

LIVING+WORDS

LIVING WORD LUTHERAN CHURCH

605-438-9672

JANUARY 2024 NEWSLETTER

2024 LWLC COUNCIL



Back row: Gene Vostad, Adam McMahon
Middle row: Tim DeJong, Moe Reede, Steve Strege, Sandy Christensen
Front row: Tina Balling, Laurie Maas



Kelly Peterson

RightNow Media

RightNow Media is a streaming video library of free Bible Studies. We believe the mission of the church matters. And we've seen how God can change lives through video resources. If you are interested in joining RightNow Media, at no charge, contact Lisa at the church office at 605-438-9672.

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A Message from our Council President...

We continue to search for a full-time pastor for Living Word Lutheran Church. We have interviewed a fair number of candidates with none of them seeming to be the right fit for our church. Then there has been a considerable break in the interview process as there are apparently too few ministers for too many churches. We continue to march on. The call committee did interview a potential pastor a few days ago. One of the several items we discussed had to do with the dwindling numbers of people attending church. She suggested that if everyone in the church brought someone to church with them, the numbers in the church would increase. That seemed logical to me so asking each of us at least once in the next year to invite someone that we know that does not have a church to come to church with us. A great time to start with that idea is now.

The call committee will continue to work with the candidate to see if we are right for each other. Please pray for our congregation.

A few weeks ago, one of our parish members gave me a letter he had received from a seminary. In reading further in the letter, they were asking for financial support. The member of our parish thought this organization may be a good fit for one of our benevolence recipients. Further on in the letter I noticed that the seminary was located in Brookings, South Dakota. Since Susan and I were planning a trip to Brookings within the next few days I thought we could leave a little early and I could visit the seminary and possibly get a few names as potential pastors for our church.

I spent about 30 minutes with a man that said he was not in charge of identifying potential ministers for churches, but he would refer my name to the proper persons for follow up. We then started to talk, actually I listened quite intently. The man told me that he felt the

methods of identifying and calling a minister in the way it has been done in the past may no longer work so well. He told me that the pool of ministers is getting smaller due to the age of the current ministers wanting to retire and the apparent lack of interest in younger people wanting to enter the ministry. The number wanting to enter the ministry is much smaller than the number needing to be replaced. He told me that churches such as ours may need to identify lay people within the church and encourage them to assist with such things as preaching, visitations, education, Bible studies, confirmation, planning etc. to fulfill these duties. He suggested the congregation could identify people in the congregation that could do some or all of these duties. Sponsoring churches could assist with these persons financially to receive their training. He said that with the way ministers are trained today and at their seminary, it is not necessary to go to the seminary for training but that the seminary could come to them. A lot of the training the seminary students receive is online with periodic face to face meetings.

This past year our church has developed a program with the name Dynamic Disciples. It currently is held on Wednesday after school 3:30 to 5:00. Students are transported from the school to our church. Our goal is to expand this program to every day after school during the next school year. We also had a very successful Vacation Bible School program this last summer. We are planning to do the same this summer.

Please pray that Living Word Lutheran Church is successful in accomplishing what God wants done.

Gene Vostad, Council President

Mark your Calendars ... **FEBRUARY**



February 14—Ash Wednesday

February 21—5:30 Lenten Meal, 6:30 Lenten Service

February 28—5:30 Lenten Meal, 6:30 Lenten Service



**FEBRUARY IS:
“LEAVE YOUR SHOES AT
CHURCH MONTH”**

No, not the ones you wore to church but those you no longer wear that are taking up space in your closet.

Shoes are needed in Sierra Leone as well at the Orphan Grain Train and we can help supply some for them.

Please bring your good, practical shoes, boots, sandals, and snow boots to church during February. Tie each pair with a strong cord or heavy string.

There will be boxes in the fellowship hall into which to put your contributed shoes.

A Thrivent Action grant is being applied for to purchase socks to send with the shoes.

If you have any questions, please fee free to contact Gretta Yaeger at 320-839-2457 or email rmyaeger@wat.midco.net.





