

# THE CALLER

AMERICAN LUTHERAN  
CHURCH  
CASTLEWOOD, SD

Volume 30, Issue 1, January 2025

## P.T.'s Practical Theology:

### Happy New Year! - Now What?

*"For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. And, how then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!'"* **Romans 10:13-15**

Like it or not 2025 is upon us! I hope that you have your calendar info from 2024 now uploaded, or, as the case may be, transferred, pen and ink into your new day planner.

Each January, some would be philosopher gets some press by reminding us what we already know.....namely, that with each new year comes new possibilities. New possibilities for success or to make positive changes in our lives. So, we have what we call "New Year's Resolutions". But those are always a test of our resolve....as many of them don't even survive the month!! Which, of course, can leave us feeling like failures, once again.

Well, the best way to lift yourself up from failure is to find success.....and I think that a particular New "New Year's Resolution" might be not only attainable, but also one that could bring glory to our God.

**So.....I am putting out a challenge to each family of American Lutheran: invite someone to come to worship with us!**

If you gave 10 minutes of thought and prayer to it, I would think that you could come up with at least one individual or one family who is unchurched or under-churched. That is, who might God be calling you to make an invitation to come connect in a real way with our family of faith?

Don't go for someone who is already faithful in their church home.....but, reach out and invite someone who has not been a church-goer, or has for some reason been absent from solid Christian Worship for some time. After all, it was the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Romans that declared just how important it was for God's children to "HEAR" His word. He was convinced that it was in the hearing of God's word that faith was created....and faith is sustained. Furthermore, it is only faith that will enable one to call upon the Lord....and it is those who call upon Him in faith that will be saved.

So, once again.....let us be resolved to pray to God that he would lift up to us at least one person, who we can invite into our fellowship. NOT for the sake of swelling our church roster, rather for the sake of those who need to hear, believe and be saved.

In His Service,

*Pastor Tom*



# Annual Meeting of the Congregation Sunday, January 26<sup>th</sup> at 10:15!

### Current Members of the Congregation

Council and the year their term

expires: (\*denotes second term)

- Lindsey Vetter (2027)
- John Bucher \*(2025)
- Jessie Ruml \*(2025)
- Mark Larson \*(2025)
- Dan Davis (2026)
- Traci Bass (2026)
- Lynn Borer (2025) Fulfilled  
Carrie Henrichsen term
- Andy Smith (2027)
- Amanda Pribbenow (2027)
- Doug Strait (2027)

### Current Nominating Committee Members

- Phil Ruml (2026)
- Dan Grupe (2027)
- Rod Fischer (2027)

### Current Auditing Committee Members

- Craig Bass (2025)
- Landon Vetter (2026)
- Rod Fischer (2027)

### Bible Quiz

In the story of the Magi, what word is used to give a sense of Jesus' age when the wise men visited? What does it tell us?

- A. "baby"; Jesus was still a newborn in a manger
- B. "child"; when the wise men visited, Jesus had grown past infancy
- C. "youth"; Jesus was probably between 10 and 14
- D. No word is used to suggest Jesus' age at the time of the wise men's visit.



Answer: B (See Matthew 2:1-12.)

### Church Council Sets End-of-Year Missions Giving:

At the December Church Council Meeting it was decided to give to the following mission:

North American Lutheran Church:	\$500.00
Eastern South Dakota Mission District (NALC) Mission Fund:	\$250.00
Castlewood Blessing Center:	\$250.00
St. Dymas Prison Ministry:	\$250.00
Beacon Center of Watertown	\$500.00
Haggenson Family (Medical)	\$250.00

Thank you for your ongoing financial support to the mission and ministries of American Lutheran Church

**Please have  
annual reports  
to the office  
by Wednesday,  
Jan. 22, 2025.**

**Please consider  
volunteering to  
be on the  
church council  
or committee.**

### Remember the CALENDAR on our Website!

Go to: [americanlutheranchurch.com](http://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 [pastortlc@gmail.com](mailto:pastortlc@gmail.com)





O Lord, let my  
*New Year's resolution*  
 be to  
**follow you**  
**more closely**  
 and to  
**trust in your**  
*loving guidance.*

# January 2025

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

1st

*HAPPY NEW YEAR!*

5th

8:30 a.m. Sr. High/Adult Choir Practice  
 9:00 a.m. Worship Service with Holy Communion  
 10:00 a.m. Fellowship  
 12:30—1:30p.m. Blessing Center Open



8th

1:00 p.m. Adult/Sr. High Bible Study at Asst. Living  
 6:00 p.m. Confirmation  
 7:00 p.m. Adult/Sr. High Bible Study

12th

8:30 a.m. Sr. High/Adult Choir Practice  
 9:00 a.m. Worship Service  
 10:00 a.m. Fellowship  
 10:15 a.m. Sunday School



