

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

*~ July 2014 ~*

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*Ponderings from the Parsonage...*

Have you ever stopped to consider why Jesus was baptized? Was it significant and necessary? Surely it was not necessary for repentance of *his sins*, which was the baptism of repentance offered by John the Baptist. Even John the Baptist realized this, as he was reluctant to baptize Jesus.

The four gospel writers link Jesus' baptism with the giving of the Holy Spirit. Three of the four gospel accounts also record that this giving of the Spirit is accompanied by a voice from heaven saying that Jesus is God's *beloved* Son and that God is well pleased. Whatever else Jesus' baptism might mean, it definitely is the place where Jesus learns who he is in relation to whose he is. At his baptism, Jesus is given God's gifts of identity and affirmation. And Jesus is labeled as beloved.

In the gospel accounts, the message is clear: the pronouncement of Jesus' identity as *the beloved* precedes his earthly ministry. We might go beyond that and say that by having a clear sense of God's identity as the beloved one and with God's positive affirmation, Jesus can take on that seemingly "mission impossible" in front of him.

This is made clear in Matthew and Luke, where Satan attacks the very core of Jesus' identity: "If you are the Son of God..." Satan introduces doubt into Jesus' relationship with God the Father, because he knows that Jesus, not unlike Adam and Eve before him, is open to temptation. This temptation is linked to how much doubt Jesus might have about his own identity as *the beloved* Son of God and whether or not he trusts in his relationship with God. Does Jesus hold tight to being labeled as the beloved one?

And this is where these stories of Jesus' baptism intersect with the stories of our own. For we too live into the mission that God has set before us to the degree that we hear and believe that we too are the beloved of God. As with Jesus, we discover in baptism who we are by hearing definitively whose we are.

Baptism is nothing less than the promise that we too are God's beloved. No matter where we go, God will be with us and love us. No matter what we may do, God is for us and will not abandon us, but will love us. In baptism we are blessed with the promise of God's Spirit as beloved and marked with the cross of Christ. We are labeled as a beloved child of God forever.

If we are beloved of God, if that is our identity, then our destiny is to be a light to the nations; and we are called to a destiny that is more than just taking up time and space.

We are destined for God's purposes, God's things. "Here is my servant, whom I have chosen, my beloved, with whom my soul is well pleased. I will put my Spirit upon him, and he will proclaim justice." *Matthew 12:18 NRSV*

We are the beloved of God, by virtue of the privilege we share in our baptisms. Like Jesus' baptism, we are marked as beloved of God, with an identity and a destiny beyond all comprehension. Let us never forget who and whose we are. Let us live lives worthy of that destiny to which we are called: beloved sons and daughters of God!

*Pastor Dan*

# ELSTAD NEWS

## Elstad Prayer Partners

Together as prayer partners we watch the seasons come and go don't we? It seems as though 2014 has already had numerous seasonal changes for us here in Fillmore County of Minnesota.

This is an incredible road that we are being directed to follow. Sometimes it is clear for smooth sailing while at other times we find it necessary to follow the pilot car through the congestion of life while on this journey.

Enter July, the beginning of the 2nd half of 2014. We started out slowly with our newly assigned prayer partner but by this time our journey together is an exciting journey. Pray for your prayer partner this month that she will reach her full potential, continuing to hone and use her skills and gifts to the best of her ability for the remainder of this season together on the journey. As you pray for one another it is good to remind ourselves that we are all in this together and are all of equal value in the eyes of God.

## Elstad WELCA

A huge round of thanks is in order for all of the experiences of the annual Rhubarb Festival bake sale. We asked for it to be huge and it was huge. The tables were bulging with rhubarb treats and other sweets. Thank you to everyone who shared their baking skills with the community and for those who endured the winds while working in the shelter. The variety of foods was incredible. There is a verse from Proverbs which is encouraging, "Put God in charge of your work, then what you've planned will take place." More joyous and thankful applause here is acceptable.

