



## **CURRENTS**

DECEMBER 2024

### ***Reach Out , Share Christ with All***

Dearest Halfway Creek family,

Welcome to December!! I don't know about you, but I'm having a hard time believing that we are already nearing the end of this year, with excitement and anticipation of Advent and Christmas.

Christmas is known as "The Most Wonderful Time of the Year", and with good reason.....holiday parties, get togethers, family and friends. However, these things, on top of already busy schedules or life struggles, might leave you feeling a bit overwhelmed. I would suggest we remind ourselves to be intentional about gratitude. Let us remember to thank God for the good things happening in our lives, whether big or small. I would like to challenge each of us to make a list of things we are grateful for. Each day, let us add something to our lists, no matter how significant or insignificant it may seem. At the end of the month, let us look back and remember the good we have been given, and thank God for all of it.

Speaking of being grateful, I would like to thank all of you who are working to keep our congregation running smoothly, as we are navigating church life without a full-time pastor. Employees and volunteers, we wouldn't be where we are without your dedication!! If any of you feel inclined to help, in any capacity, please reach out to the office, or any Vision Board members. We would welcome your time and talents.

To end this note, I would like to share a prayer I recently read, that was shared by the Women of the ELCA.

*December 2024 Currents*

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“All-Creating God, we thank you for the gift of traditions and festivities that help us remember the deeper meaning of the holy season of Advent. We pray that you replace our anxieties with the calm and the strength of your Holy Spirit. Fill us with energy, O Spirit, to do those things which you would have us do, and teach us to watch well, O Father God, for the One whose second coming we await, Jesus Christ our Lord, in whose name we pray. Amen”

Blessings to you all!!

Patti Happel

HCLC Vision Board Co-President

**Our Advent and Christmas Schedule:**

**Sunday, Dec. 8 at 10:00 a.m.**—Multi-generational Christmas Program

Led by the Worship Team, Sunday school - including special music from our youth.  
Pastor Wayne Van Kauwenbergh presiding.

**Sunday, Dec. 22 at 10:00 a.m.**- Blue Christmas Worship; Pastor Marvin Jonasen presiding.

**Sunday, Dec. 15 at 10:00 a.m.**—Pastor Carol Garman presiding

**Sunday, Dec. 24 at 2:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m.**—Christmas Eve Candlelight Services with Pastor Carol Garman.

**Sunday, Dec. 29 at 10:00 a.m.**—Lessons and Carols Worship Service; Pastor Marvin Jonasen presiding.

*May the miracle of the first Christmas fill your heart with joy!*

*Merry Christmas! - Halfway Creek Lutheran Church*

**HOLIDAY OFFICE HOURS**

The HCLC office will be open the following days during the weeks of Christmas and New Years.

**Monday December 23: 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.**

**Tuesday, December 31: 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.**

**Thursday, January 2: 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.**



## BLESSING OF THE QUILTS



These beautiful quilts adorned the pews on November 10th for a special blessing and send off to local organizations. May these quilts bring warmth and comfort and God's love to those who receive them. Thank you to everyone who participates in this ministry at Halfway Creek.

The quilters will meet again starting in February. In the



meantime, there are people working behind the scenes cutting fabric and sewing together the tops.

If you would be interested in helping prior to February, please let Nancy Holley know, or contact the office.

*Pictured to the left is Nancy loading up the quilts. To the right, Simon is enjoying the comfort and peace these quilts offer. Blessings!*



## BIBLE STUDY MEETS DECEMBER 19

Our monthly Bible study will continue on Thursday, December 19 at 9:30 AM.

We're working our way through Unafraid by Adam Hamilton. We'd love to have you join this group of learning and faith sharing! Contact the office or Nancy Holley for more information.

## HALFWAY CREEK LUTHERAN CHURCH CEMETERY NEWS

The Halfway Creek Lutheran Church Cemetery totally understands how difficult the holidays can be for families missing their loved ones. Christmas is all about God's love coming in the form of a small baby to bring hope to a lonely and broken world. If you're grieving or know someone who is struggling this season, look to the true story of Christmas and find hope. . . hope God gave us in the baby, our redeemer, Jesus Christ!

