



PARISH LIGHT

American Lutheran Church

December 2023

401 South Flynn Drive, Milbank, SD 57252



Now you might be thinking—

*“This is the December newsletter I am reading, right?
What is this Happy New Year graphic doing here?”*

This month we mark the beginning of a New Church Year—The Liturgical Calendar that guides us as we worship and helps us retell the story of our Savior, Jesus Christ each year.

Each new Church Year begins with the Season of Advent. These 4 weeks we are in right now, where we are waiting and anticipating the coming of the Christ Child. Advent means “coming.” That is followed, of course, by Christmas!

Unlike the rest of the world, who moves on from Christmas by December 26th, for us December 24th is just the beginning of the Christmas Season. In the Church, we celebrate Christmas for 12 days (cue the song) until Epiphany on January 6th.

Epiphany means to make known and this Season in January and February celebrates Christ being made known to the people. We read stories of the Wise Men coming to worship the King, of Jesus’ Baptism, and some of His first miracles where it is revealed to the world that He is truly God’s Son.

Following Epiphany, we move into the Season of Lent, beginning with Ash Wednesday. Lent reminds us of Christ’s sacrifice and prepares us to hear again the Passion Story of Jesus’ arrest, trial, and crucifixion. Lent ends with the greatest celebration in the Church Year—the celebration of Easter and Christ victory over sin and death as we retell the resurrection story. Following seven weeks of Easter celebrations we close the first half of the Church Year with Pentecost Sunday and the coming of the Holy Spirit.

The second half of the Church Year is marked as the Season after Pentecost, running from around the end of May until the end of November. This season is focused on our growth as God’s people, marked with the color green adorning the altar and pulpit. We have heard the story again of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection and have been filled with the Holy Spirit. Now we focus on what it means to live as God’s people in the world and as Christ’ disciples.

The Church Year ends with the celebration of Christ the King Sunday as we foretell the story of Christ returning to serve as King over His eternal kingdom.

I love the foundation that our Liturgical Year gives us as we gather to worship and live as a community of faith.

It provides us the guidance that helps us remember all that God has done for us through Jesus Christ and calls us to faithful living in our everyday lives.

I do wish you a Happy New Year as we begin this new Liturgical Year and invite you to join with me as we journey through this year learning and growing together as the Church!



Pastor Justin

CHURCH COUNCIL

Pres: Ryan Gruba
V. Pres: Sara VanMeter
Secretary: Heather Zinter
Treasurer: Emily Mueller

PROPERTY/ MANAGEMENT

Ryan Gruba
Dan Bohn
Brett Storm

YOUTH/EDUCATION

Jessica Schuchard
Heather Zinter
Holly Hilbrands

FINANCE/STEWARDSHIP

David Bergan
Sara Anderson
Jacob Knoll

WORSHIP/EVANGELISM

Laurie Strege
Sara VanMeter
Amanda Grabow

AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL NEWS AND UPDATES

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE NOVEMBER 08 COUNCIL MEETING

Property & Management Committee

- Painting is on the schedule for January
- The storage shed is almost complete
- Everything is winterized outside
- AED training will be held during the Wellness Fair on November 19

Worship & Evangelism Committee

- Upcoming Events: Church Potluck Nov. 19 and Family Game Night on Dec. 1.
- Church Directory Photos are planned for April 3-6.
- New members toured the church, received meatballs from meatball ministry and gift bags from ALC. They have been assigned a new member mentor to assist them with any questions.

Finance & Stewardship

- Nothing new to report

Youth and Education

- Preschool Fundraiser is planned for Nov. 12.
- Rachel is working on the Sunday School Christmas Program.

Other Business (new & old)

- Approved the use of \$2,500 in Thrivent Choice Dollars towards the purchase of a Christmas Tree.
- Pastor Justin will take Sunday, Dec. 31 off.
- Reviewed and approved request from the Quilting Group to be added to the budget for \$1,000 in 2023.
- Budget Discussion. Final numbers are being given to Emily (ALC Treasurer).
- Christmas tree is ordered and should arrive by November 20. It will be set up the 2nd week of Advent.
- Decorating Committee will be putting up Christmas Decorations starting Nov.26.
- Welcomed Peggy Mueller to the staff as custodian.
- Discussed reorganizing the ALC Council from 12 members to 9 members.
- The nominating committee is in the process of finding 3 new nominees for the council.

