



I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. Phil. 1:3-5

A season for thank yous....

I've written some notes lately, thanking folks for their kindness and generosity in honoring us with gifts at Christmas. Each note leads me also to thank God for the relationship I share with these people. As I read the treasured Christmas cards (and nowadays, even Facebook messages and emails!) that bring news and greetings from far and wide, thanks for those relationships resounds as well.

Relationship. For me, that word encompasses completely what life and faith are all about.

I treasure my family, as well as friendships that are long-lasting and friendships that are new. At Lutheran Church of the Cross, I sincerely enjoy and look forward to encounters with members and visitors in many and various ways: worship, study, movie nights, volunteer opportunities, visits, and so many others. These relationships broaden my horizons, challenge my thinking, make me laugh and make me cry. Relationships enrich and bless my life. Without them I would feel isolated and so very lonely.

Relationship is also what faith is all about. Along our faith journey we learn God wants to be in relationship with us. God loves us. And God needs and uses each of us and all of us to show this wondrous love to others. We are God's hands and feet and voice in this world. And we need each other - God's work is so much bigger than one person! We know, and grow, and go as Christ.... together.

Thank you for your welcome, your gracious hospitality and your many kindnesses to me and my family throughout the year. It is a joy to be in ministry with you.

I want to thank you for joining me, in relationship and on this faith journey. We are blessed to be in mission, growing relationships with one another and with our neighbors. There are some decisions ahead of us, and innumerable opportunities. Whatever the future holds, we know who holds us! May we go out to meet the future, with gratitude.

In Christ, Pastor Lisa

"...all that is, is given to us as a gift of love, a gift that calls us to make our life into an unceasing act of gratitude." Henri Nouwen, Gracias!

"I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion...." Phil. 1:6

**Lutheran
Church of the
Cross**

**January
2018**

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January's Altar Focus is warm clothes for the Salvation Army.

Altar Focus

Norwegian by Night by Derek B. Miller

Sheldon Horowitz is an 82 yr old Jewish widower who moves from New York to Norway to live with his granddaughter Rhea and her Norwegian husband Lars. To say he is a fish out of water is an understatement.

Book Review

One day, a woman and her son take refuge in Sheldon's apartment. She is murdered and Sheldon and the boy make a run for it to get him out of harm's way. As Sheldon and the young boy travel through Norway, we are taken into Sheldon's past by flashbacks he is having. We learn about his service to his country in the Korean War and about the guilt he feels about his own son's death.

The book starts out a bit confusing due to the flashbacks but gets easier as you come to know the characters. Sheldon is a complex character and you root for him through the whole book. This book offers humor, drama and suspense.

Submitted by Laurie Spilde



Friday Night at the Movies January 12th 6:30pm. Deb Carpenter will head up organizing the event. A potluck dinner starts the event with an enjoyable movie following the meal.

Friday Night at the Movies

Attention to all LCC men. If you have not registered for the Annual Men's Retreat at Camp of the Cross set for January 26th - 28th, please register soon and pay on line. Registration deadline is January 22nd, Scholarships are available by contacting Pastor Gary Heaton at ggheaton@me.com.

The first two verses of Psalm 100 in "The Message" reads: "On your feet now — applaud God! Bring a gift of laughter, sing yourselves into his presence!"

The Merriam Webster dictionary defines Lament as a way to, "express sadness or regret" and Laughter as "a cause of merriment."

On January 26th - 28th Camp of the Cross Ministries is hosting a men's weekend retreat that will bring together the prayers of lament and the merriment of laughter to participants as they laugh and sing themselves into God's presence.

Through lectures and Bible study participants will follow Jesus on his journey from the betrayal following his final meal with his disciples to the lament of Good Friday and the triumph of Easter morning.

The weekend begins at 5:30 PM Friday as participants gather at Ye Olde Malt Shop in Garrison ND for an evening meal before heading to Camp of the Cross. The retreat concludes with Sunday morning worship followed by brunch, before leaving by noon. Saturday afternoon 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM is designated free time. There will be a work project at the camp or simply time to relax.

The retreat format is an abbreviated form of the "Lament and Laughter" curriculum, using lectures and bible study developed for "Kogodus" International Ministries for use in their prison retreats. Used by permission of Kogodus International Ministries.