If you are planning ahead for the New Year, you can contact any trustee and discuss options. A single gravesite may be used for up to four cremations or one full casket burial. No more than one monument shall be placed on a single gravesite. If you have any questions, please reach out to one of the trustees: **Ruth Scholze (608-797-9391), Mark Witte (608-317-0183), and Daniel Brudahl (608-526-6950).**

God promises to watch over us (Psalm 121:5-8) and strengthen us (Isaiah 41:10). He will "wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain" (Revelation 21:4). Let God's word fill you with hope this Christmas. Enjoy the song by Matthew West that reminds us:

*You're still the hope of Christmas  
You're still the light when the world looks dark  
You're still the hope of Christmas  
And You're still the hope of my heart*

Merry Christmas!

## THANK YOU WAYNE!

We'd like to take a moment to recognize Wayne Atchley! Wayne has spent many hours at church after a power outage disrupted our Wi-Fi adapters and left us without reliable internet for our worship computer and livestream. Wayne has volunteered his time and expertise to help troubleshoot the system and get it working again. And he has plans to continue to improve the system. Thank you Wayne for supporting our ministry and sharing your gifts with your church family, we are truly grateful for your help!

## 2024 VISION BOARD

### Co-Presidents

Patti Happel  
patiszoo@yahoo.com  
608-317-9525

Amy Noel  
noelprairie@icloud.com  
608-386-0299

Bette Pedretti  
bettepedretti@yahoo.com  
608-526-3241

Kari Washburn  
kari.washburn@yahoo.com  
608-790-7487

### Treasurer

Carrie Payne  
payne.carrie@hotmail.com  
608-790-4401

Nicole Stumlin  
bigfarmer053@yahoo.com  
608-769-3642

### Co-Secretaries

Andrea Baxter  
baxtera42@gmail.com  
608-738-3896

### Members

Nancy Holley  
5445nanh@gmail.com  
608-526-3418

*Please contact the vision board with any input you may have.*

*Next Vision Board meeting is on Thursday, December 12 at 6 PM*

**Noisy offering:** In November, our offering was gifted to Wafer in collaboration with Holmen's FFA and our food drive. Total donated was **168.94** as of 11/17.  
In December, our noisy offering will be supporting ELCA Good Gifts. We'll combine the noisy offering with the money donated from the ornaments on our tree. Thank you for supporting this ministry!

**Year End Contributions:** As a reminder, contributions for 2024 should be post-marked or at the HCLC office by December 31, 2024, **by Noon**. Thank you for your generosity and continued support of your church.

**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.



HALFWAY CREEK LUTHERAN CHURCH  
VISION BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
November 21, 2024

**Present:** Patti Happel, Amy Noel, Bette Pedretti, Carrie Payne, Kari Washburn and Nancy Holley

**Absent:** Andrea Baxter and Nicole Stumlin

**Guests:** Jodi Anderson

Call to order at 6:02PM. Devotion led by Amy Noel

Approval of Agenda: Motion made and 2nd to approve revised agenda. Motion passed.

**Actions since last meeting:**

**10/23/24** - Approval of October 10th Vision Board meeting minutes via email.

**Financial Report received**

We had a 2025 budget planning meeting on November 2, 2024. Jodi followed up on the few recommendations that we had and presented the updated proposed budget. Motion made and 2nd to approve the proposed 2025 budget to be presented at the annual meeting in February. Motion passed.

With the generosity of recent donations, we have been able to get our mortgage under \$200,000. THANK YOU!

No transfer of funds from Thrivent during October. Offering and rental income show a positive October income of \$999.51 after expenses.

**Noisy Offering:**

November - Wafer Food Pantry in partnership with Holmen High School FFA.

December - ELCA Good Gifts program. This is an opportunity to give toward buying an animal, a hygiene kit, or stock a backpack with food in nations all over the world.

January- Unsheltered in our community with a focus supporting the ministry of Karuna House in La Crosse. <https://www.karunahousing.org/>

**OLD BUSINESS:**

Journey Lutheran contacted us to participate in another pizza fundraiser. Jodie Eide has volunteered to coordinate the HCLC contribution. Betty and Carrie are willing to apply for a Thrivent grant to help with expenses.

Planning a fun video that will be available on Christmas Day focused on a favorite Christmas story and music. Will record a story with the kids on December 8 before Jesus's Birthday Party.

Will plan to decorate the Christmas tree during December 1st. Everyone is welcome so it is ready for the first Sunday of Advent at the 10AM service that day.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Annual meeting is the first Sunday of February. Please get any articles/information you want in the report to Shari as soon as possible.