The next American Lutheran Church Council meeting is December 13 at 6:30.

LISTEN TO THE SERVICE:

On the RADIO

LIVE at 9 am on KMSD
(1510 AM / 95.1 FM)

FACEBOOK Live

"LIVE at 9 am on Facebook"

ALC APP

Worship Service Videos,
Bulletins, Newsletter

www.americanlutheran.com

Worship Service Videos
& Bulletins

Stewardship

Time, Talent, Treasure

Date	Attendance	Offering
11/05/23	190	\$ 4,783
11/12/23	300	\$ 4,641
11/19/23	190	\$ 6,056
11/26/23	221	\$ 9,510

Online giving: \$ 5,425

Our Vision & Mission Statements

*Christ welcomes all
at American Lutheran.*

*The Gospel of Jesus Christ calls us
to be a welcoming community
for all people growing in
faith, love, and service.*

American Lutheran Church Staff Contact Information

PASTOR

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PARISH ASSISTANT

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ALC PRESCHOOL

Sierra Daugaard—Teacher
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Assistant: Mya Johanson

OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR

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CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

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605-210-0753

CUSTODIAN

Peggy Mueller

PARISH NURSE

Diana Dirksen
dirksen@tnics.com
605-949-1403 (leave message)



*Each reading
points us to Jesus
and the coming
Messiah.*

These readings lead us to our Savior and the true meaning of this Season! They are posted on the church Facebook page every morning. Please join us as we prepare our hearts again to receive the gift of God's love coming down to us through the birth of Jesus Christ!

Sunday, November 26 Isaiah 9:2-7
Monday, November 27 2 Samuel 7:12-16
Tuesday, November 28 Isaiah 11:1-10
Wednesday, November 29 Jeremiah 33:14-36
Thursday, November 30 John 1:1-5
Friday, December 1 John 1:6-8
Saturday, December 2 – NO READING

Sunday, December 3 Isaiah 40:1-5
Monday, December 4 Luke 1:5-17
Tuesday, December 5 Luke 1:18-26
Wednesday, December 6 Luke 1:26-33
Thursday, December 7 Luke 1:35-38
Friday, December 8 Matthew 1:18-25
Saturday, December 9 – NO READING

Sunday, December 10 Luke 1:39-45
Monday, December 11 Luke 1:47-56
Tuesday, December 12 Luke 2:1-7
Wednesday, December 13 Luke 2:8-14
Thursday, December 14 Luke 2:16-21
Friday, December 15 Micah 5:2-5
Saturday, December 16 – NO READING

Sunday, December 17 Matthew 2:1-6
Monday, December 18 Matthew 2:7-10
Tuesday, December 19 Matthew 2:11-12
Wednesday, December 20 Isaiah 42:1-6
Thursday, December 21 1 John 1:1-5
Friday, December 22 John 1:9-13
Saturday, December 23 – NO READING

Sunday, December 24 John 1:14-18



Bible Study, Service, & Mission Opportunities

**Contact the Church Office
for additional information.**

Wednesday Morning Women's Bible Study

Wednesdays at 10 am.

Thursday Morning Men's Breakfast Group

Thursdays at 8 am in the library. Great conversation plus they look at the upcoming Sunday's gospel lesson.

Piece Corps Quilters

The quilters meet the 2nd and 4th Tuesday each month at 9.

Peace Circle (WELCA)

Bible Study, Fellowship, and Community Service. Meets first Tuesday of each month at 11 am in the Library. No meeting in December

Page Turners Book Clubs

There are two book clubs that meet once a month. (2 pm or 5 pm)
Books are provided for you. No meeting in December.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

This group crochets or knits prayer shawls (on their own time) to give to members in need of a special touch of love. Yarn is provided.

