



CURRENTS

FEBRUARY 2024

Reach Out , Share Christ with All

FROM PASTOR CHRIS

-Ash Valentine's Wednesday

February 14 is Valentines day. I know, you knew that. But it is also Ash Wednesday. While these two holidays may seem a strange juxtaposition, perhaps we can see them complementing each other in a strange and meaningful way.

During Ash Wednesday we gather in a solemn and humble start to a season of self-reflection. Many of us come forward to receive the mark of ashes on our forehead and hear those words "you are dust, and to dust you shall return." That reminder, somber as it, holds with it an amazing promise. But first, let's talk about Valentine's Day.

At Valentines Day we celebrate love. Some gather and give gifts reminding one another of the bonds of friendship and what a blessing it is to have such people in our lives. Others make reservations or cook and celebrate the companionship that they have in that one other person whom they are choosing to share this significant part of their lives with.

All love, we read in our scriptures, comes first from God who loves us. That love is shared and passed around through the ones close to us. This is how we share and shine Jesus' light and love in our lives.

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On Ash Wednesday, when that mark of ashes is made on our forehead, it is made in the shape of the cross. That cross is the reminder and the symbol of Jesus' victory over death. So even as we hear those words "to dust you shall return" we remember, because of that cross, that is not the end of the story. Yes, we are and will be dust, but Jesus' love extends beyond that dust, beyond that reality to that kingdom of heaven that is both now and yet to come.

After those ashes are imposed, we come to the table for Communion. There we hear and experience the promise of God saying to us, "I love you." "I know you, your whole story, all your faults, your finiteness, your ashy-ness. And yet, you are beautiful because you are exactly that. You are beautiful because you are mine. You are beautifully beloved, forgiven and called children of God."

God makes beautiful things out of ash and dust. You are a beautiful thing. And Jesus will continue to love you and call you to be his kingdom people in the world – now and unto eternity.

Come on in to Church this Valentines Day and receive a valentine from God – a reminder of the love God has for you – a love that endures no matter what, through all things, and forever.

-Pastor Chris

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION

All HCLC members are encouraged to attend the Annual Meeting of the Congregation on Sunday, February 4th at about 11 a.m.—following our 10 a.m. worship service. Please note there is only one service scheduled for that day. The annual meeting for the Halfway Creek Cemetery Association will meet immediately following the congregation meeting. We thank the current Vision Board Members for sharing their time and talents with us this past year and for the many prayers said for our HCLC family and community. May God continue to bless you all your days.

2023 VISION BOARD

Gaye Johnson, President

gayemj3@gmail.com, 608-780-5179

Kari Washburn Vice President

kari.washburn@yahoo.com

Andrea Baxter, co-Secretary

baxtera42@gmail.com

Amy Noel, co-Secretary

noelprairie@icloud.com

Mike Martin, Treasurer

marty495268@gmail.com

Diane Jostad—608-526-3597

Patti Happel—patiszoo@yahoo.com

Please contact the vision board with any input you may have. Vision Board meetings are scheduled for the second Thursday of each month.

Your giving helps with our mission - *Reaching Out to Share Christ with All*

December	Actual	Budget	Y-T-D Actual	Y-T-D Budget
General Fund	22,752.50	19,186.00	196,674.00	230,240.00
Expense	18,697.80	19,186.00	220,369.00	230,240.00
Debt Reduction	210.00		54,877.00	

Giving at HCLC has been made even easier. You can now go directly to Paypal and search for Halfway Creek Lutheran church. You may also click or scan the QR code! Thank you for helping us further our mission.



Noisy offering for February will be donated to Holmen's Hope! In January we collected a total of \$148.30 for our HCLC quilting ministry! The quilters will start meeting this month!

VISION BOARD MEETING

January 11, 2024

6:00 p.m.

MEMBERS Present: Pastor Chris Sesvold, Gaye Johnson, Amy Noel, Kari Washburn, Patti Happel, Andrea Baxter and Mike Martin

Members Absent: Diane Jostad

Call to Order @ 6:00PM.

Approval of Agenda. **Kari made a motion to approve the agenda. Amy 2nd. Motion passed.**

Action since last meeting: Patti made a motion to approve the December 17, 2023 VB meeting minutes. Kari 2nd. Motion passed.

Pastor's Report

1. December is always a busy month with Advent, Xmas program led by children and Xmas eve services. It also brought a lot of sadness in the loss of Raymond Lee.
2. Looking Forward: Bishop worshipping with us on January 14th, Deacon from Sugar Creek Bible Camp will be here on January 21st and the Annual Meeting on February 4th. On vacation, February 11th and Pastor Mark Jolivet will be leading worship. Pizza fundraiser starts now, with youth making pizzas on February 7th.
3. Council Development Retreat at our Savior's in West Salem on February 17th. Mark your calendars.