A generous member is sponsoring a tree for Holmen Jingle Fest on December 7th. She is asking for help in decorating it. Amy will reach out to set a date and invite the SS/confirmation kids to help.

Did some trouble shooting on identifying resources for Shari when issues come up at the church. Without a pastor, she has had to take on more responsibility. We certainly appreciate her effort, but recognize that as a congregation we need to help. Thank you, Shari!!

We will add a new role to the weekly worship volunteers, Pastor's host. The role will include welcoming the pastor, getting them set up for services and ensuring that all the volunteer spots are filled. The VB has volunteered for the month of December. Will seek other volunteers going forward.

A special thank you goes out to Wayne A. for all of the time he has spent working on the church Wifi following what we think might have been a lightning strike.

### **FUTURE BUSINESS**

VB will develop a plan to update our membership roles of voting members.

Each VB member received the brochure "Holy conversations - Options for congregations considering a vital and sustainable future." Who might we recommend to be on a committee that explores this and provides a recommendation?

We have been approached by one of the local funeral homes offering to provide an educational session on funeral planning. Bette will investigate this outreach opportunity further.

Sound system fundraiser - SIMS will be back to troubleshoot the microphones we are having trouble with.

Recruiting to vacant VB seats. We have up to two spots to fill. Kari will be stepping down.

Closing with the Lord's Prayer

Adjournment at 7:32

Next meeting(s): Thursday, December 12, 2024 @ 6pm

**THANK YOU**

Halfway Creek Lutheran Church received a very generous donation from Richard and Ruth Huston in the amount of \$42,288.83 to be applied to the principal in reducing the debt for the church. They also mailed us a poster to display and encourage others to do the same “to enable the church to keep functioning”. Richard and Ruth were married at HCLC and Rich’s Grandfather help build the church. “So it means a lot to us to keep the church working in that community in memory of Edna and Charles Huston and Raymond Lee.”

Thank you to Richard and Ruth, we are grateful for your support of Halfway Creek Lutheran Church and our mission to “Reach out and share Christ with all”. May God continue to bless you and keep you.

**FINANCIAL UPDATE ENDING 10/31/24**

	<u>Total Offering</u>	<u>Rent Income</u>	<u>Expenditures</u>	<u>Difference</u>
January-24	\$10,466.00	\$2,050.00	\$17,745.16	-\$5,229.16
February-24	\$15,122.75	\$2,050.00	\$19,806.04	-\$2,633.29
March-24	\$16,901.55	\$2,050.00	\$19,390.50	-\$438.95
April-24	\$11,949.00	\$2,050.00	\$17,451.95	-\$3,452.95
May-24	\$11,480.00	\$2,050.00	\$20,764.22	-\$7,234.22
June-24	\$11,109.00	\$2,050.00	\$19,921.05	-\$6,762.05
July-24	\$13,292.00	\$2,150.00	\$18,118.25	-\$2,676.25
August-24	\$11,847.00	\$2,150.00	\$20,309.72	-\$6,312.72
September-24	\$12,034.00	\$2,150.00	\$18,417.91	-\$4,233.91
October-24	\$12,713.93	\$2,150.00	\$13,864.42	\$999.51
November-24				\$0.00
December-24				\$0.00
	\$126,915.23	\$20,900.00	\$185,789.22	-\$37,973.99

\*Amount owed to Dedicated Funds - \$13,558.36

\*\*Amount owed to Thrivent Funds - \$30,233.94



## **GIFT CARDS THAT GIVE BACK**

Have you purchased gift cards from church or local organizations in the past? That program is still happening!! When you purchase physical gift cards or e-cards from RaiseRight (Scrip Cards), you are raising money for the organization you choose like Halfway Creek. You can use these gift cards to make purchases for your household needs like groceries, cleaning supplies, and clothes or give as gifts.

To set up your account and order using the RaiseRight app on your phone or order from your computer just click here: [\*\*Halfway Creek RaiseRight Quick Link\*\*](#)

You may also go to the website [raiseright.com](https://raiseright.com) and use our Enrollment Code: 8973A3374414L

If you have any questions, or need help getting started, give Shari a call in the office at 608-526-3701.

## **CARING TREE**

We are participating in the Caring Tree in conjunction with Holmen Lutheran Church. Tags are on the Christmas Tree in the fellowship area for the Caring Tree. This helps those children in the Holmen Area School District who would otherwise not receive presents.

