

THE CALLER

AMERICAN LUTHERAN
CHURCH
CASTLEWOOD, SD

Volume 28, Issue 10, December, 2023

"From Heaven Above"! – P.T.'s Practical Theology

*From heav'n above to earth I come to bear good news to ev'ry home!
Glad tidings of great joy I bring to all the world, and gladly sing:*

*"To you this night is born a child, of Mary chosen virgin mild;
This new-born child of lowly birth shall be the joy of all the earth.*

*This is the Christ, God's Son most high, who hears your sad and bitter cry,
Who will himself your Savior be and from all sin will set you free". (ELW 268)*

Are you one of those who has already decorated for Christmas? Have you set up your tree or turned-on twinkling lights in your windows or on your bushes? No judgement here, since some can't wait to experience the joy of the season!

For me, I'm always excited to celebrate the Christmas season, but personally, I don't get to any Christmas decorating until after Thanksgiving.....and then, I like to keep up the Christmas Tree and Decorations through the 12 days of Christmas. Hopefully, with no judgement from you!

Yes, we all have different traditions and motives when it comes to marking the holy-days. But, as a Christian people, I hope that one thing we can all strive to keep at the forefront, amidst our decorating and celebrating, is the true meaning of Christmas.

The above italicized verse, is actually the first three of fourteen verses to a Christmas Hymn written by Martin Luther. You may or may not be familiar with the hymn, because it's not of side A or even side B of any popular Christmas album. But, since it's Luther's hymns, and quite a singable tune, it is known by some of us.

Verses one and two are ripe with the spirit of Christmas, replete with joy and the news of the birth of a holy child. But then, starting with verse three comes the true meaning of Christmas, for here Luther lays out our need for Jesus to come to live among us. Here Luther declares that the Christ of Christmas has come to lift us from our despair and save us from our sin. This is the true depth of our Christmas. Oh, the decorations, the holiday goodies and the presents are all well and good, as long as we remember and give thanks to God for his most righteous gift, sent *"From Heaven Above"!*

Verse 14: *"Glory to God in highest heav'n, who unto us the Son has giv'n"
With angels sing in pious mirth a glad new year to all the earth!*

Pastor Tom



Sunday School Christmas Program Practice!



Please make every effort for all our 3 year olds through Sr. High to be at the following practices:

10:15 am on Sundays the 3rd and 10th
9:00 am on Sunday the 17th, with program at 10:00.



Sunday School Christmas Program

Sunday, December 17th at 10:00 am.

Please note, this will be our Sunday Morning Worship, as the young people of ALC will proclaim the Christmas Gospel in drama, word and song!

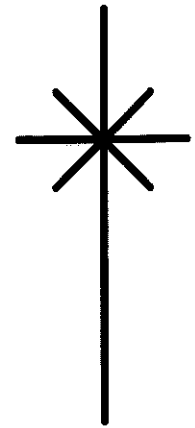


CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

Christmas Eve Worship

Sunday, December 24th, 5:30 pm!

Our worship will include lessons and carols as well as Holy Communion and the Candlelight ritual.



For
to us
a child
is born,
to us
a son
is given.



Isaiah 9:6



December 2023

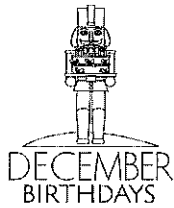
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

3rd	8:30 a.m. Choir Practice 9:00 a.m. Worship Service with Holy Communion 10:00 a.m. Fellowship 10:15 a.m. Sunday School
5th	ESD Pastors in Watertown
6th	5:15 p.m. Confirmation Class 6:30 p.m. Youth Group
10th	8:30 a.m. Choir Practice 9:00 a.m. Worship Service 10:00 a.m. Fellowship 10:15 a.m. Sunday School 12:30—1:30p.m. Blessing Center Open
13th	9:30 a.m. Bible Study in the Fellowship Hall 3:30 p.m. Bible Study at Castlewood Assisted Living 5:15 p.m. Confirmation Class 7:00 p.m. Bible Study in the Fellowship Hall
17th	9:00 a.m. Sunday School Program Rehearsal 10:00 a.m. Sunday School Christmas Pageant 10:15 a.m. Church Council
20th	5:15 p.m. Confirmation Class 6:30 p.m. Youth Group
21st	First Day of Winter
24th	5:30 p.m. Christmas Eve Worship Service with Holy Communion
25th	Christmas Day - <i>Merry Christmas!</i>
31st	9:00 a.m. Worship Service 10:00 a.m. Fellowship New Years Eve



Items that you wish to borrow from the church, please contact Pastor Tom or Janell to coordinate the use of those items. Thank you!