ALC High School Youth Group

Usually meets the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month

ALC 7-8th Grade Group

This group meets occasionally for events.

ALC Library

It's easy to check out books. No time limit. Two locations: a Book Cart in the entry area and the Church Library room.

Manna Praise Band

Usually practices one evening a week.

Note-A-Bells

A bell choir that practices most Wednesdays at 5:15.

Choir

No set schedule. They send out emails/texts when meeting.

Decorating Committee

This group changes the décor in the church to match the seasons and celebrations.

Event Committee

Plan and help with events throughout the year.

Altar Guild

This group takes care of the altar. They set up the altar for communion each week for worship. Teams sign up for one month each year.

Plant Care

Water and care for indoor plants on a weekly basis.

Boy Scouts

Meet on Monday Evenings

Baking Angels Baking Group

This group meets once or twice a month to bake the treats for the Sunday Coffee Fellowship hours.

She will bear a son, and you shall call

his name Jesus,

for he will save his people from their sins.

Matthew 1:21



You are invited to a
**Christmas Sing-along at
St. Williams Care Center**

Help **Pastor Justin** and the **ALC Preschool Children**
lead residents in worship & a hymn sing-along

Thursday, December 14, at 2 pm

All are welcome and
encouraged to attend and help sing!



GIFTS OF LOVE BOX

There are two large Christmas
Boxes in the entry for you
to drop off items for

Church on the Street and Local Needs.

Needed: New or gently used kids coats and
adult coats (especially extra large adult sizes),
mittens, gloves, hats, boots, shoes, hand
warmers and blankets.



**Musicians needed for
Christmas Eve Services.**

Call the Church Office if you would like
to participate or know of someone
that would be interested.

“Vocals & Instrumentalists Needed”
We need you!



Christmas Flowers

for Christmas Eve.

- Drop them off by noon on
December 22.
- Pick them up by January 1.

Names for the bulletin are needed by December 17.

Sign up at the Welcome Center.

Pastoral Acts

Nils Dennis Mears

Baptized on
November 26, 2023

Parents:
Nick and Olivia Mears

Sponsors:
Mike and Mackenzie Hardie
Andrew and Jaden Mears
Craig and Jenn Barlund
Spencer and Reba Folk



*And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for
behold, I bring you good news of great joy
that will be for all the people.*

*For unto you is born this day in the city of David a
Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign
for you; you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling
cloths and lying in a manger.”*

*And suddenly there was with the angel
a multitude of the heavenly host praising
God and saying,*

*Glory to God in the highest, and on earth
peace, good will toward men.*



From the Church Staff

*We wish you a merry, joy-filled Christmas
and pray you feel surrounded
by the amazing joy and peace of our Savior!*

Pastor Justin

Carol Kirchberg

Diana Dirksen

Emily Mueller

Rachel Kiley

Mya Johanson

Gail Selgeby

Sierra Daugaard

Peggy Mueller

Feeling blue this Christmas?
YOU ARE NOT FORGOTTEN.

**Blue Christmas Worship Service
December 17 at 5:00 pm
at Parkview Methodist Church**

Join Pastor Justin and Diana for a special service of comfort and hope.

In scripture and song, this service is meant to be a gift to all who would like a quiet, contemplative, worship service.



Blood Pressures
will be taken
Sunday, 12/10/23

**Diana Dirksen
Parish Nurse**



**Thursday, Dec. 7
at 10 am in the
Fellowship Hall**



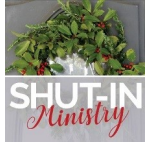
The featured speaker is Bob Frink-military with recognition of Pearl Harbor Day. There will be caroling and a light brunch.

If you would like to bring small lotions, chap sticks, small ornaments, or candies, Diana will use them in gift bags to deliver to our shut-ins.

RSVP to Diana Dirksen (605-949-1403), the church office (432-5566), or sign-up at the Welcome Center. Let us know if you need a ride.

