backpack program through Holmen's Hope is in their 10th year. The weekend backpack program runs throughout the school year. The goal this year is to provide 2 breakfasts and 2 lunches each weekend for those kids who have limited access to food.

### **Donations of items needed include (please bring to church during March):**

Hormel Compleat meals, Microwavable Mac and Cheese cups, Cup of noodles, Easy open canned ravioli/spaghetti O's/soup/beef stew, Fruit/applesauce cups, Veggie cups, Granola bars, Breakfast bars, Oatmeal packets, Cereal cups, Crackers w/ cheese, Crackers w/ Peanut butter, Microwavable popcorn, Personal hygiene items.

**Save the Date: May 7th** We're heading to **Andy's Main Street Union** in Holmen for a Chicken Q and Bake Sale to support our youth! A huge thank you to Andy for providing such a great space for this event. More details are coming soon.

### **HELP LEAD OUR CHURCH: We Need Your Voice!**

Ever wonder how our local congregation connects to the broader ELCA? We are looking for **two lay voting delegates** to represent HCLC at this year's **La Crosse Area Synod Assembly**. This is the perfect year to get involved! The event has been streamlined into a single day, the location is close by, and it's a wonderful way to meet others on a similar faith journey.

#### **Why Attend?**

- **One Day Only:** A simplified schedule from 7:30 AM to 6:00 PM.

- **Engagement:** Interesting breakout sessions and lunch are included.
- **Community:** Meet new people and learn what's happening throughout our Synod.
- **Synod Worship:** A special outdoor service at **Riverside Park** on Sunday, June 7 at 10:00 AM (open to all!).

**Key Dates:**

- **Caucus Meeting:** Sunday, April 19, 3:00–5:00 PM at Our Savior's (West Salem).
- **Synod Assembly:** Saturday, June 6.

**Interested?** Please contact **Shari in the office, Patti, or Bette** if you'd like to represent HCLC. More details can be found on the La Crosse ELCA Synod website.

**HALFWAY CREEK CEMETERY NEWS**

Lent is a time of repentance, reflection, and drawing close to God as you ponder the story of Christ and what it means for your faith. It is a time to deepen your relationship with God knowing Easter is coming!

Halfway Creek Lutheran Cemetery Association is ready to help families make decisions for peaceful rest. If you have questions about lots, family locations, headstones please ask any of the trustees.

If you wish to purchase a lot for either full casket or cremation burial, please contact one of the Trustees below. Lots are \$300 for members of Halfway Creek and \$600 for non-members. A single lot can be used for either one full casket burial or up to four cremation burials.

For more details, or to reserve your resting place, call one of the cemetery trustees:

Mark Witte, 608-317-0183

Hannah Scholze, 608-797-9388

Kent Kramer, 608-317-8644

**SECURITY AND SAFETY UPDATE – INVITE TO GENERAL FIRST AID REFRESHER MAR 15**

The start of 2026 has had the Vision Board focusing in on the security and safety of our church and its members.

So far this year, several new Fire Extinguishers were hung, Exit Lights replaced along with the expansion of the doorbell and door open chimes to be heard more widely throughout the building. We also hosted an informational meeting with the La Crosse County Sheriff's Department regarding active and unwanted intrusions to our church.

In March we want to give everyone a chance to be refreshed on **General First-Aid and the use of the AED**. Vision Board members, Office Staff, Building and Ground, Sunday School and Confirmation teachers, everyone is welcome. **Sunday March 15th after service**. (You are already at church – no need to come back a different time.) Please plan on attending, you may save a life!!! Hosted by our own Tri-State Ambulance member Wayne Atchley.

## MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Graham Kinsman
- 3 John Fredrickson, Kynzie Severson, Lynn Wegner
- 5 Doreen Wille
- 6 Timothy Severson
- 11 Robert Nelson
- 13 Gaye Johnson, Michael Martin, Tricia Syverson
- 17 Elyzabeth Yahnke
- 21 Brian Wille
- 22 Marc Jandt
- 23 Kathy Christensen, Jeremy Cook, Connor Lee
- 24 Linda Pralle
- 27 Ivy Severson
- 29 Nichols Hill, Ruth Scholze
- 30 John Daily
- 31 Daniel Brudahl, Reid Stumlin



## IN OUR PRAYERS

**We pray for** friends and family of those who have recently passed: Glenn Schmidt, Bob Cottrell, Amanda Anderson, Beulah Sanders, Harvey Miller

