

CROSSROADS

Monthly Newsletter for:

CUSTER LUTHERAN FELLOWSHIP

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MID-WEEK ADVENT SERVICES



Please join us Wednesday evenings in December at 6:00pm to contemplate and prepare for the birth of Jesus. On December 6th we will meet for worship in the Sanctuary and celebrate Holy Communion. On December 13th and 20th, we will gather in the Fellowship Hall around the tables to pray, sing, hear scripture, and engage in discussion with the people at our tables. The services will last approximately 30-45 minutes. These services are meant to be intergenerational, meaning all ages of children and adults are welcome to attend, and the level of activities and conversations will be appropriate for even the smallest among us.

LONGEST NIGHT/BLUE CHRISTMAS

On Thursday, **December 21st** we observe the first day of Winter and the Winter Solstice, which is the day of the year with the least amount of daylight hours. For many, these long, dark days of winter can intensify the feelings of grief, sadness, loneliness, and loss.



Sometimes, this makes it difficult to participate in the joyous celebrations of the Christmas season. In an effort to name, honor, and perhaps participate in the healing of this pain, we will have a special worship service of lament and healing. **Please join us at 6:30 pm** in the sanctuary where we will take time to hear words of hope and promise in the midst of the naming of your pain. If you know of someone who is grieving or for whom Christmas can be a difficult time, please share this information with them, and perhaps even offer to join them. All are welcome to attend.

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM



Children's Christmas Program on December 10th during the 9:30 AM Worship Service! The SPARK Kids are working to put together a performance of carols and costumes that you don't want to miss! The kids will use the last half of SPARK on Wednesdays to practice for the show. We will have parts for everyone as they perform "The Advent Tree". Invite your friends and family to remember the reason for the season!

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

Join us for worship on Christmas Eve as we celebrate the birth of our Savior!

Christmas Eve Worship: 9:30 AM—4th Sunday in Advent
 4:30 PM Candlelight Service
 9:30 PM Candlelight Service

Both evening services will have Holy Communion and Candle Lighting as we sing Silent Night, Holy Night.



OH HOLY NIGHT!

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

Would you like to help with decorating the altar with poinsettias for the Christmas season? You may bring them by **Dec. 22nd** and place them in the Family Room off the Narthex. They will be placed in the Sanctuary for the Christmas Eve services. Please let the office know if your plant is in memory or in honor of someone. You may take them home after the Christmas service. Thanks!



ELCA GOOD GIFTS

Christmas Shopping? Your Social Ministry Team is again sponsoring ELCA Good Gifts. This program provides more than 50 different gift-giving options that fight hunger and transform lives. Such gifts, starting at \$10, provide direct support for the churchwide ministries of the ELCA.

An animal can make a world of difference for a family in need. Animals provide food to eat, fertilizer to grow crops and offspring to sell at market. With such a gift, you can help a family escape the cycle of hunger and poverty for good. Contributions can also be made toward projects such as safe water developments and educational opportunities. Need a gift for that "hard to buy for" someone? When you purchase your Good Gifts, you'll get an ornament and/or card for that special someone to show you're honoring them by giving to those in need with their name in mind. Say "goodbye" to traditional gift-giving and hello to meaningful gifts that really make a difference in the world. There will be a table set up in the Narthex on **Sunday, November 26th** and **Sunday, December 3rd** to help you select gifts.



NEW MEMBERS ON OCTOBER 8TH



New members to CLF are (L to R) Darryn Witt, Mary Winter, Deserie (Dez) Newton, Karen Barness, Renae Scofield, Pastor Shannon Witt, Joan & Dave Ruen, and Dick & Darla Klinger. Members not present were: Jack Winter, Caden Barness, Joel & Sharon Ziebarth. We welcome you to CLF and are excited to have you with us.



SPARK KIDS



Join us for SPARK Kids! During the school year on Wednesdays, children from Kindergarten through Grade 5 are picked up at the Elementary building after school is dismissed and brought to the church. We sing songs, have a snack, and do game or craft that ties into the Bible story. It is always a fun time of learning and laughing, with also some great questions and deep thinking! Pickup is 5:00-5:15 pm. There is NO cost for this program! Children need



to be registered by their parents/guardians in order to participate. Registration materials are available through the office. We have 33 kids signed up! All are welcome!

Last month I completed a two year certification through Crossroads Soul Resources School of Spiritual Direction. For the last two years I have been meeting with 26 other people one Saturday a month for 8 hours each month. I have read over 30 books and written many academic papers. The training also included a week long intensive class studying the Enneagram. The Enneagram is an ancient tool used to deeply learn about nine different styles of personalities and how they affect our Spirituality and our approach toward life and relationships with God and with other people. My last class was November 4th and I graduated on November 5th. I am now a certified Spiritual Director.

Many of you have asked me since I shared what I was doing that week, "What exactly is a Spiritual Director? Aren't all Pastors Spiritual Directors?" The answer to the second question is no. This is a unique and specialized training that helps professionals guide their clients into a specific type of conversation to help them discern how God is active in their life. When someone comes to me for Pastoral Care, I mainly listen to and pray with and for that person. When a person comes to me for Spiritual Direction, I also listen to and pray with and for that person, but I ask guiding questions that help them to explore their relationship with the Holy Spirit, to help them navigate their faith and spiritual life, and to lead them to a deeper understanding of God's activity in their life and the world. I use the Enneagram to help myself and them to really look at how their specific personality style impacts their relationship with God, the church, and other people.