SUNDAY SCHOOL & DYNAMIC DISCIPLES



Sunday
School
2023
Christ-
mas Pro-





The new Dynamic Disciples sign has arrived. Thank you to Sarah Hill for designing the logo and for Pro-Image Partners for making the sign. T-shirts and sweatshirts are available to order. Laurie Maas, director of Dynamic Disciples, and Pastor Melanie are modeling the new sweatshirts.

Dynamic Disciples learning about the Legend of the Candy Cane, gingerbread houses and fun Christmas games!





Living Word Lutheran Church:

Thank you so much for your past, present and continued investment in Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) in Milbank. The recent \$808.51 check from the noisy change offering will allow us to continue to provide bibles, food, t-shirts and camps for our coaches and young adults all in the spirit of the Great Commission

(Matthew 28:18-20). FCA in Milbank provides a place where our young adults learn about Jesus, the impact He's made in the lives of each other, the lessons He's taught us and come to know that He is their Savior.

Here's a neat YouTube video about FCA in Milbank (you'll see some familiar faces):

https://youtu.be/-NtYyANYF9E?si=DvObmrMXGRO_AfEL

We also want to thank LWLC for its past support of the Milbank/SDSU FCA football camp, Fields of Faith event, buying donuts for the morning huddles, and for purchasing over a hundred FCA Bibles that have been placed in the hands of our area youth.

For those of you on Facebook, here's a link to the MHS FCA Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/FCAMilbankSD>

Brian Sandvig

Evangelism Committee

2024 Means a Time of New Beginnings

Along with Christmas comes New Year's Day meaning 2024 will be upon us before we know it. It's a time for new beginnings. Some people look at this time in the form of New Year's resolutions, which is good if that works for them. Others take on different challenges such as new jobs, lifestyles, hobbies or location moves. Yes...they are all new beginnings.

After the Christ child was born, Joseph and Mary took on a new beginning—the role of parenthood. Many of us are familiar with that new beginning. We've known it as one that is awesome, joyful, frustrating, overwhelming, and even heartbreaking but can you imagine being the parents of Jesus? Talk about pressure! Yet, they met the challenge head on and it was their...new beginning. They had faith, believed and listened to God. Still, it had to be difficult.

Do you have that kind of faith? Do you listen to God and try to believe wholeheartedly in what He

is telling you, even if you disagree? Or maybe you don't want it to happen? Do you not understand why something is happening? All of these questions are hard. It is actually downright difficult and sometimes people struggle. But God sees us struggle and if we turn to Him, talk to Him, have faith in Him and turn our struggles over to Him, He WILL help us work through those struggles.

God gave the Christ child to us at Christmas. He was then, is now and always will be our new beginning. As 2024 rushes in, recognize the new beginnings in your life. Ask for God's guidance and wisdom and much like He did with Mary and Joseph, God will be by your side. Turn to Him.

Happy New Year!!

Sandy Christensen

Steve Strege

Council Members—Worship & Evangelism

LIVING WORD LUTHERAN WOMEN

Updates

Arise, shine, for your Light has come!
The glory of the Lord rises upon you. Is. 60:1

As our Sunday school students proclaimed in the Christmas program, Jesus is the light of the world! Shine Him bright for all the world to see. May others see Jesus reflected in us through our love and kindness, through our actions and gifts. We truly are a chosen people who have been called out of darkness into His marvelous light.

May your New Year's resolution be to stay strong in the study of God's Word. Please join the LWLW women in monthly Bible studies and devotions, as well as mission opportunities and outreach throughout the year.

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord. Plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future Jeremiah 29:11

God does have a plan and purpose for each one of us. We have so many gifts and talents to share. We truly are blessed to be a blessing in this New Year!

Your Sister in Christ,
Sue DeJong, 2023 Coordinator



The Mission Mitten Tree filled with a variety of mittens, hats and scarves will be delivered to ICAP the first week of January. Thank you everyone for your donations.





PASTOR'S LETTER

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!!

Dear Church Family of Living Word Lutheran Church,

Happy New Year! As I write this, I am sitting at the desk reflecting on our Christmas worship. Weather always seems to offer some challenges, but we were truly blessed to gather twice on December 24, first in the morning to finish our Advent preparation and again at 5:00 pm for our Candlelight Christmas Eve service in which we celebrated the gift of the Savior with Communion, a beautiful number by the choir, Scripture offered by the Shepherd, and the singing of Silent Night with both piano and violin accompaniment! It was a beautiful evening and I want to thank everyone who made it possible!