The cost of the retreat is \$85 and includes 2 nights lodging at the camp, 3 meals on Saturday and Sunday brunch. Contact Rev. Gary Heaton at ggheaton@me.com for more information. To register go to www.campofthecross.com **Registration is limited to 20.**

**Men's
Retreat at
Camp of the
Cross**

Meet Steven and Kristina Dickens

Steven Dickens and his wife Kristina will be visiting our congregation on Jan 12th - 14th, at our invitation. Please come and meet them on Saturday (13th) afternoon at a "coffee hour" from 2PM - 3:30PM, or Sunday (14th) morning between 8:45AM and 9:45AM.

Steven is a rostered ELCA Deacon (Minister of Word and Service) from Darien, IL (Chicago area). He graduated from seminary about a year ago and has significant experience with youth leadership, multi-generational ministry and currently is employed as a Chaplain at a Hospice facility providing support services to terminally ill patients and their families. His wife is a paraprofessional with the local school system but has worked as a pharmacy tech and as a case manager at facilities providing services to people with disabilities (which is what she describes as her "perfect fit" employment), like HIT.

Steven has a BA from St. Olaf College in Northfield, MN, a Masters in Education from the University of Illinois and a Master of Divinity from Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago. He describes his areas of expertise as Preaching/Worship Leadership, Youth Leadership/Teaching, Spiritual Formation/Direction and Pastoral Care/Visitation with specific strengths in Small Group Ministry, Youth and Family Ministry, Ministry in Daily Life, Outreach Ministry and Ministry with Seniors. He has about six years of teaching experience, having taught in schools in Alaska, China and South America.

Both Steven and Kristina are excellent communicators (both written and oral) and Kristina has experience in social media communications.

Steven, in his own words describes himself this way: *"I am called to the ministry of Word & Service as a teacher, chaplain, and one who serves a congregation. I have many gifts and talents for ministry that include listening, praying, preaching, and providing the ministry of presence. I want to help others during difficult times in their lives and equip others to live as disciples of Christ."*

The Dickens' are in the process of adopting and although moving to Bismarck from the Chicago area could create some potential difficulties in this process, they have been assured that it can be done.

Please come and meet them. We will be voting to call him to our Director of Discipleship position on the 14th at our Annual Congregational Meeting.

Meet
Steven
and
Kristina
Dickens

The Church Constitution

Updating Our Congregation's Constitution:

In August 2016, the ELCA Churchwide Assembly voted to update the Model Constitution for Congregations. The draft, competently prepared for LCC by Synod Attorney Murray Sagsveen, is available for by contacting Connie in the church office. Because it is lengthy, and to save on paper and postage, printed copies will only be available if you ask for one, otherwise it will be sent to you electronically upon your request.

This new constitution (see a summary article elsewhere by Murray) must be ratified by a congregational written ballot vote at our annual meeting. It will be an agenda item for that meeting on Jan 14th.

Nominations

Nominations for 2018 Council, Missouri Slope, Camp of the Cross and Nominating Committee are currently being accepted by this year's Nominating Committee (listed below). If you are interested in running, or willing to serve for one of the listed positions, please contact a Nominating Committee member as soon as possible. They will gladly tell you more about what each position entails. Lutheran Church of the Cross would greatly appreciate your talents.

2018 OPEN POSITIONS:

Church Council positions (2) - 3-year positions

Missouri Slope Representatives (2) -1-year positions

Camp of the Cross Representatives (2) - 1-year positions

Nominating Committee (3) - 1-year positions

Committee Members:

Lee Jensen - 255-1027; leru1vet@bis.midco.net

Carol Samuelsson - 220-9725; cnsnd2000@yahoo.com

Roger Kruger - 255-7514; justus6@bis.midco.net

Jon Hanson - 391-3416; jdhanson56@gmail.com

Ken Will - 258-7127; kenwill@bektel.com

Pastor Lisa - 220-9011 (c) or 223-1001 (0); lisaahlness@hotmail.com

Nominations



OK, Show of hands...
Who's tired of snow?

Constitutional Changes Summary

Last year, the ELCA Churchwide Assembly updated the *Model Constitution for Congregations*. The proposed amendments, to be considered by this congregation at the annual meeting on January 14, would bring the LCC constitution into compliance with the ELCA *Model Constitution for Congregations*.