Personally, I have had my own Spiritual Directors that I have met with regularly for nearly 20 years. It has had a powerful impact on me and a few years ago I decided that I wanted to be able to offer this gift to others. In my graduating class there were 5 other ordained pastors. My other classmates were counselors, doctors, nurses, lay leaders in their churches, teachers, etc. If you are ever interested in a Spiritual Direction session with me, I would be honored to meet with you. I do prepare for these sessions, so it would need to be scheduled ahead of time. Beginning in January I will be offering a 9 week study on the Enneagram for those of you who are interested in discovering more about your own personality and perhaps even more about some of your family and friends. I will know dates and times and will let you know the specifics in the next newsletter. In the meantime, if you have any questions or would like more information on the Enneagram or about Spiritual Direction, please feel free to ask! If you would like more information on the school I attended you can find out more at <https://ccmonline.org/schoolofspiritualdirection/>.

Your sister in Christ,
Pastor Shannon



PLEASE NOTIFY THE CHURCH OFFICE WHEN:

- *There is a hospitalization in your family
- *You would like a pastoral visit
- *Someone becomes homebound
- *There is a cause for sorrow or a cause for joy
- *There is a death in your family
- *There is a birth or adoption
- *Someone becomes unemployed

Hospitals don't notify the pastor that a member is in the hospital, even if they ask your church membership when you arrive. So please let the pastor know if you or a family member is in the hospital. Custer Lutheran Fellowship, the body of Christ, wants to bring you Christ's love in all the seasons of your life.

Please contact Pastor Shannon Witt at 563-542-6080 or 605-673-4691 (church).

WEDNESDAY NIGHTLIFE SCHEDULE

	Meal at 5:15 pm	Worship at 6:00 pm
Dec. 6th	Jackie's Surprise	1st Week in Advent
Dec. 13th	Subway	2nd Week in Advent
Dec. 20th	Pizza	3rd Week in Advent
Dec. 27th	No meal – Christmas break	

Confirmation at 5:30 pm



Dec. 6th — Class
 Dec. 13th — Class
 Dec. 20th — Class
 Dec. 28th No Class



RAP HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP



We would love to see all 9th-12th graders join us for Youth Group! We will have our weekly Wednesday night gatherings at 6:30 PM. We had a great time during our annual Storehouse scavenger hunt for non-perishable food items. The Youth started this in Confirmation and love to continue the tradition! Another highlight was our Progressive Dinner! We had soup/salad, appetizers, a main course and dessert! Special THANKS to the Lent's, Studt's, Drew's, Rusches, Pulscher's, and with Larry Peterson as our chauffeur!

We organize a monthly weekend Fun Activity! Mark your calendars for **Saturday, December 2nd for the Custer Christmas Parade @ 5:30!** We will go on the



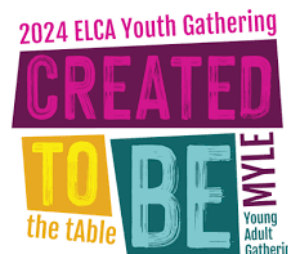
Outlaw hayride and pass out candy. Afterwards, we will have chili and games! Wear your ugly Christmas sweater! Please contact me if you would like to help with this or any activity that brings faith and fun to our youth! Wendi Rusch #509-494-3236 for more info!



2024 ELCA NATIONAL YOUTH GATHERING

The Youth Gathering is 30,000+ 8th—12th grade students from around the country that get together in a large city for faith formation, worship, fellowship and service. This year the Gathering will be in New Orleans, LA. Our youth group will join Lutherans Outdoors of SD and 200 other SD youth to go together on charter buses on July 13th—21st! South Dakota is once again sending the most kids to the gathering! Way to go!

If your business or household would like to make a tax deductible donation, we would greatly appreciate it! With food, travel, housing, and other costs, we will need more than \$20,000 for our group. You can donate with Youth Gathering in the memo line and help us reach our goal! We are also looking for fundraising ideas. Contact Wendi 509-494-3236 with any questions.



THE GREAT CLF WOOD HAUL



Our annual wood haul project has become part of the fabric that is CLF. This year, November 4th, 26 CLF'ers volunteered 176 hours splitting, loading and delivering 14 cords of firewood (in 13 trucks/trailers) to the Red Shirt Table. One hundred lunches of meat/cheese sandwiches, cookies, chips and water were also prepared and shared with our Pine Ridge Reservation brethren. Lots of socks and gloves and 13 quilts were also distributed. A good time was had by all as we shared out time, skills and resources entrusted to us by God.

PICTURES



CHRISTMAS GRAMS

To raise some money for our Youth Gathering, we will be offering **Christmas-grams!**

We will travel to sing a few Christmas carols during Youth Group on Wednesday, December 13th @ 6 PM. For a donation, you can request the youth come to your house or you can order a Christmas singing telegram for someone else!



Help us share the joy of the season and contact Wendi #509-494-3236 to get on the 'nice list'!

CLF CHOIR ~ December

We will be singing
"Does Bethlehem Know?"

We are sure to have lots of fun!

Practices:

Wed., Dec. 6 @ 6:30 PM –Sanctuary

Wed., Dec. 13 @ 6:30 PM –Sanctuary

Special Music:

Sunday, December 17th @ 9:30 AM

LYNN'S RECEIPTS

Thank you to everyone that turns in their Lynn's Dakotamart receipts. To date so far we have brought in \$1,100 for CLF

MARGARET’S MUSICAL MOMENTS

Hello Faithful CLF Congregation,

I wish to share a few of my special faith moments as Music Coordinator for CLF for the past forty years. This has been difficult for me to step away from the job I found so meaningful and endearing, for so many years. The amazing pastors, wonderful accompanists, instrumentalists and awe-inspiring choir and vocalists, will always have a very special home in my heart. Your talents and beautiful musical renditions have been responsible for the success of Christian music for all to enjoy during each service. I thank you for all your contributions and patience and praising the Lord in song.