**We pray for** Ron Christensen, Bill Baxter, Jackson Ammerman (grandson of Les and Susan Kolbo), Gayle "Susie" Johnson, Laurie Gillespie, Diane Jostad, Betty Bender, Stacey Fredricks, Robin Ruhbusch, Pat Martin, Laurie Noelke, Megan Sacia Ulrich, Perry Voshage, Marjorie Lee, Jean Latham, Joan Vaughn, Bridget Ferk, Thelma Severson, Katie Wier, Phoebe & Bill Kitzke, Gayle Kuespert, Cary Heyer, Jenny Lee, Mary Dokkebaken, Karla Johnson, the Coats family.

## 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). Volunteer Clipboards are also in the gathering space. 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!

## SERVING AND WORSHIP

	WORSHIP TIME	SEXTON	ALTAR GUILD	OFFERING COUNTERS
<b>MAR 1</b>	10:00 Patti	Mike	Carrie Nicole	Jodi E Sonja
<b>MAR 8</b>	10:00 Bishop Malpica, Patti	Stan	Jess Cook	Bette Susan
<b>MAR 15</b>	10:00 Ron & Patti	Archie	Nancy	Rhonda
<b>MAR 22</b>	10:00 Ron & Patti	Joe	Bette	Mike
<b>MAR 29</b>	10:00 Pastor Wayne	Archie	Kari W	Mike

## HALFWAY CREEK LUTHERAN CHURCH ANNUAL MEETING - February 1, 2026

(Note: Reviewed by Vision Board on February 12, 2026, and will be approved at 2027 annual meeting.)

- I. Call to order @11:04 by VB President Bette Pedretti. Quorum established with 36 of 248 HCLC voting members signed in.
- II. Motion made and seconded to adopt agenda as published. Motion passed.
- III. Opening Prayer by Synod Authorized Minister (SAM) Patti Happel.
- IV. Motion made and seconded to approve minutes of February 2, 2025, annual meeting. Motion passed.
- V. 2025 Ministry Review - Motion made and seconded to approve reports of teams and ministries as published in the annual report. Motion passed.
- VI. Financials
  - A. The 2025 Income and Expense Report was shared by Financial Assistant Jodi Anderson.
  - B. Jodi then gave an overview of the proposed 2026 budget and answered questions. Discussion:
    1. Consideration of calling a pastor. Bette shared that while we are in a more positive financial position than in the past years, we do not have the financial base to support a pastor. There were multiple positive comments on the combination of SAM and supply pastors to meet our current needs. REQUEST: Share the approximate cost of salary and benefits of a part time and full-time pastor with and without a parsonage.
    2. No dedicated funds report was included in the Annual Report. Jodi did explain how we have placed the dedicated funds into a Thrivent account to ensure a better return than what we were receiving in the savings account. We still have access to those funds as needed or as the specific account designates. REQUEST: That a report of Dedicated Funds be shared in the next newsletter.
    3. After the mortgage was paid off, we established a Thrivent Fund for Maintenance. This fund is for larger projects not regular church property maintenance which has a budget line of \$10,000. The budget reflects the \$1000 per month that we will place into a maintenance account.
    4. Motion made and seconded to adopt the proposed budget as published in the annual report. Motion passed.
  - C. Thank you to the congregation and our friends for their generosity in weekly offerings, growing dedicated funds and helping to pay off the mortgage in 2025.
- VII. 2025 Ministry Plan
  - A. Kent Kramer was elected by paper ballot as the new Vision Board member. Write-in candidates, Jodie Edie and Chris Stauffer chose not to join that VB at this time.
  - B. Thank you to outgoing VB member: Andrea Baxter and Amy Noel
  - C. Anyone interested in attending synod assembly in June, please let a member of the VB know.
  - D. HCLC Constitution changes
    1. Motion made and seconded to approve the 2025 Amendments of the Model Constitution as recommended by the Church-wide Assembly of the ELCA to the HCLC Constitution. Motion passed.
    2. Motion made and seconded to approve the amendments to the HCLC recommended by the Vision board and shared with the congregation in the December Vision Board meeting minutes. Motion passed. **Note:** These amendments will be ratified at the next annual meeting. Reference \*C16.02. Of the constitution.
- IX. Motion made and seconded to adjourn the annual meeting. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 11:50
- X. Closed with prayer by SAM Patti Happel.

