

Elstad ~ Highland Prairie Lutheran Parish
A Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

~ January 2019~

Pastor, Rev. Luther Mathsen

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Pastor's Page, January 2019

Perhaps you have heard me say how blessed I am to be a pastor in this country parish. God has blessed me (and Bobbi) with the opportunity to "pitch our tent" and live among you. Oh, yes. The parsonage is a gem. The acreage, complete with a great park, "is the bomb." The natural beauty that surrounds us is stunning. I am within easy driving distance of my mother. And you are exactly the kind of folk that "grew me up." So...I am "home" in this parish community, as is Bobbi. And we are deeply grateful to God and to you for making it all possible.

But as a year ends and another year commences, I am reminded of the mystery of time and its passing. I am reminded also that, as many good and blessed homes that I have lived in and as many blessed communities that I have been a part of, I am on a journey to my true home, even while I thank God that for now, it is with you.

Yes...We are sojourners on the Way...pilgrims...Christian sisters and brothers...heading into a future, and to a home, that Christ has prepared for us. And together we make our way, year after year, across the changing contours of our earthly lives and experiences in this special place...at this special time...and in this special community called the church, that spans time and place. And we do so in the joy of Christ's promises and the work he has called us to do in the locale he has given us to "pitch our tents", and in the communities where he has placed us...for now.

Indeed we *are* a different lot and so is the outlook on the lives we have been given to live. In an excerpt of an ancient text entitled, the Epistle to Diognetus, the writer spells out this some of this "differentness".

(Christians) pass their lives in whatever township each person's lot has determined; and conform to ordinary local usage in their clothing, diet, and other habits. Nevertheless, the organization of their community does exhibit some features that are remarkable, and even surprising. For instance, though they are residents at home in their own countries, their behavior there is more like that of transients; they take their full part as citizens, but they also submit to anything and everything as if they were aliens. For them, any foreign country is a motherland, and any motherland is a foreign country. Though their destiny has placed them here in the flesh, they do not live after the flesh; their days are passed on earth, but their citizenship is above in the heavens. They obey the prescribed laws, but in their own private lives they transcend the laws. They are misunderstood and condemned; yet by suffering death they are quickened to life. They are poor, yet making many rich; lacking all things, yet having all things in abundance. They are dishonored, yet made glorious in the very dishonor; slandered, yet vindicated. They repay slander with blessings, and abuse with courtesy. For the good they do, they suffer stripes as evildoers; *and under the strokes they rejoice like persons given new life....*

As a community whose life is to turn the life we have been given back to the One who gave it to us in the first place, where will that new life we have been given be shared in 2019? With whom? And where will it take place? Across the world? Across the street? We are the community of the redeemed who have been given holy work to do. We may rest assured that the opportunities will be countless. That's the thing about being a follower of Christ. Mighty and exciting things can happen! How glad I am to be a part of this fellowship...in this locale...for another year...and on the way....heavenward...with you. Pr.Luther+

January Worship Schedule

+++NOTE THAT WORSHIP TIMES CHANGE IN JANUARY. BUT NOTE THE ODDITY OF THE SCHEDULE ON JANUARY 27th DUE TO HIGHLAND PRAIRIE'S ANNUAL MEETING.

+Sunday, January 6th

Epiphany of our Lord

9:00 a.m., Highland Prairie

10:30 a.m., Elstad

+Sunday, January 13th

Baptism of our Lord

9:00 a.m., Highland Prairie

10:30 a.m., Elstad

+Sunday, January 20th

9:00 a.m., Highland Prairie

10:30 a.m., Elstad

+Sunday, January 27rd

9:00 a.m., Elstad

10:30 a.m., Highland Prairie

+++

The Feast of the Epiphany of Our Lord, January 6th

We will observe the Feast of the Epiphany of our Lord during worship on Sunday, January 6th. Otherwise known as Three Kings' Day, it celebrates the revelation of God "in the flesh" to the Gentiles (that would be to non-Jews....people like us). Epiphany recognizes the visit of the Magi (the Three Kings) to the Christ child. It also initiates the liturgical season of Epiphanytide.

The Baptism of our Lord, January 13th

The celebration of the Baptism of our Lord accentuates the truth that God has revealed himself to the world "in the flesh." So, it is often referred to as our Lord's second manifestation or epiphany, which occurred on the occasion of His baptism in the Jordan. He descended into the River to sanctify its waters and give them the power to beget sons and daughters of God. On this day, we, God's sons and daughters through baptism, will remember and reaffirm our baptism into Christ. You are invited to bring your baptismal certificate to church for display on that day.