When first arriving in Custer, I lived and worked at “Outlaw Ranch”. I helped with the daily schedule of chores and lived in the “Old Lodge.” I miss that old building but the memories are vivid and still live on. I then applied to Custer School District for teacher aid position. I fortunately was interviewed and offered the position. When I accepted, I didn’t realize the future events of my life would change forever. I made wonderful lifelong friends and loved the contact with those beautiful and talented young people. Many whom became future voice and piano students.

While in that position, I met my future husband Bill, who at that time was the Instrumental Music Director. We discovered that we both received our music degrees from the same university. The relationship was destined to succeed. We talked mostly about music. (I think). As our relationship grew stronger, we decided it would be great to spend the remainder of our lives in “Total Harmony”. We married in 1970 and that part of our dream has been fulfilled. For 53 years, we have been making music together. We are the parents of two beautiful and successful daughters, Michelle Anderson in Rapid City, and Tania Richmond, of Marion, Iowa. Their wonderful husbands, Mike & Steve. Five grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren. Oh how the Lord has blessed us.

My life was full, making music and teaching piano and voice. I’ve been showered with musical blessings my Entire life. I could go on, and on, and on.... But the newsletter must get printed. Thank you to all my musical friends and the countless students I have been so fortunate to teach and love. I LOVE you all...

Margaret Tretheway

Merry Christmas



BURRITOS SALE UPDATE



The breakfast burritos, prepared as a fundraiser for last month's Buffalo Roundup, have all been claimed! Over \$1,200, above cost, has been collected. These funds have been put into the CLF Mission and Outreach fund. Thank you all for your generosity. Bon appetit!

Additional note: There are still some left. If you would like to get some please contact Mary in the office. Thanks!!

PICS



PARISH NURSE UPDATE BY MARY KLEIN

Parish Nurse News

I hope you all have taken a chance to check out our Health Ministry's information table next to the family room. There is a lot of very good information and we encourage you to take anything that interests you.



I did not do any blood pressure checks in November as there was so much going on already. We had the brunch for Consecration Sunday and the WELCA gifts. Otherwise you can expect me to be in the family room taking blood pressures on the 3rd Sunday of the month after services. I encourage you to stop in and I can also keep a log of your blood pressures. During this time I also try to offer some education and support. There are times that come up when I am unable to take someone's blood pressure as my machine only has 2 sizes of cuffs right now and cuff size is important for accurate readings. My stethoscopes have been missing for some time and I need one to use the old fashioned blood pressure cuffs, which by the way are usually more accurate. If anyone is willing to donate one they no longer use, it would be much appreciated.

When you read this it will already be December. I hope that you are all protecting yourselves by getting your flu & COVID shots. These types of vaccines are based on the type of flu or virus that is best predicted. Even if they fall off the mark a little they still have been shown to lessen your chances of getting more seriously ill. Remember if you are feeling ill, stay home & take care of yourself. If that is not possible, please wear a mask and avoid infecting others.

I hope everyone has a Blessed Christmas. Remember those who may be alone, lonely and hungry. Healthy body, Healthy spirit !

Mental Health News

I was talking to a family member the other day and they voiced the difficulty they were having with their family member not being compliant with medications and doctor appointments. They said they could see that their mental illness would get worse and then they would lose their job. Because of that, they also could not afford housing or their prescriptions. What can they do to help? This is a big issue for many family members and of course the person with mental illness. Taking prescriptions as they are ordered is so important to controlling their mental illness. You can see where all of that logic begins to fall apart. Being as supportive to them as you are able, not taking the anger or guilt out on them or punishing them. It can become a revolving door, but there may need to be many "resets" to get them on the right track. Reach out for help for them and yourselves in the community. NAMI.org has some great information for everyone dealing with mental illness including family and friends. If you need more information just ask for my help.

Healthy mind, healthy soul!

LIVE NATIVITY AT OUTLAW RANCH

Outlaw Ranch would like to invite you to our live nativity on December 17th from 3-7pm. Activities will include a baked goods sale, craft fair, hot cider and cocoa.

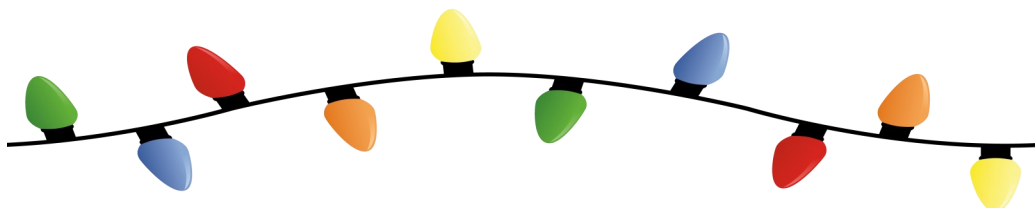
If you would like to help as an actor bringing the scene to life (no speaking involved), please call Matt at 605-673-1014.



THANK YOU!

Dear Custer Lutheran Fellowship,
We truly appreciate your awesome support and prayers. Thank you for everything.