Most of the provisions in the constitution are required (indicated by an asterisk [*]), so can't be changed by a congregation, except for the options in brackets. Two examples:

Section *C8.02.d. allows an associate member to hold a membership in another [ELCA] [Lutheran] or [Christion] congregation.

Section *9.01 states whether [this congregation] or [the Congregation Council] elects the call committee when calling a minister of Word and Sacrament.

Other provisions, not indicated by an asterisk, can be tailored to fit an individual congregation's culture. Three examples:

Chapter 10 allows the congregation to establish the guidelines for its annual congregation meeting.

Chapters 11 and 12 allow the congregation to determine the elections and terms of its council members and officers.

Chapter 13 allows the congregation to determine the number and organizational structure of its committees.

Two important sections, C12.04. and C12.05., provide the "position description" for the Congregation Council. The congregation elects the council members, who constitute the board of directors for the church corporation, to provide leadership for the "general oversight of the life and activities of this congregation, and in particular its worship life" and for the "financial and property matters of this congregation."

The congregation can also adopt bylaws to implement constitution provisions. Examples are C13.02.01., C13.02.02., C13.02.03., and C13.02.04., which address the Nominating Committee.

Members of the congregation may view the proposed constitution and bylaws by contacting the Church office and asking that a copy be emailed to them or by stopping by the office and asking Connie to print out a copy. If you have questions, you may contact Synod Attorney Murray Sagsveen at Mur-ray@WNSynod.org or 701-426-1905.

Constitutional Summary changes

LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE CROSS

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, December 12, 2017

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by President Ken Will. Council members present were: Jon Hanson, Kylie Blanchard, Jeff Thomas and Tom Harris, arriving later in the meeting. Kim Humann and Brian Johnson were absent. Staff members present were: Pastor Lisa Alness, Connie Werner, and Art Wheeler.

There were no additions to the agenda.

Pastor Lisa led us in devotions.

Motion was made to approve the November minutes was made by Jon Hanson and second by Kylie Blanchard, motion carried. Art Wheeler gave the treasurer report, all bills received by November 30, 2017, have been paid. November bank statements have reconciled and registries are correct. Art stated as 2017 draws to a close, he anticipates additional expenses of \$20,000 to possibly \$23,000 in the operating fund. For contributions to equal expenses this calendar year, we'll need approximately \$50,000 in revenue yet this year. Motion was made by Jeff Thomas and second by Jon Hanson to approve the report;. Motion carried.

Pastors report: Joint thanksgiving service with Faith Lutheran, St. George Episcopal and United Church of Christ was well attended. Heart River hosted "The Longest Night/Blue Christmas service on Tuesday, December 19th and LCC was invited. The cookie walk on December 10th was a great success with many cookies sold. The people who went Christmas caroling also took cookies to the various people they visited in the Bismarck area. Everyone is busy getting ready for the Christmas and Advent season and the birth of our Savior.

There were two funerals at LCC: Lois Erickstad and Phyllis Johnson.

Director of Discipleship: There were two nice pledges made to help offset the student loans for Steven Dickens if he accepts the call to come to LCC.

Ken went to Chicago the 5th of December and visited with Steven and Kristina, they had a wonderful conversation. Steven and Kristina are in the process of adopting a child. Art will revisit Portico Insurance as it will make a difference in the cost of the family Portico premium.

Building and Grounds: The new sign is up and shining in front of the church. The interior signage will be installed the week of December 10th. The sign for the corner of the lot was tabled once again.

Mission Endowment: No report.

Worship and Music: Heart River Child Concert will be held Wednesday, December 20th.

Church
Council
Minutes
December
2017

Church Council Minutes continued

Christian Education: No report.

Congregational Nurturing: Honoring the volunteers will have an "angels among us" theme. One volunteer a month will be honored. Anyone may suggest an honoree for the month to a council member. Faith and Care Committee reported \$2,200 was raised at the Camp of the Cross break-fast.

Nominating Committee: Members of the committee are Lee Jensen, Carol Samuelson, Roger Krueger, and council members, Ken Will and Jon Hanson. Kim Humann has decided not to remain on the council. Jon Hanson has decided to continue serving on the council for another term. If you know of anyone interested in being on the council, please contact a committee member.