Submitted by Amy Noel, Vision Board Secretary

### **Blood Drive coming to HCLC!**

Did you know that every 2 seconds, someone in America requires a blood transfusion? From trauma patients to those battling cancer, your donation can make a lifesaving impact. **Save the Date! You're invited to donate and become a hero at our upcoming blood drive.**

Blood Drive Details: HALFWAY CREEK LUTHERAN CHURCH; **April 10, 2026; 10:00 AM - 02:30 PM**

Schedule Appointments: [https://donateblood.versiti.org/donor/schedules/drive\\_schedule/11634014](https://donateblood.versiti.org/donor/schedules/drive_schedule/11634014)

Give local, stay local. We look forward to seeing you there!

**Halfway Creek Dedicated Funds**

1/31/2026

		<b>Beginning</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>Expense</b>	<b>Ending Balance</b>
Liturgy/Music		\$870.02	\$0.00	\$870.02	0.00	\$870.02
WELCA*		\$2,407.19	\$0.00	\$2,407.19	0.00	\$2,407.19
Undesignated Memorials		\$2,919.64	\$0.00	\$2,919.64	0.00	\$2,919.64
HCLC Outreach		\$907.66	\$0.00	\$907.66	0.00	\$907.66
HCLC Gardeners		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00
Bibles		\$500.00	\$0.00	\$500.00	0.00	\$500.00
Quilters		\$916.85	\$0.00	\$916.85	0.00	\$916.85
Windows		\$100.00	\$0.00	\$100.00	0.00	\$100.00
Sunday School (Children & Youth)	Children & Youth	\$156.65	\$0.00	\$156.65	0.00	\$156.65
Confirmation		\$22.13	\$0.00	\$22.13	0.00	\$22.13
Parsonage		\$263.86	\$0.00	\$263.86	0.00	\$263.86
Parsonage Security Deposit		\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00	0.00	\$1,000.00
Parsonage Property Taxes		\$2,089.55	\$0.00	\$2,089.55	0.00	\$2,089.55
Technology Fund		\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00
Sound Equipment		\$5,777.67	\$0.00	\$5,777.67	0.00	\$5,777.67
Interest		\$148.97	\$0.33	\$149.30	0.00	\$149.30
Ending Balance		\$19,080.19	\$0.33	\$19,080.52	\$0.00	\$19,080.52

**MONTHLY OFFERING 2026**

<b>2026</b>	<b>Total Offering</b>	<b>Rent Income</b>	<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>Difference</b>
Jan	\$10,127.95	\$2,150.00	\$19,875.68	-\$7,597.73
Totals	\$10,127.95	\$2,150.00	\$19,875.68	-\$7,597.73

**PIZZA FUNDRAISER**

Our annual Superbowl Pizza Fundraiser was a huge success. Thank you to everyone who volunteered, sold pizzas, purchased pizzas, and/or donated to this amazing fundraiser for our youth! We raised \$2232! What a great testament to our supporting the youth of Halfway Creek! This will help significantly for the ELCA Youth Gathering and even support anyone wanting to attend Bible Camp!! Thanks again!!

**CONFIRMATION**

Confirmation will meet March 4, 11, 28 from 7-730 PM after the Mid-Week Lenten meal (5:45 PM) and service (6:30 PM). Students and Families are encouraged to attend the Lenten meal and worship!! Check out the article on page 4 for more information.

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)**

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**Worship & Education**

9:00 AM Sunday School  
10:00 AM Worship

**Office Hours**

Monday -closed  
Tuesday – 9 AM – 3 PM  
Wednesday – 9 AM – 3 PM  
Thursday – 9 AM – 3 PM  
Friday – closed  
Saturday – closed  
Sunday – worship

**Pastoral Care**

If the need arises for Pastoral Care, please contact Patti Happel at 608-317-9525.

**Social Media**

Find us on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and our website.

@halfwaycreeklutheranchurchholmen  
#halfwaycreeklutheranchurch  
#reachoutsharechristwithall



**SAVE THE DATE**

**La Crosse Area Synod  
2026 ASSEMBLY**

Saturday, June 6, 2026  
Stoney Creek Hotel, Onalaska, WI  
Caucus Meeting: Sunday, April 19, 2026

[www.LaCrosseAreaSynod.org](http://www.LaCrosseAreaSynod.org)