Now, we look ahead to 2024! After closing out 2023 on December 31, our first service in January will be Epiphany~~~the visit of the Wisemen. Also, on the same Sunday, the Baptism of Our Lord, is celebrated as a part of our Lectionary schedule this year.

The New Year means many things. Some make New Year's Resolutions. We want to make changes in our lifestyles which will improve our daily walk in life, and yet, many times these resolutions are dropped shortly after. In spite of making resolutions, most things tend to stay the same. This may be a cause for disappointment, but there is a certain consistency we can all celebrate, **God's promises do not change** with the calendar or some of the latest fads of society. Instead of making resolutions that often fail, let's spend the first part of the new year appreciating God's unbreakable promises.

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart,
and lean not on your own understanding;
in all your ways acknowledge Him,
and He shall direct your paths." Proverbs 3:5-6

In Christian love,
Pastor Melanie

THANK YOU ~ THANK YOU

Any words I write would never be able to adequately express our sincere thanks to all of the wonderful people who are Living Word Lutheran Church!

Your many gifts and encouraging thoughts during this Christmas time are so deeply appreciated.

We thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your many acts of kindness!

In Christian love,
Pastor Melanie and Roger



COUNCIL MINUTES

LWLC COUNCIL MEETING REPORT DECEMBER 13, 2023

MEMBERS PRESENT: Gene Vostad, Pastor Melanie, Steve Strege, Tim DeJong, Adam McMahon, Laurie Maas, Moe Reede, Sandy Christensen, and Tina Balling.

OPENING: Pastor gave the opening prayer.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA: Sandy made a motion, and it was seconded by Moe to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

Vicki Strege reported on the changes recommended for the benevolences by the Impact Committee. They recommend we decrease the percentages to the Grant County Food Pantry to 8% from 13%, the Ortonville Food Pantry to 8% from 9% and Michael Sanchez to 4% from 5%. The 7% that was taken from the three will go to Jordan Hins family for their mission work in Turkey. Steve made a motion to make the recommended changes and it was seconded by Moe. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF THE SECRETARY'S REPORT: Moe made a motion, and it was seconded by Adam to approve the secretary's report. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

November 30, 2023

Income \$15,218.65

Expense \$ 8,028.92

Total \$ 7,189.73

BUSINESS MANAGER REPORT: Steve made a motion, and it was seconded by Moe to approve the business manager's report. Motion carried.

PASTOR'S REPORT: The space needs committee had evolved to the building committee. The Advent worship services are going well. Moe made a motion to accept the Pastor's report and it was seconded by Laurie. Motion carried.

PROPERTY & MANAGEMENT: Dale fixed the front door. The manger and spotlight will be put out by the crosses.

WORSHIP & EVANGELISM: Nothing new to report.

YOUTH & EDUCATION: The Youth & Ed committee will meet 12-18 at 7pm. Dynamic Disciples is going good. A motion was made by Tim and seconded by Sandy to approve the Youth & Ed report. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS: Gene and Tim nominated Moe for vice president. Moe agreed to take on this position. Laurie will join the youth & ed committee and Adam and Tim will be on property & management. Steve Strege has agreed to be the chairman for the building committee. Scott Maas and Dale Prisinger are also on the committee. Report forms for "discipline of children and youth" and "allegations of abuse" will be added to our Safe Sanctuary Policy. We will look into having the carpets cleaned in the spring. Gretta Yaeger suggested February 2024 be declared as a month for members to donate good used shoes. The shoes collected will be donated to Sierra Leone and the Orphan Grain Train. The worship & evangelism committee will work with Gretta. A motion was made by Steve and seconded by Moe to approve the shoe collection. Motion carried. Communion by intinction will be done at the Christmas Eve 5pm service.

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING: The next council meeting is scheduled for January 10th at 7pm.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by Adam and seconded by Laurie to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was closed with the Lord's prayer.

LWLC Committee Contacts

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