Stewardship: Time and Talent sheets have been sent out.

Budget Committee: The 2018 Budget was approved. Jon Hanson made the motion to approve with verbal changes, Tom Harris seconded; motion carried.

Mission Support: No report.

IT Support: No report.

Strategic Planning Committee: Jon Hanson has a report to be added to the Annual Meeting.

Unfinished Business: Annual Meeting is schedule to be held Sunday, January 14th, following worship service.

New Business: Ken Will would like to hold a Council Retreat in March at the church. It was reported the church has been left unlocked with lights on several times recently. This has been a problem in the past as well. Discussion was held on what needs to be done in the future to stop this from happening. Further discussion to follow.

No further business before the Council, the meeting was adjourned with the Lord's prayer. The next Council meeting will be on Tuesday, January 9th at 6:30 pm following C2 meeting which is held at 5:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jeffrey L. Thomas, Council Secretary

ANNUAL MEETING

Lutheran Church of the Cross
January 14, 2018
11:00 am

Annual
Meeting

Angels Among Us

Lutheran Church of the Cross runs on volunteers – so much of our ministry happens because of so many of you! Our Congregational Nurturing team would like to mention one (or a family) of the multitude each month to be mentioned in our newsletter and bulletin so we can thank them.

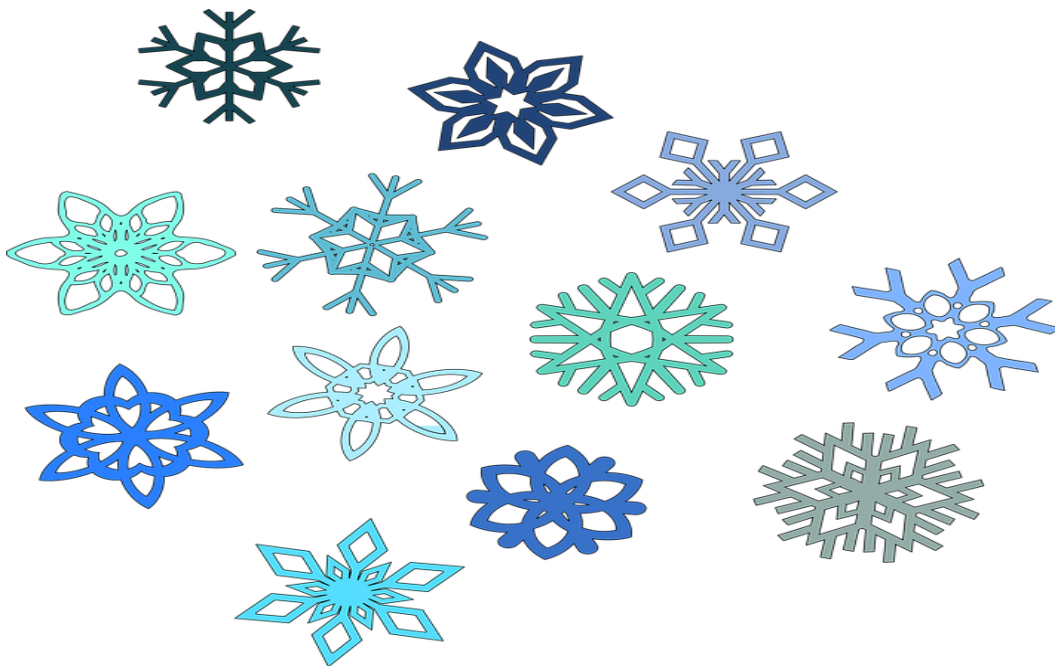
Angels
Among Us

To kick off this angel effort, join us in thanking the Blanchards. Baron and Kylie, Bayne, Bria and Brek live right next door to the church. They are long time and very active members. Kylie currently serves on the church council; Baron has also served in this capacity. We are especially grateful right now for the Blanchards' team effort to keep the LCC sidewalks and entrances clear of snow in the winter – what a huge help! You will see their smiling faces often, and when you do, please pat them on the back and say "Thanks for all you do! We appreciate you!"