Each child receives a clothing gift (green tag) and a toy gift (red tag.) The sign-up sheet is on the clipboard by the tree. After taking a tag, please write down your name and phone number by the tag number on the sheet. All presents should be wrapped and returned to HCLC by Sunday, December 8th. You may return presents to Holmen Lutheran directly but please note that on the sheet or text/call me so I am aware at 608-526-3241. Further instructions are on the tags.

Thanks, Bette Pedretti

## **BLUE CHRISTMAS DECEMBER 22**

On Sunday, December 22, we will be having a special Blue Christmas liturgy at our 10 am worship service. A Blue Christmas Service is a time when we gather together to worship and to acknowledge those “blue” feelings we can get around the holidays. The worship is planned to support each other as we experience grief and loss, but also to move us toward the hope that comes with the birth of Jesus Christ. A Blue Christmas service is a wonderful time of rest and encouragement for those who have lost a loved one, especially recently, for those who are struggling with their faith, or for those who are simply stressed out by the holidays. There will be a time for individuals to receive individual prayers and the laying on of hands during the service.

## **IN THE SPIRIT—THANK YOU**

Thank you to Rhonda and Greg Britton for donating the two wreaths decorating the outside of our church building! The wreaths came from The Christmas Farm! Thanks again for sharing the Christmas spirit!



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## **ELECTRONIC GIVING**

On the next page is an electronic giving form for Halfway Creek Lutheran Church. If you currently give electronically and would like to increase your giving, you will need to fill out the authorization form to update the amount you would like to give. If you would like to start giving electronically (funds will go directly from your bank account to HCLC), fill out the authorization form and return to the HCLC office.

If you have any questions about electronic giving, please contact Jodi Anderson at [jodi.anderson@halfwaycreek.org](mailto:jodi.anderson@halfwaycreek.org) or call the church office.

## ELECTRONIC GIVING AUTHORIZATION FORM

Halfway Creek Lutheran Church

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY	ENVELOPE/DONOR #	DATE
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Effective date of authorization: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

Type of authorization:  New authorization  Change donation amount  Change donation date  Change banking information  Discontinue electronic donation

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF FIRST DONATION: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

FREQUENCY OF DONATION:

- Weekly – Mondays
- Weekly -- Fridays
- Monthly on the 1<sup>st</sup>
- Monthly on the 15<sup>th</sup>
- Semi-Monthly on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>

FUNDS:	AMOUNTS:
<input type="checkbox"/> General	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Debt Reduction	\$ _____
TOTAL	\$ _____

Please debit my donation from my (check one):

Savings Account (contact your financial institution for Routing #)

Checking Account (attach a voided check below)

Routing Number: \_\_\_\_\_

*Valid Routing # must start with 0, 1, 2, or 3*

Account Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**Your Name** \_\_\_\_\_ 1035  
**Your Address** \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

PAY TO THE ORDER OF \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ DOLLARS

**Your Bank Name** \_\_\_\_\_

MEMO \_\_\_\_\_

⑆ 123456789 ⑆ 987654321 ⑆ 1035 ⑆

Routing Number      Account Number      Check Number

I authorize the above organization to process debit entries to my account. I understand that this authority will remain in effect until I provide reasonable notification to terminate the authorization.

Authorized Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*If using a checking account, please attach a voided check at the bottom of this page.*

## SUNDAY SCHOOL & CONFIRMATION

Hello Sunday School families! This year Sunday School is open to all ages from Pre-K to 8th Grade! We will be meeting the following Sundays for practice: **Dec. 1st at 9:15 a.m.** and **Dec. 8th at 8:45 a.m.** Students and families are also invited to help decorate the church at 8:30 a.m. on Dec. 1st.



## CONFIRMATION WEDNESDAYS

In addition to the Sunday option for confirmation (above), students may meet on select Wednesdays each month. In December, we'll gather on the 18th at 6:30 PM. Classes will be one hour, and parents can pick up kids around 7:30 PM.

Students and families are also invited to help decorate the church at 8:30 a.m. on Dec. 1st.

## SUPPLY PASTORS & PROGRAMS

Thank you for welcoming all of our supply pastors and speakers we've had the past month! In November we welcomed Ron Christensen, Pastor Wayne and Pastor Garman along with Todd Trautmann from Thrivent.