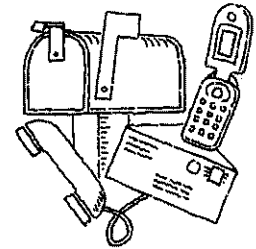


Traci Bass	12-04
Carter Larson	12-04
Gail Nagelhout	12-04
Rhonda Karst	12-09
Sara Nei	12-10
Kendall Nielsen	12-11
Ernie Karst	12-12
Landon Vetter	12-12
Carna Miller	12-16
Kevin Pribbenow	12-21
Larry Dockter	12-22
Lisa Janssen	12-27
Kendra Nielsen	12-27
Lorene Tvedt	12-27
Celia Kenyon	12-29
Jennifer Carter	12-31
John Mickey	12-31



Joshua Nei	12-01
Drake Langenfeld	12-03
Julie Hofwalt	12-05
Lincoln Pribbenow	12-05
Clara Kenyon	12-08
Reid Nolte	12-10
Adrienne January	12-12
Barbara Stevens	12-19
Chuck Juntti	12-20
Emma Lewno	12-23
Todd Larson	12/31

If there is a need for pastoral care please contact Pastor Tom Christenson 605-793-2444.



Remember there is CALENDAR on our Website!

Go to: americanlutheranchurch.com and you can see the calendar of events for American Lutheran. If you have anything church related to add to the calendar, please contact Pastor Tom at pas-tortlc@gmail.com



Kendal & Alisha Nielsen
Dec. 21st



Sr. High/Adult Choir!

This month we practice on the 3rd and the 10th, and provide the anthem on the 10th.

On Oct. 29, Vance Leigh Smith was baptized, parents are Andy & Sarah Smith. Blessings!

Jet Matthew Petersen received his First Grade Bible on Oct. 29.

Darlene Trenary's funeral was at American Lutheran Church on Sat., November 11, 2023.

Lynn Vetter transferred membership to a congregation in Wilmington NC





Confirmation Ministry – Grades 7-9

Confirmation Classes, *December 6, 13, 20 at 5:15 pm.*

Please help: if your son or daughter will not be in class for any reason, it is the parent's responsibility to contact Pastor Tom **in advance** to arrange for the make-up material.

Students: BRING YOUR OWN BIBLE & WRITING UTENSIL!

December Snack Families:

- 6 Charlsy Laue
- 13 Ava Ruml
- 20 Larz Tvedt



December Acolytes:

- 3 Kendra Nielsen
- Ava Ruml
- 10 Lincoln Pribbenow
- Easton Carter
- 17 Trevor Everson
- Lars Tvedt
- 24 Open
- 31 Shawn Prohl



American Lutheran Youth!

Youth Group (grades 7-12) usually meets on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at 6:30 pm. Youth Group is a combination of study, fellowship and planning for service events and fun stuff too!

In December:

Grades 7-12 will meet at the church December 6th and 20th at 6:30 pm. Hopefully, the 20th will be our time to go Christmas Caroling at the Castlewood Assisted Living to share the joy of the season! Watch for more details.



New Banners being used this month!

The Advent Banner set has been given to ALC by Carmen Jankord. The Christmas Banner set has been given to ALC by the Lynn and Kristy Borer family in loving memory of Dennis Lund.

There are still ALC Christmas ornaments for purchase at \$7.00 each. *please contact a council member or email the church at americlc@itctel.com.*



“Acts: The Gospel Throughout the World”

Adult/Sr. High Bible Study

Wednesdays – November 29, Dec. 13 at 9:30 am & 7:00 pm

Also offered at Castlewood Assisted Living at 3:30 pm

The fall Bible Study will take us back to the early church, as we work through the book of The Acts of the Apostles.

In many ways, we are again a 1st century church, with so many in our nation having heard of Jesus, but have yet to find him as Savior and Lord. So, come along for the journey as we trace the works of the Apostles in bringing the Gospel into our world.

Study Materials will be provided, so all you need to bring is your Bible and a writing utensil!