15th

6:00 p.m. Confirmation  
 7:00 p.m. Youth Group

16th

*ESD Pastor Meeting in Brandon*

19th

8:30 a.m. Sr. High/Adult Choir Practice  
 9:00 a.m. Worship Service with Holy Communion  
 10:00 a.m. Fellowship  
 10:15 a.m. Sunday School  
 10:15 a.m. Church Council  
 12:30—1:30p.m. Blessing Center Open



20th

Martin Luther King Jr. Day

22nd

1:00 p.m. Adult/Sr. High Bible Study at Asst. Living  
 6:00 p.m. Confirmation  
 7:00 p.m. Adult/Sr. High Bible Study

26th

9:00 a.m. Worship Service  
 10:00 a.m. Fellowship  
 10:15 a.m. Sunday School



29th

6:00 p.m. Confirmation



Barrett Wittnebel	1-02
Gareth Hamen	1-04
Jodi Hanson	1-04
Collyns Ruml	1-10
Eric Aderhold	1-11
Lacey Seversen	1-11
Sarah Christenson	1-12
Rodney Fischer	1-14
Asher Davis	1-16
Bill Henrichsen	1-20
Al Schochenmaier	1-22
Brody Bass	1-25
Alisha Nielsen	1-29
Dennis Strait	1-30



Janet Christenson	1/01
Larry Dockter	1-02
Vale Smith	1-02
Vavalia Smith	1-06
Walker Borer	1-08
Sara Nei	1-11
Ernie Karst	1-12
Haley Strait	1-12
Taylor Hanson	1-16
Landon Vetter	1-20
Noah Wiersma	1-21
Gail Nagelhout	1-23
Logan Ronne	1-24
Kendall Nielsen	1-27
Kevin Pribbenow	1-27
Carna Miller	1-29
Madyson Ching	1-29
Roxanne Bass	1-30
Celia Kenyon	1-30
Kendra Nielsen	1-31
Ava Ruml	1-31

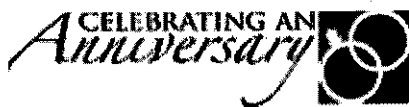
As Jesus showed, "everybody can serve," Martin Luther King said. Your background or status doesn't matter, as long as you have "a heart full of grace" and "a soul generated by love."

**Please notify the church with your...**



If there is a need for pastoral care please contact ...

Pastor Tom  
Christenson  
605-956-0130



*Larry & Pat Dockter*

Dear God, at the start of this new year, and the Epiphany season, shine your light on my path. Amen.

**Sr. High/Adult Choir!**

Practices on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays of each month in the fellowship hall and will generally be prepared to provide the anthem on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Worship.

EPIPHANY OF THE LORD



*May all kings fall down before him, all nations serve him!*

PSALM 72:11, ESV





### Confirmation – Grades 7-9

Confirmation classes resume on January 8th and will run through February 12th at 6:00 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!

#### January Snack Families:

- 8th Kendra Nielsen
- 15th Lincoln Pribbenow
- 22nd Trevor Everson
- 29th Bryce Wittnebel



#### January Acolytes:

- 5th Ava Ruml
- 12th Bostyn Ruml
- 19th Bryce Wittnebel
- 26th Open

### American Lutheran Youth!



At our twice per month youth group meetings we have talked about options for a summer Mission Trip, and have narrowed down our options to serving in Nashville, TN with Group Ministries. We have lifted up the preferred week as being, June 14-21 (22). Please talk to Pastor Tom asap, with your interest as we need to reserve our spots!



***"God, I don't know what to do!"***

### Decisions

### Adult/Sr. High Bible Study

Offered at 1:00 at Castlewood Assisted Living & 7:00 at ALC

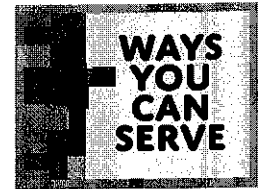
What kind of decisions are you facing? Yes, we have a God who can help, but how do we tap into His wisdom and divine guidance? In this 4-session study we will build on our relationships with God and others, as God in Christ intends. He knows our feelings, He relates to us, and He has the answers we have been looking for.

- January 8<sup>th</sup> - Free to Choose
- January 22<sup>nd</sup> - Motivated by Grace to Trace
- February 12<sup>th</sup> - Empowered by Grace to Choose
- February 26<sup>th</sup> - Enabled by Grace to Help





### The Servants of our Lord



	<i>Organists</i>	<i>Ushers</i>	<i>Audio-Visual Technician</i>
January 5	Roxanne Bass	Philip & Jessica Ruml family	Chuck Juntti
January 12	Marsha Kurtenbach	John & Bonnie Bucher	
January 19	Roxanne Bass	Landon & Lindsey Vetter family	Doug Strait
January 26	Marsha Kurtenbach	Kevin & Amanda Pribbenow family	Rod Fischer

**SIGN -UP SHEET FOR**  
**LECTORS—(Scriptures sheets available)**  
**&**  
**Fellowship Servers**  
**IN THE NARTHEX**

### ALTAR GUILD

January: Kari Nolte & Janet Christenson

February: Vicki Strait & Kristi Borer

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

	<b>General</b>	<b>Building</b>	<b>Mission</b>	<b>*Children</b>	<b>*Blessing Ctr</b>
<b>December 1</b>	\$4,289.00	\$200.00	\$518.00		
<b>December 8</b>	\$2,445.00	\$75.00	\$244.00		
<b>December 15</b>	\$5,252.00	\$5.00	\$25.00		



\*Childrens and Blessing Center amounts are included into the Mission account totals.