Attention! January is Annual Meeting Month

The annual meeting of **Elstad Lutheran Church** will occur on Sunday, January 20th, 2019, @ 11:30 a.m.

The annual meeting of **Highland Prairie Lutheran Church** will occur on Sunday, January 27th, 2019, @ 11:30 a.m.

All voting members of the congregation are encouraged to attend.

Confirmation Class and Mentor Notes

Classes will resume on Wednesday, January 9, 2019, 6:30 p.m., at Elstad. The next mentor and confirmand meeting will be Wednesday, January 23rd, 2018, 6:30 p.m., at Elstad

January Parish Men's Breakfast

The next parish men's breakfast will be held on **Saturday, January 26th, 2019, 7:30 a.m., at Elstad**. A prominent Biblical figure will be discussed. Prepare to be engaged by his life story. We'll have a whale of a time. Breakfast will be served. Please sign-up at the sanctuary entrance of either church.

Sunday Afternoon at the Movies 2.0

On Sunday afternoon, January 12, 4:00 p.m., parish youth and adults are invited to Highland Prairie to watch the movie, "The Mission." The Mission is "a powerful action epic about a man of the sword (Robert DeNiro) and a man of the cloth (Jeremy Irons) who unite to shield a South American Indian tribe from brutal subjugation by 18th century colonial empires. Bring your favorite movie treat to share!!!

NOTE TO PARENTS: This movie is rated PG, but I suggest you go to the internet to get the information you need to determine its appropriateness for your child. plm+

Thank you

Bobbi and I are deeply grateful for all the kind words and gestures love that we received during the Christmas season of 2018. We are so thankful to be members of this parish community. May your New Year be filled with the blessings of Christ!

Prayer Corner

Scripture tells us to pray without ceasing. Let's me known as a praying congregation. Please keep Marion Dahl, Wendy Will, Michele Thompson, Olive Peterson, and all who are ill or in need or your prayers.

January Council Meetings

January 13th—Elstad Council, 5:30-Parish Council, 6:30 p.m., Highland Prairie Council at 7:30 p.m. All meetings will held at Highland Prairie.

January 20th-Elstad Annual Meeting after worship.

January 27th -Highland Prairie Annual Meeting after worship.

Highland Prairie/Southfork Annual Cemetery meeting will be Sunday, January 20, 2019 following church service.

~Worship Time Change~

Sunday, January 27th Highland Prairie will worship at 10:30 and Elstad at 9:00 due to Highland Prairie's Annual Meeting.

Highland Prairie Lutheran Church Council

The December 9, 2018 council meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm by President Kyle Chiglo. Absent were Joyce Dahl and Becky Lind, Mary Gudmundson will be Acting Secretary. A quorum was established.

Devotions were given by Pastor Luther Mathsen.

There were no changes to the agenda and Gordon Johnson moved to approve, Sarah Bearbower seconded, motion carried.

Allen Skalet and Jerry Hallum were members wishing to address the Council with concerns of the expansion of the Highland Prairie Hayseed baseball team. Discussion on the representation was had and will request that the managers attend the next council meeting.

Treasurer's Report was given by Karen Bakken and Tim Stensgaard moved to approve, Gordon Johnson seconded, motion carried.

There was no President's report.

Pastor Luther reported that the November worship services included Thanksgiving service and that the Advent season continues with preparations for Christmas worship. November's Advent family event was held at Elstad. Visits continue to home bound, nursing home and hospitalized members continue as well as Confirmation lessons. There is a youth mission trip proposed for June. The Conference Clergy meeting will be held in Winona this week and the Synod mission support will be sent in January. There will be a new Bishop elected in May. February 10th is the Root River Assembly at Cross of Christ Church in Houston. December men's breakfast was held with Sheriff Elect, member John DeGeorge speaking on the challenges before him and his department.

Correspondence included a packet on the Bishop election, letter from World Relief, notification of the Future of Fillmore County ELCA Ministry meeting on January 20, 2019, 3:30 p.m. at Christ Lutheran in Preston. Good Shepherd Lutheran Home Delegate meeting on their board nominations. A letter of apology from the Board Store for the delay in scheduling the replacement of damaged window. And Worldwide Ministry letter.