We will generally only meet every other week, as the opposite Wednesday nights are being reserved for Youth Group.

Lesson 4—Marks of Maturity (Acts 6-7)

Lesson 6—Broadening Horizons (Acts 10-12)

Lesson 7—The Mature Church in Labor & Hardships (Acts 13-15)

Lesson 8—Nurturing Young Churches (Acts 16-20)

Lesson 9—Bound and Yet Free (Acts 21-24)

Lesson 10—The Church Prevails (Acts 25-28)

SUMMER 2024 MISSION TRIP!

It was decided at our November 1st meeting to set the Mission Trip for: Dates: **June 16-22**

Ministry Organization: Next Step Ministries

Mission Site: Cheyenne River Indian Reservation (Eagle Butte, SD)

more info: see nextstepministries.com

Registration and Deposit to Pastor Tom by Sunday, November 26th

Registration Deposit of \$100 (\$50 of which is non-refundable)

Total Cost of the Trip is app. \$500 per person, of which your only out-of-pocket cost is the \$100 deposit. If finances are an issue for your family, please contact me and we will have you covered.

Please reach out to me, Brenda or Traci if you have any questions.

Church Council Meeting Minutes
American Lutheran Church
October 15th, 2023

Members Present: Danny Davis, Lindsey Vetter, Traci Bass, Jessi Ruml, Dan Grupe, John Bucher, Rod Fischer, Carrie Henriksen, and Pastor Tom.

Call to Order: President Grupe called the meeting to order, declaring a voting quorum as being present.

Prayer: Led by Pastor Tom

Meeting Minutes: Review of the meeting minutes from September 17th, 2023. Motion by Pastor Tom, second by Traci to approve the minutes as read. **MC**

Financial Report: Rod presented the September 2023 financial report. Motion by Jessie, second by John to approve as presented. **MC**

Pastor's Report: The Gideons will be here on Sunday, October 22nd rather than October 8th.

Old Business:

Church Repairs: The youth will plan to put the paint primer on the walls in the basement on Wednesday, October 18th. The same color paint that was used throughout the Church will be used after the primer is on.

Custodial: Tracy and Charsley Laue were hired & started on October 5th.

New Business:

Communion Schedule: October-John November- Rod

Lector / Fellowship Sign-ups: No action taken.

Thanksgiving Dinner is scheduled for Sunday, November 19th from 11:00-1:00.

Thanksgiving Eve Service will take place Wednesday night at First Presbyterian Church at 7:00. ALC members are asked to provide the snacks that evening.

Rain gutters on the Church need to be repaired & the shed floor needs to be looked at before the snow arrives.

On October 29th, one 1st grader will receive their Bible & a baptism will also take place.

New Church software will be researched, as our current one is no longer being serviced and maintained.

Next Meeting: Sunday, November 12th, 2023, following Worship.

Motion to Adjourn: Motion by Lindsey, second by Traci to adjourn. **MC**

Closing Prayer: The Lord's Prayer

Lindsey Vetter
Acting Secretary

**American Lutheran Church Financial Report
October 2023**

General Account

Balance on hand 10-1-2023		\$	150,423.81
Receipts			
Offerings	\$	9,356.00	
Special Offering	\$	54,501.00	
Confirmation	\$	23.00	\$ 63,880.00
Disbursements			
Thomas Christenson (Pastor Salary)	\$	4,472.80	
Thomas Christenson (Social Security)	\$	289.72	
Thomas Christenson (Housing Equity)	\$	200.00	
Thomas Christenson (Mileage - 207 miles)	\$	91.70	
Retirement Contribution	\$	467.28	
EBSO (Health Insurance - Nov.)	\$	2,328.00	
Tristar Management (Ancillary Benefits)	\$	631.32	
Janell Bemis (\$284.44 Sept + \$336.15)	\$	620.59	
Janell Bemis (Reimburse for Stamps)	\$	66.00	
Amanda Pribbenow (Custodian - Sept)	\$	182.00	
Tracy Laue (Custodian - Oct)	\$	174.08	
Tracy Laue (Reimburse - Vacuum & Cleaning Supplies)	\$	217.98	
Roxanne Bass (Organist - 3 svcs)	\$	165.00	
Marsha Kurtenbach (Organist - 2 svcs)	\$	110.00	
NALC (benevolence)	\$	50.00	
City of Castlewood (Ch: \$60.00, Pars: \$83.16)	\$	143.16	
ITC (Church phone & internet & Parsonage Phone)	\$	126.98	
Northwestern (Ch: \$10.62, Pars: \$9.46)	\$	20.08	
Ottertail (Ch: \$355.22, Pars: \$122.14)	\$	477.36	
North Star Mutual Insurance Company	\$	329.00	
Office Peeps (Office Supplies)	\$	105.69	
Upper Room	\$	34.25	
US Treasury (3rd quarter payroll taxes)	\$	170.45	\$ (11,473.44)
Balance on hand 10-31-2023			\$ 202,830.37
*** Confirmation Balance	\$	1,107.49	
*** Thrivent Choice Balance	\$	3,014.95	