### ONLINE GIVING

Our congregational website: [americanlutheranchurch.com](http://americanlutheranchurch.com) now has a link on the home page for online donations: **DONATE NOW**. From that link, you can set One-time, Weekly or Monthly Offerings.

If you point the camera on your cell phone at the QR code it will take you to the donation page.



**American Lutheran Church Financial Report  
November 2024**

**General Account**

Balance on hand 11-1-2024		\$	57,849.61
Receipts			
Offerings	\$	7,332.00	
Confirmation	\$	34.00	
Thrivent	\$	99.00	\$ 7,465.00
Disbursements			
Thomas Christenson (Pastor Salary)	\$	4,712.98	
Thomas Christenson (Social Security)	\$	298.40	
Thomas Christenson (Housing Equity)	\$	200.00	
Thomas Christenson (Mileage - 311 Miles)	\$	208.37	
Retirement Contribution	\$	-	
EBSO (Health Insurance)	\$	2,328.00	
Tristar Management (Ancillary Benefits)	\$	512.29	
Janell Bemis (Secretary - 24 hrs)	\$	332.46	
Tracy Laue (Custodian - 18 hrs)	\$	232.72	
Roxanne Bass (Organist - 2 Svcs)	\$	130.00	
Marsha Kurtenbach (Organist - 2 Svcs)	\$	130.00	
Karen Lund (Organist - 1 Svc)	\$	65.00	
City of Castlewood (Ch: \$65, Pars: \$91.55)	\$	156.55	
ITC (Phone & Internet)	\$	127.41	
Northwestern (Ch: \$16.45, Pars: \$12.34)	\$	28.79	
Ottertail (Ch: \$163.60, Pars: \$88.26)	\$	251.86	
North Star Mutual Insurance Company	\$	434.17	
NALC	\$	50.00	
Office Peeps (Office supplies & Copier)	\$	54.87	
American Church (offering envelopes)	\$	525.41	
Jim Erickson (pulpit supply)	\$	309.00	
Justice Fire & Safety (fire extinguishers)	\$	226.21	
Upper Room Ministries (Jan & Feb)	\$	34.25	\$ (11,348.74)
<b>Balance on hand 11-30-2024</b>		\$	<b>53,965.87</b>

\*\*\* Confirmation Balance \$ 1,303.49  
 \*\*\* Thrivent Choice Balance \$ 2,684.07

**Building Account**

Balance on hand 11-1-2024		\$	44,493.73
Receipts			
Offerings for Building Fund	\$	85.00	\$ 85.00
Disbursements			
Gerhold Brothers (gravel for steps)	\$	104.50	\$ (104.50)
<b>Balance on hand 11-30-2024</b>		\$	<b>44,474.23</b>

**Mission Account**

Balance on hand 11-1-2024		\$	3,223.60
Receipts			
Offerings for Mission Fund	\$	3,206.00	
Children's Offering	\$	-	
Offerings for Blessing Center	\$	-	\$ 3,206.00
Disbursements			
Tables Steakhouse (Thanksgiving)	\$	1,360.00	
KeVee (Thanksgiving food)	\$	279.96	\$ (1,639.96)
<b>Balance on hand 11-30-2024</b>		\$	<b>4,789.64</b>

**Memorial Account**

Balance on hand 11-1-2024		\$	4,358.31
Receipts	\$	-	\$ -
Disbursements	\$	-	\$ -
<b>Balance on hand 11-30-2024</b>		\$	<b>4,358.31</b>

**Account Summary**

	Current	Change	Change
	Balance	November 2024	Year to Date
General Account	\$ 53,965.87	\$ (3,883.74)	\$ (14,991.07)
Building Account	\$ 44,474.23	\$ (19.50)	\$ (8,191.00)
Mission Account	\$ 4,789.64	\$ 1,566.04	\$ 3,369.72
Memorial Account	\$ 4,358.31	\$ -	\$ (2,500.00)

*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](http://americanlutheranchurch.com)**

**2024 Church Council Members**

John Bucher, President

Lindsey Vetter, Vice President

Mark Larson, Sec.

Doug Strait, Treas.

Jesse Ruml

Dan Davis

Traci Bass

Lynn Borer

Andy Smith

Amanda Pribbenow