The WELCA officers have been having an "electronic" meeting this week and have shared visions for the next big event, the music festival on August 24th. By popular request this festival will again be repeated, this year with special musical guest Rachel Storlie, Norwegian from Spring Grove. Other musical events are being worked on to make this a meaningful experience for one and all. Any suggestions you might have for a special hymn or musical presentation are more than welcome, simply tell any officer and this will be placed on the planning board with all others being considered! Also, back by popular request will be the silent auction. We had a wonderful variety of items the last time we tried this and are looking forward for the same this year. There are yet 2 months before the auction so you have plenty of time to think about and prepare something if you so desire. Our people are super gifted and talented so this is a good time to share in creativity. The noon meal will be a carefully crafted pot luck...meaning that food items may be suggested so that there will be an equal number of each food category, casseroles, salads, etc. Much more to follow on this as the event grows closer in time.

### Thank you Elstad—Highland Prairie Members for you "Noisy Offering"

On behalf of the Mission Trip team and Staff & boys at the Sunbeam home We thank you for you "noisy offering" This will purchase school shoes for twelve boys. What a generous gift!

~Pastor Mark

### Elstad Budget for May

	7772.50
Received for May	7126.00
Under for May	-646.50
YTD BUDGET THRU MAY	38862.50
RECEIVED THRU MAY	33985.00
UNDER THRU MAY	-4877.50

# HIGHLAND PRAIRIE NEWS

## *Elstad—Highland Prairie 160<sup>th</sup> Celebration*

Please join us on August 17<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 for a “bowl service” to celebrate the 160<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the beginning of Highland Prairie Lutheran Church. The service will begin with Frieda Nowland portraying Tarkjel Landsverk’s mother. She was one of the first Norwegian pioneer women to settle on Highland Prairie. From there we will hear from some of our former pastors with greetings and words of remembrance. All these things will be mingled together with worship and thanks to God. The service will be a time of worship, memories, music and hope for the future. The Elstad choir will be offering two anthems and we hope we will have many more music selections. Elstad Lutheran Church has always been partnered with us and we applaud and appreciate their steadfast faithfulness to the common good we embrace as sister churches.

As usual, a delicious lunch will be served in the park shelter where everyone can visit and reminisce. Remember those chicken barbeques and the games of horseshoes? There will be music in the band shell and a time for everyone to tour the church and check out our “new history wall” in the fellowship room. The day will be capped off by a “vintage baseball game” between the Highland Prairie-Elstad team and a team from Lanesboro. A vintage baseball game is played using a wooden bat, a small soft ball and no gloves. The rules are a little different from today’s game. The game starts at 2:00 o’clock and will cap-off a full day of events. Please mark your calendars and join us for a day of remembrance and fun.

Please plan to be a part of celebrating and remembering our past, embracing the gifts of the present and going forth to make disciples of all people.



## **Elstad – Highland Prairie Vintage Baseball Players !!!**

We need baseball players for a team to play against the vintage baseball team from Lanesboro. This team will play a 2:00 o’clock game at the HP ball field as part the 160th anniversary celebration on August 17th. Those interested should contact Kay Eiken.

**Practice:** July 20 at 3:00 p.m.

## **Highland Prairie Financials For May**

YTD Income-- ----\$ 38,198  
YTD Expenses ----\$ 34,868  
Income exc. Expenses-----\$ 3,330  
YTD Budget--- ----\$ 40,738  
YTD Income-- ----\$ 38,198  
YTD Under---- ----\$ 2,540  
Special Project Fund brought in  
\$3,404  
Through May 31.

## **Movie Night: “The Stranger”**

The subject of immigration is all over the news these days; some see it only as a political issue, but as Christians we are compelled to look at the Biblical and human dimensions. How does our faith inform our views toward immigrants and immigration policy? What does Scripture have to say about this topic? Join us **Wednesday, July 9<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm** at First Presbyterian Church in Rushford for a screening of The Stranger, a newly-released 40-minute documentary produced by the Evangelical Immigration Table, accompanied by popcorn, refreshments and a group discussion, with Bible study and other resources to take home. Invite your friends and neighbors! Watch the trailer at: [www.TheStrangerFilm.org](http://www.TheStrangerFilm.org).

**HIGHLAND PRAIRIE LUTHERAN CHURCH  
COUNCIL MEETING  
June 8, 2014**

The meeting was **called to order** by council president Gordon Johnson at 9:35 am following the worship service.