God Bless Y'all
Donna Talley, Director and WEAVE Board





CHURCH E-MAIL ADDRESSES

If you would to e-mail someone in the church office, our e-mail addresses are:

Main address— clf@gwtc.net
 Pastor— pastor_clf@gwtc.net



OFFICE HOURS

The church office is open
 Monday to Thursday from
 8:30 AM—4:00 PM.

CLF WEBSITE OFFERS ONLINE GIVING OPTIONS

On Custer Lutheran Fellowship's website, www.custerlutheran.com you will find the option to support Custer Lutheran Fellowship's mission and ministry through the "ONLINE GIVING" link. Whether you'd like to make a one-time donation or set-up regularly scheduled donations, you can do this easily through a secure server by following the instructions. At this time, CLF accepts bank account (ACH) transactions only. You can set up your own login/password and make changes with your giving at any time.

JANUARY NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Please have articles for the
 January Newsletter to the office by
December 20th. Thank you!

DO YOU HAVE ANY CHANGES?

Please let the church office know of any recent address changes, new email addresses or changes in your phone numbers whether home or cell phone. We are trying to keep our records up to date. Thank You for your assistance!





Our next meeting is January 15, 2024 (no meeting in December) at 11:30 AM in the Fireside Room with a potluck meal. Please bring a dish to pass. We will be planning for 2024, bring your ideas.

Again, we were overwhelmed with your generous support for our "Craft And Goodie" Sale. This sale and the "Auction of Talents" in the spring are our main fundraiser in support of our missions. CLF WELCA is a self supporting organization and we receive no money from the church. With the congregations help, we have been able to donate to the Custer "Y", Lutheran Social Services, Outlaw Ranch, Red Shirt Table coffee house, WEAVE, the quilting for Lutheran World Relief and many others as needed. At the November meeting, the women voted to give \$500 to the Pastor's Discretionary Fund. In the spring, we hope to be able to help the RAP Group going to New Orleans. But we couldn't do any of it without the contributions of the congregation again. THANK YOU and wishing you Happy Holidays!

THE THANKFUL QUILTERS



We will be gathering on Tuesday, December 5th and December 12th.

We will then take a break for the Christmas holiday until January 9th.

Thank you so much for all the supplies that we are receiving.

The "THANKFUL" Quilters



CRAFT & GOODIE SALE 2023

Lefse Making Part of Craft & Goodie Sale
"Sure Looks Great, Ladies!"



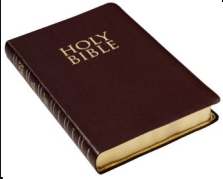
THANK YOU SO VERY MUCH

My family and I would like to say "a heartfelt thank you so very much to the members of CLF" knowing that we greatly appreciated all of the cards, flowers, memorials, hugs and words of inspiration that they have shared with us since the passing of our mother, Karen Hansen.

If you sent a memorial in our mother's name, it was given to the choir music fund as our mother was very involved in music during her life.

May God continue to bless each and everyone of you richly.

Mary & Jack Winter; Sharon & Art Lampert; and Michael Hansen



CLF MEN'S BREAKFAST/BIBLE STUDY

The Men's Breakfast will be meeting on December 9th at 8:00 AM in the Fireside Room. The men gather for a breakfast first then move on to their Bible study for the day. All are welcome to join this group. We have great discussions.

LADIES' BIBLE STUDY



The Ladies Bible Study happens on Thursday nights at 5:30 PM in the Fireside Room. If you have any questions about the bible study, please give Joy Smolnisky a call at 605-929-1244. Everyone is welcome!

THURSDAY MEN'S BREAKFAST

7:00 AM — "Outlaw Ranch"

Come join us for breakfast each week. There's always good conversation and good food! Open to all! Bring a friend!



REMEMBER THE REASON
FOR THE SEASON.

WORSHIP & MUSIC COMMITTEE

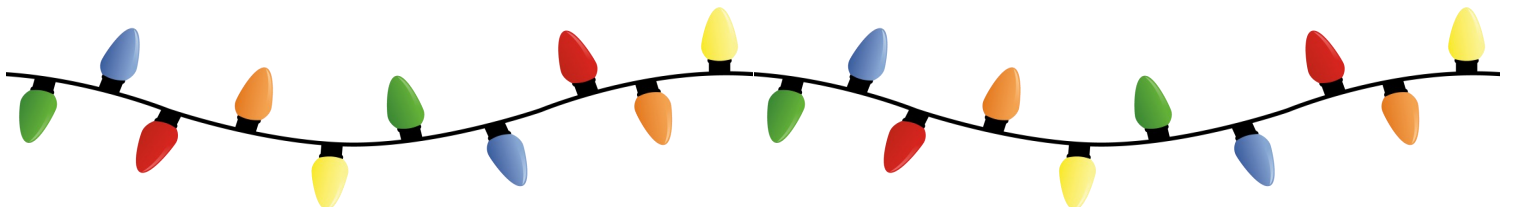
Planning future worship and music services and events for CLF.

Members are: Standing: Cozy Dorton, Janice Albers, and Jennifer Doyle.
Seated: Donna McConnell, Pastor Shannon Witt, and Margaret Tretheway.



YOUTH SCAVENGER HUNT

On Wednesday, November 15th, 5 Middle School youth and 18 RAP Group youth held separate scavenger hunts after the worship service for The Storehouse. They were allowed 45 minutes to obtain as many items as possible in the time allowed. The 23 youth were able to collect 379 pounds of food (up from last year) which will be used for the Christmas Baskets along with general distribution from the food pantry. The Middle School youth collected the most points and were awarded the CLF Scavenger Hunt trophy. Thanks to all for participating!!!