Sponsored by the Parish Nurse Board

Everyone is welcome!



Add our home bound list to your Christmas Card list. Addresses are at the Welcome Center.

FAMILY GAME NIGHT

Friday, December 1, at 6:00
Fun for all ages. Mom, Dad, Grandma, Grandpa,
Kids, Friends, Everyone!
Pizza provided. You are welcome
to bring extra games and snacks.



Photo Opportunity in the Fellowship Hall

Stop by anytime and take a photo using the Christmas Backdrop.
Great for individuals, groups and families!



HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!



12/1	Brodryck Speth	12/6	Steven Schlueter	12/13	Lorrie Hardy	12/26	Ray Ogdahl
12/1	Taylor Welberg	12/7	Asher Brandt	12/13	Lynelle Thyne	12/27	Marilyn Nef
12/2	Jake Anderson	12/7	Claire Kastrop	12/16	Jacob Stinson	12/27	Lincoln Rinehart
12/3	Nollen Sheeley	12/7	Ariana Prisinger	12/18	Corinne Dohman	12/27	Amber Sriver
12/4	Katie Heller	12/8	Carey Berry	12/18	Sid Fosheim	12/27	Jessica Zemlicka
12/4	Taves Mears	12/8	Jacksyn Johnson	12/18	Alyssa Frogner	12/28	Bracen Grabow
12/4	Suzan Roggenbuck	12/8	Jeffrey Nodsle	12/20	Mary Kasuske	12/28	Justin Neugebauer
12/5	Gail Barlund	12/8	Ciera Schwinger	12/21	Chaxton Goldammer	12/28	Tiffany Storm
12/5	Charlotte Farrell	12/9	Heidi Mischel	12/23	Jasmine Smith	12/29	Brynlee Frerichs
12/5	Briggs Koepke	12/9	Harley Zemlicka	12/23	Chely Wellnitz	12/29	Colleen Larson
12/5	Siera Wenzl	12/11	Lance Junso	12/24	Nicholas Frerichs	12/29	Hannah Lester
12/5	Emily Jo Wollschlager	12/12	Doug Barlund	12/25	Alan Mathiason	12/29	Melissa Schuneman
12/6	Michael Gruba	12/12	Mark Leddy	12/25	JoAnn Volkenant	12/29	Betty Sipe
12/6	Henry Heller	12/13	Emma Anderson	12/26	Emily Brandt	12/30	Tessa Johnson
12/6	Alex Pauli	12/13	Taylor Anderson	12/26	Joshua Moen	12/31	Dillon Dwyer



Baking Angels
 will meet to bake on
 Saturday, Dec. 9 at 1 pm
 Saturday, Dec. 16 at 9 am



*Lefse time
 is a always a
 good time!*



American Lutheran Church members attended a **Church on the Street Worship Service** in Sioux Falls on November 11. Gathering together inside, on a chilly November day, everyone celebrated the promise of the resurrection and gave thanks for God's work in their lives.

American Lutheran, along with Our Saviors Lutheran Church of Flandreau and First Lutheran Church of Sioux Falls, provided and served a meal for 200, which included cookies baked by the ALC Baking Angels. **The 3 church groups, along with Church on the Street staff pictured below.*





Important Dates:

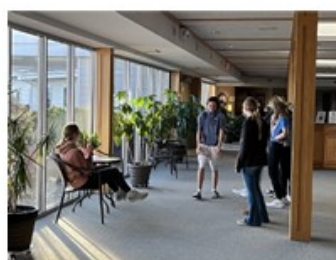
High School Christmas Party: December 6th @ 6:00pm

Youth to bring a \$5-10 present

High School Youth Community Party: December 20th @ 6:00pm Meet at church plan to go Caroling and Bingo

Youth group has been enjoying lots of activities. They recently played games and made brownies with left over Halloween candy. The brownies were used at the recent lock in and potluck. Middle school and High school students enjoyed the lock in. Thank you to everyone who donated items and time. A few members of Youth Group also joined Church on the Street in Sioux Falls, serving others.

