



CURRENTS

FEBRUARY 2025

Reach Out , Share Christ with All

Dearest Halfway Creek family,

Welcome to February!! The month that is commonly known for its reflection of love (Valentine's Day).

Valentine's Day is typically a sweet day, filled with pink and red hearts, boxes of chocolates, and beautiful flowers. Children may craft fun boxes to collect valentines from classmates, while we adults might plan a special dinner or exchange gifts with our one and only. However, "Love" means so much more than just the love we share with our significant others – love for (and from) God, family unity, forgiveness, compassion and kindness all fall into this category – with God being the ultimate Valentine, who loved us so much that He gave His Son, Jesus, to die for our sins.

Let us all remember to take the time this month (and don't forget about the rest of the year), to be intentional about, and focus on appreciating the love all around us, and being the love for others. God, spouses, significant others, family, friends and neighbors, as well as those around the world that we haven't met. Kindness, compassion, and unity are a reflection of the love one can share.

Colossians 3:12-14

¹² Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. ¹³ Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. ¹⁴ And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Blessings and Love ~

Patti Happel

HIGHLIGHTS FOR FEBRUARY

Sunday, February 2, 2025—10:00 a.m. worship with Pastor Tara Shilts
Following worship please plan to stay for

- **the Annual Congregational Meeting**
- **the Annual Cemetery Meeting**
- **Congregational Potluck**

Sunday, February 2 and 9, 2025—Operation Happy Mail. We'll be writing letters to those from our local National Guard who are deployed.

Tuesday, February 4—Quilters Group meets 845 AM

Wednesday, February 5—Super Bowl Pizza fundraiser at Journey Lutheran.
Volunteer from 5-8 PM. Pick up orders starting at 6 PM. Orders may also be picked up at Halfway Creek on Sunday, Feb. 9 after worship.

Sunday, February 9—worship with Pastor Carol Garman; Laurie Noelke on piano

Sunday, February 16— welcome Ron Christensen to worship

SUPPLY PASTORS

Thank you for welcoming all of our supply pastors and speakers we've had the past month! In January we welcomed Pastor Arends; Pastor Kathryn Thompson from LuMin La Crosse Campus Ministry; Ron Christensen and Jason Knipe.



Ron Christensen



Pastor Kathryn Thompson



Jason Knipe with Patti,
Laurie Noelke, and Amy

HALFWAY CREEK LUTHERAN CHURCH
VISION BOARD MEETING MINUTES

January 9, 2025

Present: Patti Happel, Amy Noel, Bette Pedretti, Andrea Baxter, Kari Washburn, Carrie Payne Nicole Stumlin and Nancy Holley

Guests: Jodi Anderson, Shari Ireland and Lynn Wenger

Call to order at 6:01PM. Prayers led by Patti Happel which included the people experiencing the wildfires in California.

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

Actions since last meeting:

- **12/16/24** - Approval of December 12, 2024 Vision Board meeting minutes via email.

Office Update (to replace Pastor's Report)

- New members: Wayne and Jean Atchley and Bob Cotterl. WELCOME!! In weekly announcements, please ask visitors to fill out a pew card.
- Baptism on March 16th. Pastor Arends will be presiding.
- Sunday Live Stream is working GREAT! Thanks Aaron Barlow for doing the update.
- WI-FI network in the church is very strong. Thanks Wayne Atchley! Password is located on the table in the welcome area!
- Annual Report is in progress.
- Working on options for a calling tree to notify the congregation of urgent messages, i.e. Cancellation of services due to weather.
- Super Bowl pizza fundraiser - Will need volunteers to help make pizzas on Feb. 5, 2024!

Financial Report received

- With the generosity of recent donations, our mortgage is \$183,791.68. THANK YOU!
- No transfer of funds from Thrivent or Designated Funds into General Checking during December.
- Motion made and seconded to pay lay ministerial support \$225 (includes mileage). Consideration will be given to special events occurring the day they are here. Motion passed.

Noisy Offering:

- December - ELCA Good Gifts program. Contributions totaled \$542. THANK YOU!