MARGARET TRETHERWAY RETIREMENT 42 YEARS OF DEDICATION TO CLF

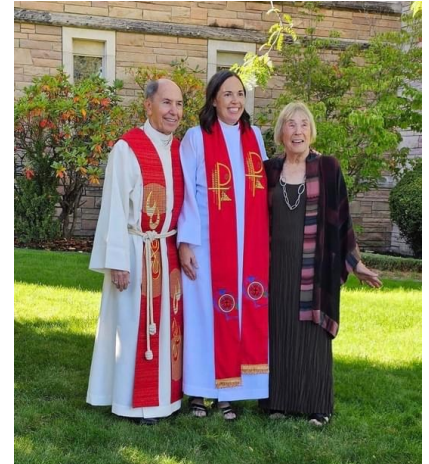


THANKS FOR YOUR SERVICE AND MEMORIES, MARGARET!

MEGGAN MANLOVE ELECTED



One of Custer Lutheran Fellowship's very own, Meggan Manlove, has recently been elected as the Bishop of the ELCA Northwest Intermountain Synod. Several members of from CLF attended her 6-year term. Those attending from CLF were: Pastor Chuck & Kaona Hazlett, Mark & Bonnie Thompson, Steve & Judy Baldwin, Mary Kettl, Liz Kleffner, along with her mother, Linde Manlove and best friend, Jennifer (Schleining) Cerfogli.



CONGRATULATIONS
MEGGAN!

3.5 REASONS TO CONSIDER A SPECIAL YEAR-END GIFT

Year-end giving is a great way to support your church or favorite ministry, and an opportunity to make a real difference in the lives of those who need it most. Here are some reasons to think about a special gift as a part of your Christmas generosity:

- 1. Meet Budgetary Needs:** Year-end gifts play a vital role in helping churches meet their financial goals by closing budget gaps and ensuring the mission and ministry of the church continue. Financial obligations cover essential expenses, including staff salaries, building maintenance, utilities, and outreach programs. Insufficient funds make it difficult to meet the basic needs.
- 2. Celebrate Achievements:** A year-end gift can be made to recognize and express appreciation for the hard work of volunteers and staff members who have dedicated their time and energy to the church throughout the year.
- 3. Build Financial Stability:** Your generosity can help your church or favorite ministry to build financial stability by creating a reserve fund to provide resources during lean times or fund a new mission project.
- 3.5. Tax Savings and Income:** A year-end give can create a charitable tax deduction or lower your taxable income and also generate tax-advantage income for the rest of your life. Whether it's a gift of cash, stock, grain or a qualified distribution from your IRA, the options are endless.

For more information about how you can make a difference with your year-end gift and receive tax-advantaged income for life, contact Kathy McHenry, Executive Director of Lutheran Planned Generosity of South Dakota at 605.274.5030 or kmchenry@sdsyod.org.

Kathy McHenry

Executive Director, Lutheran Planned Generosity

Dear SD Synod,

Grace and peace to you in the name of the Holy Trinity!

I would like to begin by extending a heartfelt "thank you" to you. Your generosity has allowed a group of five individuals to be guests in our companion synod in Cameroon. The EELC celebrated its centennial this year. What began as the "Sudan Mission" a hundred years ago are now two church bodies, one in Cameroon and one in the Central African Republic.

Please, know that the group would be delighted in your congregation would like to hear about the rich ministry that happens in the EELC as well as how we can partner and learn from each other. Feel free to reach out to Rev. Dr. Aaron Matson in the synod office to schedule anyone of the group members to share in conversation with your context.

One of the many treasured memories I bring home with me is the deep and abiding joyful almost childlike faith I came to experience in the church in Cameroon. The untamed dancing and singing from memory were contagious, even for an introvert like me. Throughout my entire time in Cameroon, I was reminded that when we entertain and welcome a stranger, we might just as well entertain angels and God's provision is written all over our lives, if we open our eyes and hearts to the possibilities.

Finally, please know that I recognize that times for many faith communities are challenging, but hear the affirmation that in the midst of our challenges are opportunities for God to shine and work among us in mighty ways. I invite you to trust the first line of the Apostle's Creed that "I believe in God the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth." No matter how hard times will get, God will not forsake or forget us. That's a promise we can respond to with great joy.

Journeying in Christ with you,
Rev. Constanze Hagmaier
Bishop of the SD Synod

YOU ARE NOT ALONE

I am writing this very early morning, October 16, 2023. I was awoken early with a message from our daughter that said, "we are safe, no school sheltering in place." I immediately went to a news source and found out the mass shooting in Maine was in a neighboring town to where our daughter and her family live. Needless to say, my sleep was over for the night. My heart and prayers go out to the families that find themselves in a place they have never wanted to be, but I know that Jesus is with them.

As saddened as I am for this senseless shooting, there is something just as senseless going on in this country and yet it's only mentioned in small town papers obituary section. I am referring to the large number of farm suicides. In the USA, two farmers die by suicide every day! Think about that for a moment and let that sink in, two farmers die by suicide every day! Now take a look at the churches you worship in and ask yourselves, are any of the people gathered here this morning headed that direction? Staggering thought isn't it?

I invite you to be aware of the people in the pews and let them know that they are not alone in their struggles and that help is available. With the rising costs of farm inputs that I am hearing about for next year, we may find ourselves and our congregations caught up in this statistic. Please provide resources for everyone, such as the 988 the national suicide hotline and also local resources. Our Farmers and ranchers need to know that we as the brothers and sisters of Christ care about them and want them around! The Synod staff have resources too and are walking with you.