Confirmation has been discussing the Lord's Prayer. They have been breaking down parts of the Lord's Prayer and learned the meaning of each petition. They also have learned different methods of prayer. Confirmation will have a Christmas Celebration this month.



SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS



The students have been working hard on the Christmas program throughout November. We will be presenting the program "He Makes All Things Beautiful" on December 17th with cookie fellowship to follow. It is very important the next few weeks they attend regularly. There will be no Sunday School after Christmas program and will not be back until January 7th.

The Sunday School classes have been exploring Genesis stories. Recently discussing Jacob's Dream and Abraham's story. While the older students have been discussing different praying methods and the Lord's Prayer in Confirmation Class and Sunday School. As the season of Advent has begun, we have started to learn more about the Advent Wreath. You can find a small homemade wreath in most the classrooms. We also invite you to walk the hallway after the Christmas Program to view new pictures and artwork displayed.

Thank you for sharing your children with me, I am looking forward to the New Year. I am enjoying creating a program that helps teach why Jesus was important and learning the history of the Old Testament. God bless you this Season. Looking forward to the accumulation of the Advent Candles light and Celebrating Jesus' Birth!

Rachel Kiley ALC Youth Director

Can you help the Sunday School?

SOMEONE TO HELP WASH OLD COSTUMES

HELP SERVE/PREP LUNCH DECEMBER 10TH

(SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS WILL BE HELPING WITH REHEARSAL)

DONATIONS

6 STRAW BALES NEEDED

FRUIT/VEGGIES FOR REHEARSAL LUNCH

**IMPORTANT
INFORMATION**



**Program Rehearsal:
December 10th: 10-12:30
(lunch provided)**



**Christmas Program
December 17th during church.
There will be no Sunday
School after program.**



**After the program:
Join us in the fellowship hall
for cookies and apple cider.
Then explore the Sunday
School Wing, decorated with
new pictures and art work.**



ALC Preschool



We wish everyone a
Merry Christmas and a
Happy New Year!

Morning Class: 8:00-11:00; Afternoon Class: 12:15-3:15; Email: alcps@itcmilbank.com



December 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 6 Family Game Night	2
3 9 Worship 10 Fellowship 10 Sunday School	4 7 Scouts	5	6 10 Bible Study 3:30 Confirmation 5:15 Bell Practice 6 HS Youth Group Christmas Party	7 8 Men's Group 10 Parish Nurse Christmas Party	8	9 1 Baking Angels 5 Piano Recital (Sheila Dailie)
10 9 Worship 10 Fellowship 10-12:30 Sunday School (w/extended practice time)	11 7 Scouts	12 9 Quilting 10:30 Milbank Area Ministerial Assoc.	13 10 Bible Study 3:30 Confirmation Christmas Party 5:15 Bell Practice 6:30 Church Council	14 8 Men's Group 2 Vespers-Hymn Sing-a-long at St. Williams	15	16 9 Baking Angels 5 Cub Scouts Christmas
17 Christmas Program 9 Worship/Program 10 Fellowship 5 Blue Christmas Worship at Parkview 5 Eagle Scout Program	18 7 Scouts	19	20 10 Bible Study 5:15 Bell Practice 6 HS Youth join area groups for caroling & fun.	21 8 Men's Group	22	23
24 Christmas Eve 9:00 AM Worship 5:00 PM Worship	25 Christmas Day	26 9 Quilting	27	28	29	30
<p>←-----Office Closed-----></p> <p><i>The staff will work off and on during the week. Their contact information is on page 2.</i></p>						
31 9 Worship 10 Fellowship Pastor David Tonn – Guest Minister	Jan 1 Office Closed	2 11 Peace Circle	3 10 Bible Study 3:30 Confirmation 5:15 Bell Practice 6 HS Youth Group 6:30 Manna Band	4 8 am Men's Group	5	6



Christmas Eve Services
Sunday, December 24
Two candlelight services with carols
and readings plus Holy Communion.
9:00 am and 5:00 pm