**Roll Call** was taken. All members were present. A **quorum** was called. Pastor Dan and Church Secretary, Lisa Chiglo were also in attendance.

The **agenda** was approved.

**The Pastor's Report** (copy attached) was reviewed and he encouraged participation in Good Earth Village on the Road taking place at Sylvan Park in Lanesboro June 22-26 and ELCA Day at Valley fair June 30. He is considering an additional year of confirmation focusing on service opportunities for the students.

**Correspondence:** A thank you letter was received from Faith Lutheran Church for the donation sent to them from our May 11 "noisy offering" to purchase shoes for the students at the orphanage during their upcoming mission trip.

The **Secretary's Report** by Deb was read and approved.

The **Treasurer's Report** was presented by Karen reviewing previous month and year to date income and expenses noting that \$3404 has been raised so far in our envelope special project fund, and the parsonage expenses have exceeded the amount available in the parsonage fund. The report was approved, is available for review and subject to audit.

**President's Report**

There are problems with some windows in the parsonage. The parsonage sidewalk will be pressure washed.

**Committee Reports/Old Business:**

*Church:* Furnace filters have been replaced. Plumbing has been updated. Fire extinguishers have been checked. Shelving has been added in the furnace room and closet. Module for bell in chapel has been repaired. The used lift that we had inquired about was offered to us, but an inspection revealed that the size is obsolete. We will be getting a third estimate for a lift from another company.

**Grounds:** Indicator on well may be difficult to place due to design. Circuits in shelter have been replaced – there are now nine designated circuits. A tree limb is down near the bowl and will be removed. The materials for the rest house repair are here and the project is expected to begin soon, as well as completion of the pergola project that is being done by the same contractor.

Kaye has received a repair estimate for the log cabin for \$1500. Motion by Sarah, second by Steve to proceed with this project. Motion passed.

**Worship:** The outdoor worship service on June 22 will be in the band shell. The 160<sup>th</sup> anniversary planning committee met May 25<sup>th</sup> and June 1<sup>st</sup> to continue organizing the event scheduled for August 17<sup>th</sup>.

**Youth and Education:** The confirmation program will be reviewed.

**New Business**

Discussion was held about cleaning of the tables and shelter area prior to a scheduled event and it was decided that it is the responsibility of those using the shelter to clean just before it is used. This will be noted when the space is reserved and we will also enforce the policy that the reservation fee is required to be paid to hold the date for use of the shelter area.

A vintage baseball game at the ball field will take place on August 17<sup>th</sup> as part of our 160<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. Al Skalet is organizing a team of members from Elstad- Highland Prairie Parish and they will play the Lanesboro Excelsiors using rules for the game adopted in 1860. We will also need a name for our team.

Liability insurance for the South Fork Cemetery can be added as a rider to the church policy for \$17.00/year. Motion by Deb, second by David to purchase the insurance as quoted. Motion passed.

The rest house is not handicapped accessible for wheelchairs – discussed having a ramp made to be available as needed, and to add grab bars in the rest room.

Motion to accept the window project bid was made by Deb, seconded by Steve. Motion passed.

Propane summer fill price will be checked to determine if it is more cost effective to have both tanks filled now.

Several members are forming a historian group with plans to meet monthly. Access to records may require some rearranging of office space to accommodate them.

Motion by Sarah, second by Deb to pay 75% of the fee for our youth to attend the June 22-26 Good Earth Village vacation Bible school in Lanesboro. Motion passed.

The rock garden and flower beds by the parsonage need attention. We will ask for volunteers to help with this project on Wednesday evening, June 11<sup>th</sup>.

Volunteers will be sought to help Lisa prepare bulletins for worship services.

No further business. Meeting was **adjourned** at 11:06 am

**Next Meeting:** Sunday, July 13 following the worship service

Submitted by Deb Book, Council Secretary

## June Pastor's Report

### Accomplishments:

Made a recent hospital visit to Rochester and Winona. Did 17 visits to people at home since mid-May.

Rushford Ministerium now meets at Jessie Street Java after text study.

Attended several graduation open houses for parish graduates.

Gave devotional Bibles to all high school grads.

Outstanding week at the Festival of Homiletics in Minneapolis. Came back with many ideas for worship, the sanctuary and the church.