Church committee reported that the heat tape on the roof needs to be turned on and discussion of the janitorial duties and appreciation for the great job being done by Chellsey Olson. Grounds committee had concerns on the plowing done recently with the heavy wet snow and parsonage driveway being missed. Youth and Education has a Christmas program coming up Sunday, December 16th during the worship service. Possible schedule of Sunday School to be held before/after worship services beginning with the new year is pending committee approval.

There was no old business.

New business was the 2019 ballot. The council reviewed open positions and discussion continues to the January council meeting.

The Secretary's report was read by Mary Gudmundson and Sarah Bearbower moved to approve, Nancy Rustad seconded, motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:57 pm upon the motion by Gordon Johnson, Nancy Rustad second, motion carried.

Mary Gudmundson, Acting Secretary.



THE BRIDGE

A Monthly Resource from the Southeastern Minnesota Synod



An Interview with Rev. David Hanson, Director of Communication & Innovation for Living Every Day as Disciples (LEAD)

What are one or two of the big lessons the Holy Spirit has taught you over these last 6 years of LEAD?

- That the Spirit is doing amazing things in congregations. When a passionate team (pastor and lay leaders) commits to work together for at least 3 years, the Spirit often stirs up revitalization. It is possible.
- The metrics most churches use often discourage the spiritual life of leaders. They reduce creativity, trust and congregational growth. Helping a ministry to shift metrics opens sacred space for innovation and hope.

For those who haven't experienced LEAD before, how do you describe what LEAD is all about and how a congregation might get involved?

LEAD offers a partnership for transformation – both personal and congregational. Consultation and coaching alone are helpful but when they are part of an intentional journey over time, new things happen. Email lead@waytolead to talk with someone on our LEAD Team about your congregation.

[Click here for several videos and additional information.](#)

Your purpose statement includes “listening to God.” How does your team do that – individually and together? The LEAD staff is intentional about our prayer life together. Any time we gather, we pray together both with our words and our listening. In the times when we are apart from one another, we each commit to prayer for each other and our shared ministry. There are some practices that we have found especially helpful, which we pass on to the congregations we work with to guide their work – immersing all we do in Scripture and prayer.

What is your advice to church leaders and congregations about how to more intentionally listen to God?

Go beyond your comfort zone – trust that God is everywhere. Listen for God speaking through all the people in your neighborhood: people in different socioeconomic realities, different cultures and ethnicities. A diversity of voices gives you new angles of vision on God's love. Ask questions – and then don't talk – just listen.

We love your “Why this Matters” statement (included below). What are some of the ways LEAD has taken bold steps to practice what you preach and speak out against that which conflicts with your values? Why is this so important to your organization?

LEAD's values commit us to listening, centering, exploring and connecting. We do this personally by working on ourselves first. How we show up for our friends, family and our personal needs mean there are times we need to ask for help or step off the grid for rest and renewal. We work at our own plans for learning, exercise, worship and sabbath so we have the capacity to be fully present when we work with our partners. Our LEAD Staff is intentionally made up of people from across the country with proven skills for their work. This interesting team holds LEAD Values in their ministry beyond their work with LEAD. The pastors on our team practice what we teach in their own congregations. The LEAD coaches and consultants are encouraged to test our values by integrating them into all they do. We are constantly taking what is learned by listening to our partners into team conversations that result in improving our products in real time. Finally, we intentionally listen to people around the globe as they trust us with the pain and joy of their own leadership experiences. We are humbled by the trust people offer us. We know that in the end, we ARE LEAD and integrity is at the core of our being.

Is there anything else about LEAD that you'd like to share with the people of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod?

Thank you for being the pilot synod for the LEAD Journey. Through our partnership with you, we have learned so much that has been influential in all we do today. LEAD is proud to be your partner and know that God is up to something as we work together. We hope that more congregations in the Southeastern Minnesota Synod will join the LEAD Journey. LEAD is your leadership organization. Please count on us.

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES!