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
January Calendar 2018						
7 9:00 Worship Team Practice 9:15 Church School 10:00 Worship/Baptism 11:00 Coffee Hour	1 Happy New Year Office Closed	2	3 Supper 5:00-5:45 5:35 Wed. W. Practice Wed. Worship/ 6p Confirmation Large Grp 7p River Practice 7p	4 8p AA Mtg.	5	6 4:30p Optional Sm Group River practice
14 8:45—9:45 Meet & Greet w/ Dickens family 9:00 Worship Practice 9:15 Church School 10:00 Worship 11:00 Annual Meeting/ Potluck	8 Office Closed	9 Supper 5p C2 Mtgs 5:30p Church Council 6:30p	10 Supper 5:00-5:45 5:35 Wed. W. Practice Wed. Worship/ 6p Confirmation Small Grp 7p River Practice 7p	11 Quilting 1pm 8p AA Mtg.	12 Friday Night at the Movies 6:30pm	13 <u>Book Club</u> 12 :30p Meet & Greet Steven & Kristina Dickens 2-3:30p Fellowship 3:30p 4:30p Optional
21 9:00 Worship Team Practice 9:15 Church School 10:00 Worship 11:00 Coffee Hour	15 ELCA Bible Study 3p Note time change	16	17 Supper 5:00-5:45 5:35 Wed. W. Practice Wed Worship 6p Confirmation Large-Group 7p River Practice 7p	18 Quilting 1pm 8p AA Mtg.	19 Newsletter deadline	20 4:30p Optional Sm Group River practice
28 Men's Retreat @ COC 9:00 Worship Team Practice 9:15 Church School 10:00 Worship 11:00 Coffee Hour	22 Knitting for Others 1pm Newsletter deadline	23	24 6:30a MM Bible Study @ Panera's Supper 5:00-5:45 5:35 Wed. W. Practice Wed Worship 6p Confirmation: 7p Leaders only	25 Quilting 1pm 8p AA Mtg.	26 Men's Retreat @ COC 5:30 Fri—noon on Sunday	27 Men's Retreat @ COC 4:30p Optional Sm Group River practice
		30	31 Supper 5:00-5:45 5:35 Wed. W. Practice Wed Worship 6p Confirmation: 7p Special Large Group			

HELP HEAT THE CHURCH

A monthly calendar is available in the entrance hallway for contributors to pick day(s) to help Heat the Church. November and March will be \$10 per day, and December, January, February will be \$25 per day. Please enter your name on the selected date(s), and include if the donation is in memory of someone, or acknowledging a special event or purpose. Donations may be left with the secretary, put in the offering or use electronic giving. Thanks to those individuals or families who have sponsored the heat for December Al & Rita Staloch, Jerry and Patty Hanson, Mark & Claudia Thompson, Tiffany's, Chery Neu, Roger & Cherie Krueger, Roger & Esther Anderson, Helen Tessman, Lisa Ahlness, Bassingwaite's, John & Jean Kraft, Mark Kunze family. Thank you so much for helping to keep the church warm!



**HEAT the
CHURCH**

C2 and Church Council Meetings



The next Church Council Meeting is at 6:30pm Tuesday, **January 9**. A light supper at 5:00pm is planned for each month. The C2 committees meet at 5:30 and Council meetings are open to everyone. If you have an item to come before the Council, please contact Ken Will prior to the meeting.

**C2 Supper
5pm
C2
Committee
Mtgs. 5:30
Church
Council
6:30pm**

1004 E Highland Acres Rd
Bismarck ND 58501
Phone: 701.223.1001

churchsecretary@midconetwork.com

E-News

Worship Times:
Wednesday Worship
6:00pm

Sunday Worship
The River Service
10:00am

Lisa Ahlness, Pastor

Office Hours:
M - TH 8-4pm
Fri. 8-noon School Year
Summer Hours 9-1
Mon.—Fri

Lutheran Church of the Cross

2017 Church Council

Ken Will, President	258.7127
Jon Hanson, Vice President	391.3416
Jeff Thomas, Secretary	955.3632
Kim Humann	255.6547
Brian Johnson	391-0872
Kylie Blanchard	391.0373
Tom Harris	751.6371

Making Jesus Known by Sharing our Gifts