Blessings,
Pastor Alan Blankenfeld
Rural Ministry Liaison

THANK YOU!

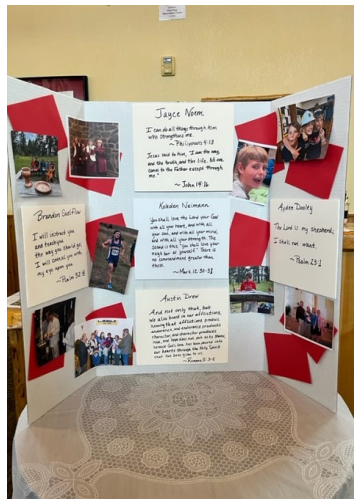
We are so sorry this is late getting to you. Our apologies.

Thank you so very much for allowing us, the Studebaker Drivers Club, to use your beautiful church for our banquet.. It met our needs perfectly. Again, thank you and hopefully we can use the facility another year.

Susan Dittman
Dakotas Chapter Studebaker

ALL SAINT'S SUNDAY REMEMBRANCES





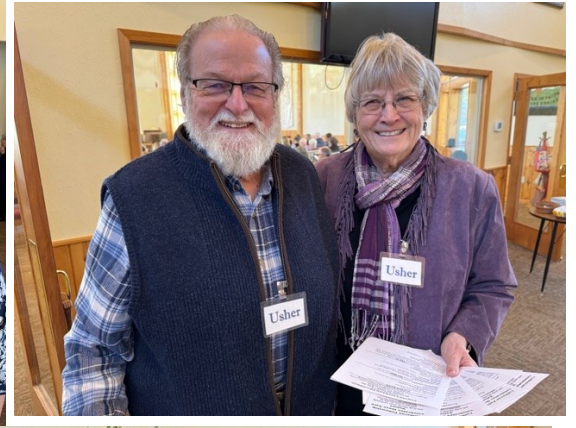
FRIENDS & FELLOWSHIP AT CLF

GOD'S WORK OUR HANDS HIGHWAY CLEAN-UP

God's Work Our Hands continued as our Highway Clean-up crew was out cleaning up on Hwy 16A near Custer Lutheran Fellowship Church. Thank you for the many hands make lite work.

Pictured are: Back row: Gary Williams, Connie McKinney, Larry Peterson, Sharon & Joel Ziebarth and Jan Thom. Kneeling is Dave Thom.





BUDGET BASICS

By Joy Smolnisky, CLF Treasurer

CLF categorized expenditures as Non-restricted, Designated and Restricted.

Table 1: Non-Restricted Contributions are used to cover budgeted expenses in the current year or set Aside for future major expenses.

Table 2: Designated Funds contain non-restricted contributions that were set aside previous budget years to cover large non-repetitive or emergency expenses.

Table 3: Restricted Funds can only be spent for the purpose the donor has delineated.

Funds accumulated in a designated or restricted account can (with budget authority) be withdrawn to cover large expenses. Example: In 2024, fourteen youth and two adults from CLF will be traveling to the Youth Gathering in New Orleans. This trip will be expensive. The youth have been fundraising for years to cover their expenses. Each year the money donated to them (through wood sales and other fundraisers) is deposited in a restricted fund. In 2024, CLF will withdraw the funds to pay for their participation expenses.

So, when you see positive "new income" on the end-of-the-year Table 1, those funds are available to designate for immediate or future use. Perhaps the capital improvement fund is depleted, or other valuable ministries need additional support. Perhaps it appears extra dollars will be needed to cover increases in Operating costs for the next year.

You, as a member of CLF, have the opportunity and responsibility to help make these stewardship decisions. Familiarize yourself with the budget at the January Budget Forum and provide your input. Attend the annual meeting where you can vote on amending and approving the Council's proposed budget. Your insight and ideas keep CLF's stewardship fresh and relevant in our community and throughout God's World.

CLEAN SIDEWALK CLUB

"Let it Snow, Let it Snow, Let it Snow"

It's already showing up, isn't it. And we need volunteer sidewalk shovelers for the Church. There is a sign-up sheet at the Welcome Center in the Narthex and you can sign up for whatever days work for you. (If you can't make a weeklong commitment, that's fine. Sign up for two or three days.)

If you need to be shown how to operate the John Deere snow blower, contact Brad McKinney at 308-641-1741 or any number of "experienced" snow shovelers.



CUSTER LUTHERAN FELLOWSHIP

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

January through October 2023

Table 1: Ordinary Income/Expense

	Actual	Non-Restricted Budget	Variance
Income			
40000—Offering Contributions	\$ 263,196	\$ 241,840	\$ 21,356
Total 40014—Non-restricted Special Donations	5,367		
Miscellaneous Revenue	265		
40300—Interest	2,111	\$ 250	\$ 1,861
Total Income	\$ 270,939	\$ 242,090	\$ 23,217
Expense			
Pastor	\$ 49,753	51,981	(2,228)
Guest Pastor	6,033	7,249	(1,216)
Total - PASTORAL LEADERSHIP	55,786	59,230	(3,444)
Total - WORSHIP	9,344	9,667	(323)
Total - EDUCATION	18,401	19,650	(1,249)
ELCA Mission Support	22,371	21,899	472
Other Mission Support	8,688	8,688	(0)
Total - MISSION SUPPORT	31,059	30,587	472
Support & Care	48,641	48,674	33
Facility Expense	62,535	53,464	9,071
TOTAL—SUPPORT/CARE + FACILITIES	111,176	102,138	9,038
Total Expense	225,766	221,273	4,493
Net Ordinary Income	45,173	20,817	24,356