Very positive response to Rogation/Creation service on Memorial Day weekend.

### Plans:

I will lead worship at Good Shepherd on June 8.

Root beer floats on Father's Day at Highland Prairie.

Our grand daughter will be baptized at Elstad on Father's Day.

Good Earth Village on the Road is coming to Sylvan Park in Lanesboro June 22-26. It is essentially VBS. Cost is \$75/student and \$55 for siblings. We should consider subsidizing it since we have not had VBS for years.

ELCA Day at Valley Fair is June 30. Several people have expressed interest in going. Should we rent a van?

We qualify for big discounts for refurbished computer hardware and new software through [www.techsoup.org](http://www.techsoup.org). We should consider upgrading hardware and software for the office and for the treasurer.

Plan to take vacation during the month of July. Supply preacher is scheduled for July 20<sup>th</sup>, Pastor Corrine Denis, campus pastor at Winona State. Still need coverage for the other Sundays in July.

I will lead the Bible study during June at Good Shepherd.

I will write the devotional column for the Tri-County Record in mid June.

Hope to have a church float in the Rushford Days Parade (if they have the parade.)

Think about having a service on Memorial Day from now on. We had a 21 gun salute and taps happen at the Highland Prairie Cemetery at 7:45 am with nobody here to witness it.

People have expressed the desire to have regular worship outside including for bowl services instead of special entertainment. Might consider places besides the bowl for worship (band stand, west picnic shelter).

Consider moving picnic tables beside the church for outdoor fellowship after services.

Thinking about adding a year to confirmation for monthly service opportunities.



## Facebook:

<http://www.facebook.com/semnsynod>

## Twitter:

<http://www.twitter.com/semnsynod>

## Website:

<http://www.semnsynod.org>

## July 2014 - Special Announcement

At the synod office, we place a high priority on staying connected with you - the people of southeastern Minnesota. We do this in a variety of ways including: congregational visits, the weekly e-news, the synod Facebook page, and our newsletter.

An exciting newsletter transition is just around the corner! River Crossings will soon be available in a new format, and we want all the people of our synod to know about it.

The June issue of River Crossings was our last of the previous monthly style. We will now be transitioning to a quarterly, full-color format that is longer in length. The next issue will be released on October 1.

Our hope is that the new format will provide additional space for congregational stories, topical pieces, and resources. We would love to expand our readership of River Crossings. It is available to any person in the synod. Sign up here: <http://bit.ly/rivercrossingsupdates>. You can opt to receive River Crossings in print or in a digital format.

We are also hoping to expand our e-news readership. E-news is a weekly newsletter that comes through your email. It contains helpful

updates, links, and resources. Each week also contains a "Bright Spot" which lifts up an exciting ministry happening right here in our synod! Sign up for e-news using the address below and invite the people in your context to do the same: <http://bitly.com/semnnews>. Thank you for sharing this information widely within your context. We are so thankful for each of the congregations that make up this wonderful synod!

In closing, below are a few important dates to have on your personal and congregational calendars. Grace and peace to you throughout the summer months ahead!

"God's Work. Our Hands." Sunday

**September 7**

<http://www.elca.org/dayofservice>

Bishop's 5K

**September 20 at 9am**

Rochester, MN

Registration: <https://bitly.com/bishops5k>

Synod Campus Ministry Sunday

**November 9**

<http://www.semnsynod.org/campusministry>

# JULY BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES!

All Birthdays & Anniversaries are listed according to the information I have. If you see an error please contact me  
Email: [highlandprairie\\_elstad@gmail.com](mailto:highlandprairie_elstad@gmail.com) ~ Thank You!