Pastor Wayne



Pastor Garman



Jeanne welcoming Todd Trautmann,  
Thrivent

## PASTORAL CARE

If you or a family member are in need of pastoral care, don't hesitate to call the office during business hours (608-526-3701) or Patti Happel after hours (608-317-9525). We will help you with your needs or direct you to one of our on-call pastors. We are grateful to have local pastors serving us in emergencies. If you have any questions at all, do not hesitate to call. God bless you.

### Support ELCA Good Gifts this Christmas!

**We have ELCA Good Gifts ornaments on our caring tree in the gathering space for you to purchase and take home. These gifts will support families globally!**

**MERRY CHICK-MAS**

Shop ELCA Good Gifts this Christmas for more than 60 different gifts that grow the church, fight hunger and transform lives.

Chicks \$10

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

[ELCA.org/goodgifts](http://ELCA.org/goodgifts)

1. If you purchase an ornament (bees, goat, chicks, etc.), take your ornament off the tree, and then place the money in the envelope (checks made out to HCLC).
2. Once the ornaments have all been purchased, we will have reached our goal of \$525! The money will be sent to ELCA Good Gifts.
3. If you choose, you can buy an ornament for a friend or relative and take a card from the basket to send them—letting them know you bought it in their name. What a great gift!
4. Have fun with this amazing ministry. Please talk to Bette if you have any questions.

## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

*If your birthday is missing, please notify the office.*

<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>22</b>
Justin Happel	Mason Dokkebaken	Mark Thompson	Alayna Ruhbusch
<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>23</b>
Maddy Arendt	Trent Gander	Cami Hill	David Erdman
<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>24</b>
Matthew Payne	Troy Fiers	Deb Smith	Rebecca Moss
<b>4</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>27</b>
Alice Jackson	Jon Halverson	Lindsay Tuquero	Emily Arnold
<b>5</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>28</b>
Patty Brandau	Megan Sacia	Daniel Daily	Tilly Kinsman
Rita Johnson	<b>13</b>	Michelle Olson	<b>29</b>
Cameron Legrave	Rick Shisler	Owen Bringe	Elsie Barbour
<b>6</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>31</b>
Laura Oines	Katie Yahnke	Chad Brandau	Jacob Thornton
Esther Smith	<b>15</b>	Shannon Jandt	Wayne Atchley
<b>7</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>21</b>	
Jodi Eide	James Bringe	Kelly Anderson	
Adam Thoma			



**We pray** for friends and family of those we have lost this past year:  
*Ron Hanson, Rod Sutherland, Curt Nedoba, Judy Campbell, Mike Nedoba, Raymond Lee, Marie Jezova*

**We pray** for *Perry Voshage, Owen Gilbertson, Adisyn Rhyme, Kannon Happel, Marjorie Lee, Jean Latham, 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 Dokkebaken, Karla Johnson, Alice Fonfara, the Coats family.*

## SERVING AND WORSHIP

		SEXTON	ALTAR GUILD	OFFERING COUNTERS
<b>DEC 1</b>	10:00	Stan Schwier	Carrie Nicole	Rhonda Sonja
<b>DEC 8</b>	10:00	Mike Martin	Bette P	Bette P Susan J
<b>DEC 15</b>	10:00	Archie	Nancy H.	Jodi Eide
<b>DEC 22</b>	10:00	David C.	Bette	Mike
<b>DEC 24</b>	2:00		Bette	
	4:00	Archie	Bette	
<b>DEC 29</b>	10:00	Archie	Kari W.	Mike

Check out our Google Calendar now on the home page of our [website!](#)

### Volunteer to help at Worship

Use [Sign-up Genius](#) button on the website or E-News; call the office or email [assistant@halfwaycreek.org](mailto: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 are so important to our worship volunteer team! We are looking for more people to learn how to help in this area! Sign-up in the office or email Shari: [assistant@halfwaycreek.org](mailto:assistant@halfwaycreek.org).

Halfway Creek Lutheran Church  
608-526-3701  
[www.halfwaycreek.org](http://www.halfwaycreek.org)

**WORSHIP**

Sundays at 10:00 AM

**OFFICE HOURS \***

**Monday—Closed**

**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**

\*see article for holiday hours

**PASTORAL CARE**

If the need arises for Pastoral Care,  
please contact Patti at 608-317-9525.

**SOCIAL MEDIA**

Find us on Facebook, Instagram,  
YouTube and our website

@halfwaycreeklutheranchurchholmen

#halfwaycreeklutheranchurch

#reachoutsharechristwithall

Halfway Creek Lutheran Church  
W6016 County Road W  
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