Finance Team

1. Pop can money is again going into the Youth Fund. End of year Thrivent Account total is \$29,739.11.

End of year financials:

1. Total Revenue of \$263,084.80
2. Total other financial Sources used \$12,662.06 (mostly Thrivent funds)
3. Total Expenditures of \$220,368.99

4. Total Other Expenditures of 60,451.06. These are pass through expenses which also have been counted as revenue. It includes a generous gift to debt reduction.

5. BALANCE of -\$5073.20

2. Amy made a motion to accept the financial report as presented. Patti 2nd. Motion passed.

3. Noisy offering: January - Quilting Ministry, February - Holmen's Hope, in March and April - Youth going to National Gathering and their mission project (Hurricane Relief Kits)
4. 2024 Budget: Planning for conversation with congregation on January 14th between services. May need to repeat on January 21st if low participation on the 14th. Discussed which documents should be in the annual report which includes the proposed three budgets (four column document).
5. Should we consider a Combined Capital Campaign to cover cost of church repairs and working down the mortgage?

Property Team

1. Discussed needed repairs on the church and prioritized the windows. Unfortunately, no financial resources are available right now to do or plan anything.
2. **Kari made a motion to increase the rent at the parsonage to \$1975 per month beginning March 1, 2024 to cover cost of lawn mowing which was originally agreed upon to be done by tenant. Andrea 2nd. Motion passed.**

New Business

1. Reviewed current VB nominations and gave recommendations on other possible candidates.
2. Created annual meeting agenda. Amy will send to Shari for inclusion in the annual report.

Patti made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Kari 2nd. Motion passed. Closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Next Vision Board Meeting will be determined with new Vision Board Members.

Super Bowl Pizza Fundraiser

Back by popular demand and just in time for National Pizza Day (Feb 9th) and the Super Bowl (Feb 11th)! Order your 14 inch take and bake pizza today! Pick up options are: Wednesday, February 7th from 6:30-7:30 p.m. at Journey Lutheran Church or after Worship at HCLC on Sunday, February 11th.

Thank you for supporting the Super Bowl Pizza Fundraiser!
Use the QR code below or the link above to order online!



YOUTH UPDATE

HCLC youth will be making pizzas on Wednesday, February 7th at Journey Lutheran Church. Check with Pastor Chris about arrival time.

Wednesdays during Lent, the youth will be helping to serve dinner and clean up afterwards. Congregation members will be providing the meal each week, and we'll have a free will offering for the youth and youth gathering participants.

Youth Gathering plans are coming along! This month we'll be securing our travel arrangements. We'll be traveling by Amtrak from La Crosse to New Orleans. We found out we'll only have a 5 minute walk to our motel from the station in New Orleans. Thanks to everyone who has been supporting us so far. We'll have more fundraisers this coming spring!

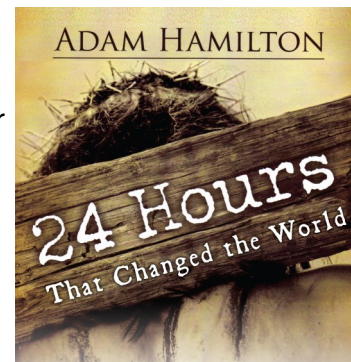
Youth gathering meetings are scheduled for 9:30 a.m.: 2/25; 4/14; 5/19.

LENT 2024

Our HCLC Lenten season is coming together with a new study book and Wednesday services!

Wednesday nights will begin at 5:45 p.m. with a meal provided by congregation members and served by the Confirmation Students. There will be a free will offering for the meal and money will go towards the youth account and Youth Gathering trip.

Worship will begin at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday nights and focus around the book "24 Hours that Changed the World" by Adam Hamilton. The book is not necessary for worship, but some people like to have it for additional reading or note taking. We'll put in an order for books the first week of February. If you would like one for \$12.50, please sign-up in the gathering space or call the office.



Sunday worship at 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. during Lent will also share the message from "24 Hours that Changed the World" by Adam Hamilton.

Schedule for Lent

Ash Wednesday, February 14 - light meal at 5:45 p.m.; Worship at 6:30 p.m.

Sundays during Lent - Worship at 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

Wednesdays, Feb 21 - March 20 - Dinner at 5:45 p.m.; Worship at 6:30 p.m.

Sign up with friends to provide a meal at worship on Wednesday evenings during Lent. Clipboards are in the Gathering Space for meal sign-up and book orders or call the office.