## Happy Birthday!!

1~ Joey Stensgard  
2~ Katy Redalen  
~ Emma Decker  
3~ Debbie Book  
4~ Gary Vust  
5~ Christopher Johnson  
~ Peter Ask  
~ Joshua Drinkall  
6~ Richard Nepstad  
~ Kent Christenson  
~ Richard Johnson  
~ Paul Peterson  
~ Jonathan Dahl  
7~ Beckett Hovland  
8~ Glenn Peterson  
~ Caroline Anfinson  
~ Christine Knutson  
9~ Dean Berland  
~ Kyle Chiglo  
~ Calvin Nergen  
10~ Arlene Johnson  
~ Hali Richardson  
~ Adleigh Brisebois  
~ Gaige Volkman  
11~ Allison Bauer  
~ Marguerite Abrahamson  
12~ Kathy Abrahamson



~ Kristi James  
~ Jeremy Pederson  
13~ Kyle Bearbower  
16~ Charles Pederson  
~ David Stockton  
~ Lyle Rustad  
17~ Jade Grabau  
~ Nicole Howe  
~ Kreedon Wangen  
18~ Elizabeth Abrahamson  
~ Kirstin Lawstuen  
19~ Shelly Nelson  
~ John Knutson  
20~ Joan Finnegan  
~ Mary Gudmundson  
~ Brent Storhoff  
~ Adrienne Britson  
21~ Colby Lind  
~ Jackson Ingvalson  
22~ Ken Jacobson  
~ Karen Bakken  
~ Jerod Chiglo  
~ Nolan Eide  
23~ Ray Humble  
~ Gayle Watland  
24~ Craig Jonsgaard  
~ Jimmy Sharpe Jr.

25~ Siri Dworschak  
29~ Lori Bakke  
~ Josie Bearbower  
30~ Lee Johnson  
~ Kayleigh Wangen  
31~ Susan Blagsvedt  
~ Isaak Michel

## Happy Anniversary!!

7~ Allan & Marion Dahl  
~ Dan & Gayle Watland  
9~ Clair & Patty Olson  
12~ Richard & Sharon Howe  
18~ Rodney & Christine Humble  
20~ Kenny & Cathy Bakkum  
21~ Richard & Pam Johnson  
22~ Trinity & Emily Johnson  
23~ Nicholas & Katie Bakke  
24~ Adam & Jodi Daniels



# JULY 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Tabitha circle, 1:00 p.m. @ GSCC	2 <b>Bulletin Deadline</b>	3	4	5
6 HP 8:30 a.m. EL 10:30 a.m.	7	8	9 <b>Bulletin Deadline</b>	10	11	12 Dahl Birthday @ Picnic Shelter
13 <b>Bowl Service 10:30 a.m.</b> H.P. Council fol- lowing worship Mindrum Reun- ion @ Park	14	15 <b>Newsletter Deadline</b>	16 <b>Bulletin Deadline</b>	17	18	19
20 HP 8:30 a.m. EL 10:30 a.m. Baseball practice @ 3:00 p.m. w/ Lanesboro team	21	22	23 <b>Bulletin Deadline</b>	24	25	26 Danielson reunion/ Park
27 HP 8:30 a.m. EL 10:30 a.m. Olson Reunion/ Park	28	29	30	31		



*Elstad ~ Highland Prairie Lutheran Parish*  
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Peterson, MN 55962

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# July Newsletter

## Highland Prairie Acolytes/Readers/Greeters

### Sunday, July 6, 2014

Acolytes: Chealsy Eide, Riley Koop  
Readers: Chealsy Eide, Sylvia Markegard  
Greeters: Jerry & Shannon Kopperud

### Sunday, July 13, 2014 \*Bowl Service @ 10:30 a.m.

Readers: Riley Koop, Norma Halverson  
Greeters: Lyle & Ann Meldahl

### Sunday, July 20, 2014

Acolyte: Paula Howe  
Readers: Treyten Chiglo  
Greeters: Kyle & Lisa Chiglo

### Sunday, July 27, 2014

Acolytes: Paula Howe, Collen Dahle  
Readers: Paula Howe, Sylvia Passow  
Greeters: Sharon & Paul Ehler

## Elstad Acolyte/Reader/Ushers

### Sunday, July 6, 2014

Acolyte: Caleb Gravos  
Reader: Gene Topness

### Sunday, July 13, 2014

Bowl Service @ 10:30 a.m.

### Sunday, July 20, 2014

Acolyte: Chris Freese  
Reader: Glee Claussen

### Sunday, July 27, 2014

Reader: Peter Holm

**Ushers:** Mike Ask, Stanley Sveen, Rich Nepstad, Gene Topness, Adam Daniels, Issac Freese