Building Account

Balance on hand 10-1-2023		\$	52,264.51
Receipts			
Offerings for Building Fund	\$	336.00	\$ 336.00
Disbursements			
	\$	-	\$ -
Balance on hand 10-31-2023			\$ 52,600.51

Mission Account

Balance on hand 10-1-2023		\$	3,833.92
Receipts			
Offerings for Mission Fund	\$	231.00	
Children's Offering	\$	64.00	
Offerings for Blessing Center	\$	185.00	\$ 480.00
Disbursements			
Castlewood Blessing Center (Oct. offerings)	\$	185.00	
Gideons	\$	500.00	\$ (685.00)
Balance on hand 10-31-2023			\$ 3,628.92

Memorial Account

Balance on hand 10-1-2023		\$	6,828.31
Receipts			
	\$	-	\$ -
Disbursements			
	\$	-	\$ -
Balance on hand 10-31-2023			\$ 6,828.31

Account Summary

	Current Balance	Change October 2023	Change Year to Date
General Account	\$ 202,830.37	\$ 52,406.56	\$ 29,976.42
Building Account	\$ 52,600.51	\$ 336.00	\$ (25,780.22)
Mission Account	\$ 3,628.92	\$ (205.00)	\$ (441.00)
Memorial Account	\$ 6,828.31	\$ -	\$ (315.80)



The Servants of our Lord

	<i>Organists</i>	<i>Scripture Lectors</i>	<i>Fellowship Servers</i>	<i>Ushers</i>	<i>Audio-Visual Technician</i>
December 3	Roxanne Bass	Rod Fischer	Nielsen/Zimiga Nolte	Dennis & Vicki Strait	Chuck Juntti
December 10	Marsha Kurtenbach			Joshua & Sara Nei Family	
December 17	Roxanne Bass	Sunday School Program		Traci Bass & Gail Nagelhout	Doug Strait
December 24 Christmas Eve	Marsha Kurtenbach		*****	Philip & Jessie Ruml Family	Rod Fischer
December 31	Karen Lund			Austin & Lesllie Tvedt family	

ALTAR GUILD

December: Joann Fischer & Lorie Mack

January: Janet Christenson & Kari Nolte

Altar Guild takes care of the communion ware, change altar clothes, banners and fill oil candles when needed. Thank you for your service.



	General	Building	Mission	Children	Blessing Ctr
Oct. 29	\$1,610.00		\$33.00	\$8.00	\$25.00
Nov. 5	\$3,100.00	\$275.00	\$134.00	\$24.00	\$25.00
Nov. 12	\$2,435.00	\$10.00	\$136.00	\$11.00	\$60.00
Nov. 19	\$1,460.00		\$61.00	\$11.00	\$50.00

Free will offering for Thanksgiving Dinner..\$1,395.00

Blessing Center Collection – We remind the congregation that there is a collection box in the narthex, and ask that each ALC family bring in a few non-perishable items each month to support this local ministry.



The American Lutheran Caller

P.O. Box 132

Castlewood, SD 57223

Address Service Requested



WATCH US ON YOUTUBE & ITC!

*American Lutheran
Church's
Mission Statement*

The mission of American
Lutheran Church is to

**welcome,
worship,
teach and
serve**

In the name of Christ our Lord
and Savior!



americanlutheranchurch.com

2023 Church Council Members

Dan Grupe, President

John Bucher, VP

Rod Fischer, Treas.

Mark Larson, Sec.

Jesse Ruml

Danny Davis

Traci Bass

Lindsey Vetter

Candy Galliseth

Carrie Henrichsen