- January - Unsheltered in our community with a focus supporting the ministry of Karuna House in La Crosse. <https://www.karunahousing.org/>
- February - HCLC Quilters
- March - Coulee Region Immigration Task Force

Music Director Update:

- Working on an intergenerational theme for Lent. Evening will include a meal. Will finalize plan at February VB meeting.
- Blue Christmas service well received. Will consider a healing service or opportunities for prayers on a quarterly basis.
- Christmas Eve attendance was 189 (more than last year) with lots of visitors and members that are coming back. Lots of great comments on what a beautiful service it was. Thanks to everyone who made that happen.
- We have received a quote from SIMS on updating the sound system. The Music and Liturgy Team will meet and provide a recommendation to the VB.

OLD BUSINESS:

- Annual meeting is the first Sunday of February. Please get any articles/information you want in the report to Shari by January 10, 2025. Potluck planned after the Cemetery meeting.
- We have added 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. Lynn shared "Host Checklist".
- VB will develop a plan to update our membership of voting members. A small group will meet in January to begin the process. The last time this was done was approximately 7 years ago.
- Reflecting on our Congregation's legacy: We identified several possible congregational members who we would ask to participate in this process.
- Planning a training session for all PowerPoint operators in the near future. Shari will set up.
- Recruiting to 2-3 vacant VB seats. We have two interested people and will take other nominations from the floor. Began a discussion of how we might engage our high school youth in the VB.
- Synod council retreat on March 22, 2025 from 9-12 in Sparta.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Planning for the last Sunday of Sunday School to be in April.
- Future agenda topic: Evaluation of Sunday School and Confirmation programming.
- Motion made and seconded to allow Wayne Atchley to rebuild corner computer area to make it more user friendly. Motion passed.

OUTREACH: Future Event Planning

- Remember/Recognize the National Guard Unit out of Arcadia that is currently serving overseas in February. Will include HCLC Brooklyn Cook who is serving in Africa.
- In May (or late April) recognize local EMS.
- In February, will recognize the Jazzercise group who are using our facility several times a week.
- Other ideas: Versiti Blood Drive, End of life (funeral) planning, ADRC (Aging and Disability Resource Center) education, Open house so the community can see our church

Closing with the Lord's Prayer Adjournment at 8:18.

Next meeting(s):

VISION BOARD**Co-Presidents**

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

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

Co-Secretaries

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

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. God bless you.

OUTREACH MINISTRY

ELCA Good Gifts Youth Piggybank Collection

Just a reminder to Sunday School kids, if you have a ELCA piggy bank please continue to be collecting your coins. You are due to bring them back to church no later than Sunday, April 13th. (You can bring them back sooner if you will not be at SS class on that day.) Thanks.

Operation Happy Mail

We currently have some young people, who are part of the Arcadia National Guard, from the Holmen community that were deployed in September 2024. Brooklynn Cook, who is a member of Halfway Creek, is deployed to Africa with 7 others from her unit. Owen Gilbertson, who is a great-nephew to Susan Jostad and Bette Pedretti, is deployed to the Middle East, along with 4 other young men from Holmen. Our congregation has the opportunity to support these young people while they are serving our country. We will be asking our congregation to write notes of encouragement and appreciation, some recent community events, or other interests to provide support and inspiration while they are away from home and family. These do not need to be lengthy, just a reminder that they are not forgotten and appreciated for what they are doing.

We will have supplies set up in the fellowship area-paper, pens, or for those more artistically inclined-markers, colored pencils and stickers. Please take a few minutes to write a note, they do not need to be addressed to any one person, as we will send them to be distributed among their units. We also will have pictures of Brooklynn and Owen setup in the fellowship area, along with a little information about both.

The confirmation class and Sunday School class will also be participating in this project during some class time in February. Please, if you desire, write more than

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one note. You may also take-home paper and write a note to be brought back by February 16th, as we will be sending packages that week.

If you would like to contribute to care package items, there is a list of items that are acceptable to send by the supplies or you may make a donation that will be used to purchase items for the care packages. Please have any items to church by February 16th.

Thank you for participating in this project and for supporting our mission to Reach Out, Share Christ with All.



Brooklynn Cook



The day before deployment: Tanner Schultz, Jack Westcott, Ryan Wink, Sawyer Phillips, and Owen Gilbertson

GIVING AT HCLC

We have another option for giving at HCLC. You can use Paypal—just search for Halfway Creek Lutheran Church or scan this QR code!