Table 2 Designated Funds YTD 2023

	Released	Expenses	Net
Funds Council designated to for specific future expenses. Increases funds on hand when set aside, decreases funds on hand when released for expenditures. (Example: Capital Improvement, Youth and Family Fund, etc.)	\$ 15,943	\$ 16,118	\$ 640

Table 3 Restricted Funds YTD 2023

	Released	Expenses	Net
Donations restricted for specific purpose by the donor.	\$ 15,943	\$ 16,118	\$ 640

COUNCIL MINUTES – NOVEMBER 21, 2023

Secretary's Report: The correspondence was reviewed There was consensus and the minutes for the September meeting were approved. Worship attendance records were reviewed.

Treasurer's and Finance Committee's Report: The offerings thru October were 108.8% (+\$21,356) of budget and expenses were 102% (+\$4,493) of budget.

Council Actions:

- ❖ **Appoint Sara Mooney as Co-Treasurer** – Sara would work as Co-Treasurer with Joy Smolnisky. Christie moved, Donna seconded to appoint Sara Mooney as Co-Treasurer and to approve her for all Banking Authorizations appropriate for the Treasurer. Motion approved.
- ❖ **Open additional bank accounts** – Helena moved, Mark seconded to facilitate CLF's role as fiscal agent for a United Way grant received by the Early Learner Collaborative which includes opening a checking account. Motion approved. Helen moved, Mark seconded to facilitate CLF's role as fiscal agent for a Community Based Child Care grant received by Growing Roots which includes opening a checking account. Motion approved.
- ❖ **W/ELCA Checking Account** – Donna moved, Mark seconded to move W/ELCA's checking account from First Interstate to Black Hills Federal Credit Union. Motion approved.

Joy went over draft 2024 budget.

Special Agenda Items:

There were no special agenda items.

Unfinished Business:

- ❖ **Thrivent Choice** – November \$ 0.00, YTD - \$ 539.00
- ❖ **Amazon Smile** – November \$ 0.00, YTD - \$ 18.44
- ❖ **Lynn's Dakotamart Receipts** – November \$ 200.00, YTD - \$1,100.00
- ❖ **Sprinkler System Update** – Mark went over inspection report. There are items on it that need to be addressed.
- ❖ **Worship & Music Coordinator/Choir Director** – discussed employment status of some. John moved, Mark seconded to make Wendi Rusch (Youth Coordinator) and Jenn Doyle (Worship & Music Coordinator/Choir Director) employees and not contract. Motion approved.
- ❖ **Wednesday NightLife Worship** – Pastor Chuck Hazlett has offered to help with Wednesday Advent services in December
- ❖ **Growing Roots Update** – December 3rd they will be hosting a lantern walk, campfire and hot cocoa gathering. The congregation is invited to attend.
- ❖ **National Youth Gathering** – 14 youth attending – all deposits are paid
- ❖ **Other**

New Business

- ❖ **Membership changes** – Transfer Out: Steve & Susan Wood to First Methodist Church, Lebanon, Missouri
- ❖ **Advent Worship Services** – Will be looking for families to light the advent candles and do the readings
- ❖ **Delta Dental Bus** – Contract for 2024 – price has increased \$500 to \$3,000
- ❖ **2024 Budget** – Covered under Treasurer's Report
- ❖ **Potential Council Members for 2024** – discussed potential names for council members
- ❖ **Other**

Pastor's Report

- ❖ **Review Worship & Activities** – The Confirmation students want to meet every week instead of twice a month. Meetings will be at 5:30 PM and then once a month will meet on Sunday after worship for a longer period of time. Pastor also is going to start a middle school youth group similar to the high school group.
- ❖ **Worship Services** – December 21st, Longest Night at 6:30 PM; December 24th, Christmas Eve @ 9:30 AM, 4:30 & 9:30 PM

Committee & Ministry Team Reports:

- ❖ **Property**, Mark Thompson – Expressed gratitude for the members of the Property Committee.
- ❖ **Social Ministry**, Christie Behlings – Reviewed committee activity. Mark moved, Helen seconded to place a donation box at CLF for plastic film recycling. Motion approved.
- ❖ **Worship & Music**, Donna McConnell – Reviewed committee activity.

Council Highlights Cont'd next page

ELW DEVOTIONS FROM THE DAILY LECTIONARY

Advent 2

Thurs. December 1: Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19; Isaiah 4:2-6; Acts 1:12-17, 21-26
 Fri. December 2: Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19; Isaiah 30:19-26; Acts 13:16-25
 Sat. December 3: Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19; Isaiah 40: 1-11; John 1:19-28
 Sun. December 4: Isaiah 11:1-10; Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19, Romans 15:4-13; Matthew 3:1-12
 Mon. December 5: Psalm 21; Isaiah 24:1-16a; 1Thessalonians 4:1-12
 Tues. December 6: Psalm 21; Isaiah 41:14-20; Romans 15:14-21
 Wed. December 7: Psalm 21; Genesis 15:1-18; Matthew 12:33-37