*All Birthdays & Anniversaries are listed according to the information on file. If you see an error please contact...
Lisa Chiglo ~ Email: highlandprairie_elstad@ymail.com*



1~ Darrellyn Barrett
2~ John Smith
4~ Michelle Rein
6~ Sandy Kiel
~ Bricker Dahl
7~ Angel Bakke
8~ Mark Dahl
9~ Nathan Bakke
10~ Philip Dragvold
~ Nancy Rustad
~ Sawyer James
12~ Kay Dahl
13~ Steve Chiglo
~ Joshua Dahl
~ Daniel Sjarpe
~ Tyler Berg
~ Darren Stockton
14~ Michelle Ryan
~ Colton Horning
15~ Carolyn Smith
~ Kasten Klug
16~ David Bakke
~ Owen Dammen

17~ Jennifer Nepstad
~ Stacy Mensink
~ Shane Jacobson
~ Lucas Redalen
18~ Barb Lee
~ Brenda Chiglo
~ Peter Stensgard
~ Ann Hoiland
19~ Robert Lawstuen
~ Easton Grabau
23~ Katherine Chiglo
~ James Bearbower
24~ Martha Stensgard
~ Deborah Mensink
25~ Ellen Feine
~ Sarah Freese
~ Paula Howe
27~ Eleanor Peterson
~ Michael Oian
~ Dave Lawstuen
29~ Freda Kiel



7~ Dan & Erika Lind
15~ Jerry & Julie Dragvold
28~ David & Sue Larson

JANUARY 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Happy New Year!	2	3	4	5
6 HP-9:00 a.m. SS-10:00 a.m. EL-10:30 a.m.	7	8	9 Confirmation 6:30 p.m. @ Elstad ?	10	11	12 Movie @ 4:00 p.m. "The Mission"
13 HP-9:00 a.m. SS-10:00 a.m. EL-10:30 a.m. HP & Elstad council meetings @ HP	14	15	16 EL-Annual Report Deadline Confirmation 6:30 p.m. @ Elstad Bulletin Deadline	17	18 Newsletter Deadline	19
20 HP-9:00 a.m. SS-10:00 a.m. EL-10:30 a.m. EL-Annual Meeting	21	22	23 HP-Annual Report Deadline Confirmation 6:30 p.m. @ Elstad Bulletin Deadline	24	25	26 Men's Breakfast 7:30 a.m. @ Elstad
27 EL-9:00 a.m. SS-10:00 a.m. HP-10:30 a.m. HP-Annual Meeting	28	29	30 Confirmation 6:30 p.m. @ Elstad Bulletin Deadline	31		

Elstad ~ Highland Prairie Lutheran Parish
 Visit our websites at...
elstادلutheranchurch.org
highlandprairielutheranchurch.org

Elstad ~ Highland Prairie Lutheran Parish
43267 Bowl Drive
Peterson, MN 55962

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HIGHLAND PRAIRIE
ACOLYTES/READERS/GREETERS

SUNDAY, JANUARY 6, 2019

ACOLYTES: KENNA GUDMUNDSON, LINDSEY HOINESS
READERS: DANA DEGEORGE, SYLVIA PASSOW
GREETERS: GORDON & ARLENE JOHNSON

SUNDAY, JANUARY 13, 2019

ACOLYTES: ANDREW HOINESS, KRISTINA STENSGARD
READERS: KRISTINA STENSGARD, ARLENE JOHNSON
GREETERS: SHARON & PAUL EHLE

SUNDAY, JANUARY 20, 2019

ACOLYTES: DANA DEGEORGE, LACI SIEVERS
READERS: NIKKI DAHLE, BECKY LIND
GREETERS: ROGER & SARAH BEARBOWER

SUNDAY, JANUARY 27, 2019

ACOLYTES: CADEN JOHNSON, LARISSA RYAN
READERS: JENS LIND, SHARON EHLE
GREETERS: DOUG LIND FAMILY

ELSTAD
ACOLYTES/READERS/USHERS

SUNDAY, JANUARY 6, 2019

ACOLYTE: MACKENZIE KNUTSON
READERS: WILSON STORHOFF, LORI BAKKE

SUNDAY, JANUARY 13, 2019

ACOLYTE: MICHAEL REIN
READERS: MACKENZIE KNUTSON, VICKY TOPNESS

SUNDAY, JANUARY 20, 2019

ACOLYTE: KYLE DANIELS
READERS: MICHAEL REIN, GLEE CLAUSSEN

SUNDAY, JANUARY 27, 2019

ACOLYTE: LIZ HAGEMAN
READERS: KYLE DANIELS, CAROLYN SMITH

USHERS: DAVID LAWSTUEN, ROBERT KNUSTON,
WAYNE FINNEGAN, RICH NEPSTAD