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First Word

To this end we always pray for you, asking that our **God will make you worthy of his call and will fulfill by his power every good resolve and work of faith**, so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ. *2 Thessalonians 1:11-12*

Good Resolve:

The work of sharing the Gospel is full of opportunity and challenge. It has many blessings and not a few trials. It brings both comfort and anxiety.

The most difficult part of the call of ministry is putting aside all that holds back the Gospel from its powerful work. It is the Gospel that has the power, not the teacher. It is the Gospel that has the power, not the person who prays. It is the Gospel that has the power, not the person who reads it. It is the Gospel that has the power. Indeed the work and end of the Gospel is salvation, not something any of us can do or work out on our own.

New Year's resolutions flow swiftly from this coming season of celebration. The new year offers new beginnings. In the early church, the newness of the Gospel's power pervaded the work of the apostles. When Paul wrote to the church in Thessalonica, he put resolve into proper perspective. Paul knew the incredible power of God to make a difference in the life of a human being. He himself was living proof of the power of God to save. A former persecutor of the Church, accomplice to the murder of the saints, the power of Jesus had transformed him into the most powerful witness of the Gospel the world has ever seen. So when he prayed for the fledgling church in Thessalonica, he did so with the knowledge that the venture would fail without the understanding of the Divinely granted Gospel power given to the church.

This new year in Winds of the Prairie brings any number of new ventures. We are taking a serious look at the ministry of God's Grace in each of our congregations. We are seeking to empower the gifts of the Spirit granted to each and every minister of the Gospel (read every member) in our congregations of faith. If we look to our own resources, our own power, our own personal resolve, we will fail.

Let us make one resolution this year: to look to Jesus, the author and the perfecter of our faith (Hebrews 12:1-2). We are assured of the power of God in the work of sharing the Gospel in our portion of the world. In God, we have all we need.

Pastor Stephen



Vicar's News

Vicar Update-December 2015

Advent is here! I'm reminded of a choral movement from Georg Friedrich Handel's oratorio *Messiah* that I sang at Luther a few winters ago, which simply takes verse 5 from Isaiah 40, and spins it into the most exhilarating 4 part-harmony of proclamation (forgive my jubilant transcription here J):

And the Gloooooory, the Glory of the Loooooord!

Will Beee eee-eee-eee-eee eee-eee-eee-eee Re-veeeeeeeal-ed!

And All Fleh-eh-eesh Shall See-eee it To-geh-eh-ther!

Foooooor thaaaa Moooooouth ooof the Looooord Hath Spoh-ken it!

This all might look ridiculous printed out like this, but trust me: give Handel's *Messiah* a google, or get a copy from the library because when you hear the proclamation, it's hard not to feel the ground shaking, the anticipation that is Advent.

The incarnation of our Lord comes to us in the form of a slave (Philippians 2:7), "emptied" so that he can approach us from below, beneath, and behind. From literally within us, within a human being, Christ is born to Mary, the blessed mother, who is represented in Catholic iconography as the Burning Bush of the Old Testament: the finite shrub containing God's infinite glory, the fleshly womb containing our fragile Messiah. It is at this time of year that we anticipate God's approach- the heat of the flame that does not consume, the light of the star that illuminates our path, the sleeping breath of an infant who will free all of his people from the shackle of captivity and bondage to sin.

I eagerly anticipate celebrating the coming near of our savior, and the way in which this coming closer transforms us into holy vessels, so that like Mary, we might carry God's promise always on our lips, and with our entire bodies, rejoice in this unimaginable gift.

Blessings to all of you and your families this Advent season!

-Vicar Ryan





Cross Winds

**Merry
Christmas**

Calendar

December 2015	Bethany Lutheran Sunday Worship 8:30am	Bethany-Elm Lutheran Sunday Wor-ship 10:30am	Grace Lutheran Sunday Wor-ship 8:30am	Peace Lutheran Sunday Wor-ship 10:30am	St. Paul Lutheran Sunday Wor-ship 8:30am
Wednesday, December 2	9:00am Bible Study at Divine Providence 10:00am Worship at Divine Providence 1:30pm GLCW 5:30pm TFA in Minneota 6:00pm Family Bible Study at Bethany 6:15pm TFA at Bethany 6:15pm P3 at Bethany				
Friday, December 4	7:00am Bible Study at Bethany				
Saturday, December 5	1:00pm New Member Welcome Class at Bethany				
Sunday, December 6	5:00pm-7:00pm Bethany Sunday School Christmas Caroling ALL ARE WELCOME!				
Monday, December 7	9:00am Bible Study at Grace 5:00pm Bethany-Elm Council Meeting				
Tuesday, December 8	5:00pm Internship Committee Meeting (place tbd) 7:00pm Mutual Ministry Meeting (place tbd)				
Wednesday, December 9	9:00am Bible Study at Divine Providence 5:30pm TFA in Minneota 6:00pm Family Bible Study at Bethany 6:15pm TFA and P3 at Bethany				
Thursday, December 10	10:00am Devotions and Communion at Sunrise Manor in Tyler 1:30pm Bethany WELCA				
Friday, December 11	7:00am Bible Study at Bethany				





Cross Winds

Happy
Birthday
Jesus!