Thank you for helping us further our mission.



HALFWAY CREEK CEMETERY NEWS

The most requested song for a traditional funeral service is “Amazing Grace,” a Christian folk hymn written by English poet John Newton. Many find the message of forgiveness and redemption a beautiful tribute to the mercy of God. I’m sure this song has been shared at many funerals throughout the generations.

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me
I once was lost, but now I'm found
Was blind, but now I see

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear
And grace my fears relieved
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed

What a blessing to receive this powerful gift from God. The cemetery trustees hope and pray you can find peace knowing your loved are receiving peace and love. 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).

John 1:16–17

For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ

NOISY OFFERING—QUILTERS

In February our noisy offering will support the HCLC Quilters group. Each year they assemble around 30 quilts to be donated in the community! The noisy offering will help them defray the cost of material and supplies! Thank you in advance for your support. Quilters meet on Tuesdays mornings in February and March! In January, our total noisy offering for Karuna Housing was \$179.03. Thank you!!

SUNDAY SCHOOL AND CONFIRMATION

All ages will meet on Sundays at 9:15 a.m. on February 2 and 9! Confirmation (grades 6th–8th) will be meeting on the 19th and 26th at 6:30 p.m.

The first confirmation service project will take place Wednesday, February 5th at 5 p.m. at Journey Lutheran Church for our **3rd annual Superbowl Pizza Fundraiser!** Please plan to attend this important part of our service ministry!

COFFEE, TREATS AND FELLOWSHIP

Staying after worship for coffee, treats and conversations is a great way to build community at HCLC. Thank you to those who make the coffee, bring treats to share, clean up afterwards and those who stay for fellowship! We would love a few more volunteers to help with coffee and treats. If you are interested in signing up, please find the clipboard in the gathering space or online [HERE](#).

FINANCIALS ENDING DEC 2024

	Total Offering	Rent Income	Expenditures	Difference
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	\$10,327.81	\$2,150.00	\$11,042.43	\$1,435.38
December-24	\$21,612.10	\$2,150.00	\$10,959.76	\$10,652.34
	\$158,855.14	\$25,200.00	\$207,791.41	-\$25,886.27

*Amount owed to Dedicated Funds - \$6,813.29

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

If your birthday is missing, please notify the office.

1	11	14	22
Alexa Shisler	Bear Gates	Whitney Happel	Ellie Adam
2	11	14	23
LeRoy Holley	Berkley Gates	Susan Jostad	Cailyn Schreiber
7	11	15	24
Lee Thoma	Jodi Lee	Savannah Horstman	William Miller
8	11	16	27
Judy Casberg	Lee Lohrentz	Jesse Plomedahl	Noah Oines
10	12	19	28
Nelson Holley	Donald Graham	Jaxson Happel	Bambi Daily
Matthew Tolvstad	Matthew Page	20	28
	12	20	29
	Brayden Wanie	Vivianna Yahnke-Kolbo	Samantha Osesek
	13	21	Sara Osesek
	David Bringe	Heidi Rosenow	
	Erin Bringe	21	
	Cassie Leiby	Megan Page	
	Carter Thiele	Maison Payne	



IN OUR PRAYERS

We pray for friends and family of those who have passed: Charles Severson, Ray Cook, Madilyn Vang, Jeff Rose, Ron Hanson, Rod Sutherland, Curt Nedoba, Judy Campbell, Mike Nedoba, Raymond Lee, Marie Jezova

We pray for Brooklynn Cook, Megan Sacia Ulrich, 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

	WORSHIP TIME	SEXTON	ALTAR GUILD	OFFERING COUNTERS
FEB 2	10:00	Mike Martin	Carrie Nicole	Rhonda Sonja
FEB 9	10:00	Stan Schwier	Bette	Bette Susan J
FEB 16	10:00	Archie	Nancy	Jodi Eide
FEB 23	10:00	Joe Anderson	Bette	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.

Gifting 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!

Thank you Joe Anderson for answering the call to be a Sexton! We appreciate you.

We would love to have a couple more Sextons to help as substitutes.

Would you please consider volunteering for this important role?

Training is available. Thank you!

Sign-up in the office or email Shari: assistant@halfwaycreek.org.

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

Halfway Creek Lutheran Church
608-526-3701
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

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

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