HALFWAY CREEK LUTHERAN CHURCH CEMETERY ASSOCIATION



Prayers continue for the Raymond Lee family during this difficult time. The cemetery trustees also ask for prayers as the association moves forward filling the vacancy on the cemetery board. Mark Witte and Dan Brudahl are working hard with the Scholze family organizing cemetery papers and digitizing maps. If you feel called to help, please talk to Mark (608-317-0183) or Dan (608-526-6950).

We will meet for the cemetery annual meeting following the regular church's annual meeting on February 4, 2024.

Thank you.
Ruth Scholze

WITH SYMPATHY

We continue to pray for the family and friends of Mike Nedoba. A celebration of Mike's life and funeral was held at Halfway Creek on Tuesday, January 30th. Thank you to all who attended and helped in any way.

We pray for the family and friends of Judy Campbell, who was a member of HCLC many years ago. Her funeral was held at HCLC on Wednesday, January 31st. Her family was so thankful for being warmly welcomed at Halfway Creek.

QUILTERS

Quilters will start meeting on Tuesday, February 6 at 9:00 a.m. and will continue to meet Tuesdays through the end of March! Interested in helping? Meet us at church!

BIBLE STUDY

The Bible Study group will meet on Thursday, February 15 at 9:30 a.m.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday school students are singing once a month at HCLC and helping pastor with Thanksgiving for Baptism by giving Baptismal water high fives to everyone. They even participated in worship with Bishop Felix and Deacon Stephanie. Way to go kids—keep praising the Lord!! This month Sunday School families will meet for the 10 Commandments Milestone lesson on February 18. Regular Sunday School days are Feb. 4th with Confirmation students during annual meeting, Feb. 11th and Feb. 25th.



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

If your birthday is missing, please notify the office.

1	12	19	28
Alexa Shisler	Donald Graham	Vivianna Yahnke-Kolbo	Josie Happel
2	13	20	29
LeRoy Holley	David Bringe	Heidi Rosenow	Samantha Oseseck
7	14	21	Sara Oseseck
Lee Thoma	Erin Bringe	Megan Page	
8	15	22	
Judy Casberg	Cassie Leiby	Maison Payne	
10	16	23	
Nelson Holley	Whitney Happel	Ellie Adam	
Matthew Tolvstad	Susan Jostad	24	
11	17	25	
Bear Gates	Savannah Horstman	William Miller	
Berkley Gates	Jesse Plomedahl	Noah Oines	
Jodi Lee	18	26	
Lee Lohrentz	Jaxson Happel	Bambi Daily	
Dante McDowell			
Sonja Nelson			
Matthew Page			



We pray for ... the family of Judy Campbell, the family of Mike Nedoba, Marjorie Lee, Jean Latham, Ed Scholze, Bob Loper, Joan Vaughn, Bridget Ferk, Thelma Severson, Lisa Herrera Evans, Katie Wier, Phoebe Kitzke, Gayle Kuespert, Beulah Sanders, Cary Heyer, Eric Erdman, Dawson Reed, Jenny Lee, Mary Dokkebakken, Karla Johnson, Alice Fonfara, Marie Jezova, Coats family

SERVING AND WORSHIP

		SEXTON	ALTAR GUILD	OFFERING COUNTERS
FEB 4	10:00	Mike Martin	Carrie Nicole	Rhonda Sonja
FEB 11	8:30	Stan Schwier	Bette P	
	10:30			Bette P Susan J
FEB 18	8:30	Archie A.	Nancy H.	
	10:30			Jodi Eide
FEB 25	8:30	David Chase	Barb H Bette P	
	10:30			Diane Mike

Volunteer to help at Worship

Use [Sign-up Genius](#) button on the website or E-News; call the office or email assistant@halfwaycreek.org.

Giftng your time is important to help meet the needs of this congregation at each service.

Thank you so much for sharing your time and talents!

Thank you!

Acolytes play an important role at worship from lighting candles to helping Pastor with communion! We'd love to have you join our team of volunteers!



Halfway Creek Lutheran Church
608-526-3701
www.halfwaycreek.org

WORSHIP

8:30 and 10:30 a.m.
Education Hour 9:30 a.m.

OFFICE HOURS

Monday—By Appointment

Tuesday—9:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.

Wednesday—9:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.

Thursday—9:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.

Friday—Closed

Saturday—Closed

Sunday—Worship

PASTORAL CARE

If the need arises for Pastoral Care,
please contact Pastor Chris at
608-526-3701 or 608-397-1578.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Find us on Facebook, Instagram,
YouTube and our website

@halfwaycreeklutheranchurchholmen
#halfwaycreeklutheranchurch
#reachoutsharechristwithall

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