Calendar

December 2015	Bethany Lutheran Sunday Worship 8:30am	Bethany-Elim Lutheran Sunday Worship 10:30am	Grace Lutheran Sunday Worship 8:30am	Peace Lutheran Sunday Worship 10:30am	St. Paul Lutheran Sunday Worship 8:30am
Monday, December 14	9:00am Bible Study at Grace				
Tuesday, December 15	9:00am Prairie Conference Meeting at Bethany-Elim 7:00pm Bethany Council Meeting				
Wednesday, December 16	9:00am Bible Study at Divine Providence 10:00am Worship at Divine Providence 5:30pm TFA in Minneota 6:00pm Family Bible Study at Bethany, Arco 6:15 pm TFA and P3 at Bethany, Arco				
Thursday, December 17	2:30pm Worship at Minneota Manor 6:30pm Grace Council Meeting				
Friday, December 18	7:00am Bible Study at Bethany				
Wednesday, December 23	9:00am Bible Study at Divine Providence 10:00am Divine Providence Christmas Eve Service 5:30pm TFA in Minneota? No Bethany Sunday School 6:15pm TFA in Arco 6:15pm P3 in Arco				
Thursday, December 24	4:00pm Christmas Eve Service at Peace, St. Paul and Grace 6:00pm Christmas Eve Service at Bethany-Elim 7:00pm Christmas Eve Service at Hendricks Nursing Home 10:00pm Christmas Eve Service at Bethany				
Friday, December 25	MERRY CHRISTMAS! 10:30am Christmas Day Service at Diamond Lake				
Wednesday, December 30	6:00pm P3? 6:15pm TFA in Arco? NO Bethany Sunday School				



Cross Winds

Community News

Christmas Eve Church Services

4:00pm Peace Lutheran
4:00pm Grace Lutheran
4:00pm St. Paul Lutheran
6:00pm Bethany-Elim Lutheran
10:00pm Bethany Lutheran

Christmas Day Service

10:30am Diamond Lake Service



Ivanhoe Holiday Bazaar

When: December 5th 9:00am-1:00pm

Where: Lincoln Elementary School, Ivanhoe

What: All types of Vendors! (come do some Christmas shopping)

Santa arrives on the Firetruck at 10:00am and the Children's Santa Shoppe is open from 10:00am-12 noon. All gifts are \$1

Live Holiday Music



Cross Winds

Community News



2015 COOKIE WALK

Saturday, December 13 9:00am-11:00am

Bethany Lutheran in Arco
Come buy your Christmas Cookies.
Enjoy coffee and cookies with friends as well.

Bethany Sunday School Caroling

Sunday, December 6th from 5:00pm-7:00pm

Please come join our Sunday School with singing classic and favorite Christmas Carols throughout Arco. Following the caroling, the Bethany Sunday School will be offering Hot Chocolate and treats. Free Will Donation to support our Sunday School Program!



Cross Winds

Community News

Ivanhoe Holiday Open House

December 2nd from 4:00pm-8:00pm participating businesses in Ivanhoe will be joining in a community wide open house. There will be samples and drawings for door prizes. This is a great way to kick off the holiday season!



Hope Lutheran Country Christmas

On Saturday, December 5 at 6:00pm in the Hope Lutheran parking lot, join us for an enjoyable evening of Christmas carols, live animals, hotdogs, popcorn and apple cider to keep you warm, plus sleigh rides and kiddie train rides. The evening is FREE, but if you could bring an item for the food shelf, it would be appreciated.

Bring a blanket, dress warm, but do come to celebrate Hope Lutheran's gift to the community. For more info please call Pastor Bruce (507) 828-9522



Cross Winds

Community News

TREASURE HUNT of GIFTS

A treasure is often something we find that we never knew we had or needed. It becomes a gift of invaluable use. We have such a treasure from the Holy Spirit called Spiritual Gifts.

The spiritual gifts listed below are found in three passages: Romans 12:6-8, 1 Corinthians 12:8-10;28-30, and Ephesians 4:11

Administration	Giving	Miracles
Apostleship	Healing	Pastor/Shepard
Discernment	Interpretation of Tongues	Prophecy
Evangelism	Knowledge	Serving/Ministering
Exhortation	Leadership	Teaching
Faith	Mercy	Tongues and Wisdom

We are on a Treasure Hunt at Winds of the Prairie to find the individual's Spiritual Gifts. You can find a map to your gifts at two places.