Advent 3

Thurs. December 8: Psalm 146:5-10; Ruth 1:6-18; 2 Peter 3:1-10
 Fri. December 9: Psalm 146: 5-10; Ruth 4:13-17; 2 Peter 3:11-18
 Sat. December 10: Psalm 146: 5-10; 1 Samuel 2:1-8; Luke 3:1-18
 Sun. December 11: Isaiah 35:1-10; Psalm 146:5-10; James 5:7-10; Matthew 11:2-11
 Mon. December 12: Psalm 42; Isaiah 29:17-24; Acts 5:12-16
 Tues. December 13: Psalm 42; Ezekiel 47:1-12; Jude 17-25
 Wed. December 14: Psalm 42; Zechariah 8:1-17; Matthew 8:14-17, 28-34

Advent 4

Thurs. December 15: Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; 2 Samuel 7:1-17; Galatians 3:23-29
 Fri. December 16: Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; 2 Samuel 7:18-22; Galatians 4:1-7
 Sat. December 17: Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; 2 Samuel 7:23-29; John 3:31-36
 Sun. December 18: Isaiah 7:10-16; Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; Romans 1:1-7; Matthew 1:18-25
 Mon. December 19: 1 Samuel 2:1-10; Genesis 17:15-22; Galatians 4:8-20
 Tues. December 20: 1 Samuel 2:1-10; Genesis 21:1-21; Galatians 4:21-5:1
 Wed. December 21: 1 Samuel 2:1-10; Genesis 37:2-11; Matthew 1:1-17

Days Around Christmas

Thurs. December 22: Luke 1:46b-55; Isaiah 33:17-22; Revelation 22:6-7, 18-20
 Fri. December 23: Luke 1:46b-55; 2 Samuel 7:18, 23-29; Galatians 3:6-14
 Sat. December 24: Nativity of Our Lord I: Isaiah 9:2-7; Psalm 96; Titus 2:11-14
 Sun. December 25: Nativity of Our Lord II: Isaiah 62:6-12; Palm 97; Titus 3:4-7; Luke 2:1-20
 Sun. December 25: Nativity of Our Lord III: Isaiah 52:7-10; Psalm 98; Hebrews 1:1-12; John 1:1-14
 Mon. December 26: Psalm 148, Solomon 4:7-15; Acts 7:59-8:8;
 Tues. December 27: Psalm 148; Proverbs 8:22-31; 1 John 5:1-12
 Wed. December 28: Psalm 148; Isaiah 49:13-23; Matthew 18:1-14

Name of Jesus

Thurs. December 29: Psalm 20; Jeremiah 31:15-22; Luke 19:41-44
 Fri. December 30: Psalm 20; Isaiah 26:1-9; 2 Corinthians 4:16-18
 Sat. December 31: Psalm 20; 1 Kings 3:5-14; John 8:12-19
 Sun. January 1: Name of Jesus: Number 6:22-27; Psalm 8; Galatians 4:4-7; Luke 2:15-21
 Mon. January 2: Psalm 72; Genesis 12:1-7; Hebrews 11:1-12
 Tues. January 3: Psalm 72; Genesis 28:10-22; Hebrews 11:13-22
 Wed. January 4: Psalm 72; Exodus 3:1-5; Hebrews 11:23-31



Council Minutes Cont'd

Next Meeting: December 19, 2023:

Treats – Donna McConnell.
 Devotions – John Kirk.
 December 2023 Care & Share Calling Coordinator –
 _____.

Closing Prayer, Lord's Prayer & Adjournment

Donna McConnell, Council Secretary

CUSTER MEET & EAT

The monthly Meet & Eat will be held on **December 12th** **from 5 to 7 PM** at the Custer Community Church at 6th & Harney Street.

Gather for a meal with friends and neighbors.

No charge for the meal.
 Everyone is Welcome to attend



Custer Lutheran Fellowship, ELCA
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Custer. SD 57730

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Custer Lutheran Fellowship

Our Mission ... is to plant the word of God, nurture growth in children and adults, and scatter the seeds of joy and faith in a diverse community.

We envision Custer Lutheran Fellowship to be like the Black Hills themselves, an inviting community in which God's Spirit blows through people – like wind through the pine – life that is forever new! God's spirit inspires us to be:

A **worshipping** community, hearing the life-giving Word of God receiving Christ's very presence in the Sacraments, and raising our voices in joyful songs of praise and prayer;

A **growing** community, with building and grounds spacious enough for all;

An **intergenerational** community, nurturing children and youth, young adults, people in mid-life, and older people as one family of God;

A **learning** community, in which people of all ages take advantage of multiple opportunities to deepen their understanding of the grace and justice of God;

A **giving** community, generously offering our time, talent and treasure to support each other and share in Christ's ministry;

A **servicing** community, reaching beyond ourselves to stand with the poor, the sick, the hungry and the oppressed;

A **witnessing** community, eager to share with everyone the joy we have received from Christ.

***We believe in the Cross and
our risen Lord and
that through Christ
we have eternal life***

Our Bedrock Beliefs are...

We grow in faith through worship and sacraments

The Word of God is our hope, Support comes from within our family of believers who see and serve Jesus in others

Through prayer we evoke God's love and power as the Spirit intercedes for us "with sighs too deep for words to express"

In crisis God is our strength. He is all loving and accepting and He helps us through these times.

We have faith only through God's grace.

Our Core Values are:

*Faith, Family, Mission,
Service, Worship*



Ministering at Custer Lutheran Fellowship

Pastor: Shannon Witt

Office Manager: Mary Winter

Parish Nurse: Mary Klein

Custodian: Augie Heyne

Worship & Music Director:

Jennifer Doyle

Financial Secretary:

Janice Albers &

Steve Baldwin

Treasurer: Joy Smolnisky

Youth Coordinator: Wendi Rusch

Ministers: All Members of CLF!