1. Go online to www.spiritualgiftstest.com to take either the adult or youth online test. Once you submit the test, a list of your gifts will be generated. You may print it off for your records. We need to know your top three gifts which you can submit on a Treasure Hunt postcard near the treasure chest at your church. Fill out the card and return to the Treasure Chest for Spiritual Gifts or mail in the postcard.
2. Hard copies of the test questions and a scoring sheet are available at each church. Score yourself on the scoresheet and calculate your gifts. Report the top three scores on the Treasure Hunt postcard near the treasure chest at your church. Fill out the card and return to the Treasure Chest for Spiritual Gifts or mail in the postcard.

Any member, young or old, is encouraged to take this survey and submit their findings. Once we know what treasured gifts are among us we can develop a plan to use them for the building of God's kingdom in our communities. Please try to complete this by the end of 2015 as your gift of self to the church for this season of giving.



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Bethany

Bringing Everybody Together by Helping, Accepting and Nurturing YOU

Worship Aides

Altar Guild: Ilene Sorensen

Ushers: Wayne and Dar Schreurs

Lectors: 6—Beth Daniels

13—Dar Schreurs

20—Gleb Sorensen

24—Gayle Rasmussen

27—Ilene Sorensen

Assisting Ministers: 6—Katilynn Jorgensen

20—Ardis Henriksen

24—Glen Sorensen

Dates to Remember:

Dec 10: WELCA 1:30pm –Bethany-Elim guest of Bethany

Dec 11: 7:00pm Set up for Cookie Walk

Dec 12: 9:00-11:00am Bethany Cookie Walk

Dec 15: 7:30pm Bethany Council

Dec 20: 9:30am Sunday School Christmas Program and Service

Bethany News:

Bethany-Elim WELCA is invited to Bethany's December meeting on the 10th at 1:00pm. The program will be the "Symbols of the Christmas Season"

Bethany Cookie Walk: Women of Bethany, this is our annual fund raiser event. You have received letters about this and we hope you have taken the time to read it and to plan to be a part of it. We would appreciate you help, both in contributing cookies as described in the letter and possibly to work at set up on Friday evening and/or on sale day. Thanks for your part in the success of this event.

Bethany Sunday School: Christmas Program will be on December 20th. Service that day will be at 9:30am instead of 8:30am. Our Sunday School will be presenting the



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Bethany-Elim

Jesus Christ is Lord

Worship Assistants

December 6

Ushers: Robert and Bernie Olsen

Lector: Donna Kurth

Acolyte: Ryder Olsen

EM: Marlene Lawrence

December 13

Ushers: Chris and Amy Clarke

Lector: Amy Clarke

Acolyte: Madison Lawrence

December 20

Ushers: The Gifford's

Lector: Cody Gifford

Acolyte: Brady Gifford

December 27

Ushers: Gene Faulds and Roger Nelson

Lector: Gene Faulds

Acolyte: Kim Bloch

Bethany-Elim Sunday School

Mark your calendars for Sunday, December 13! The Christmas Program will be held during worship at 10:30am. Please join us for potluck dinner after the program. Beverages and paper products will be provided. The program is entitled, "A Piece of Christmas". As this piece of fabric weaves its way through the Christmas story, you will be reminded that the best piece of Christmas is the Savior . . . the one who fills our lives with love, joy and hope. Please invite your family and friends to attend. The children have a beautiful way of telling the Christmas Story!



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Grace

To Love and Support Each Other, As We Grow in Faith

Worship Service 8:30am

December Ushers - Michael and Derek Haugen, Gary Heffele, Jim Herschberger

December Acolytes - Dec 6 Jayla Prosch, Dec 13 Adam Czech, Dec 20 Jaylen Miller, Dec 24 Adrianna and Austin Johnson, Dec 27 Breelee Berkenpas

December Deacon - Jerid Johnson

December Altar Guild— Anne Lichtsinn

Don't eat alone! Lutheran Social Services is pleased to provide nutritious meals served Mon – Fri at 11:30 am, at the Lake Benton Community Center for adults 60+. There is a suggested donation requested for those 60 & older; for those younger than 60, there is a charge of \$7.00. Come as often as you like! Our meals are affordable and take the work out of eating healthy. Not able to get out of the house? No problem! Ask for **Meals on Wheels**, and we will arrange a volunteer to deliver your meal to your home. Please call Carole, Site Manager at 368-9564, one day in advance to reserve your meal. Senior Dining/Meals on Wheels welcomes you! **We have room for you at our table!**

December Grace Council Meeting – Thursday December 17, 6:30 pm at church

January Grace Council Meeting – Thursday January 21, 6:30 pm at church

The Grace Sledding event is scheduled for Saturday January 16, 2016 starting at 2pm at the Hole in Mountain Park Chalet in Lake Benton MN, WOTP Members of all ages are encouraged to attend this wonderful event for sledding, games, food and fellowship. Hope to see you all there.



Volume 11, Issue 10

Grace

To Love and Support Each Other, As We Grow in Faith

Grace Sunday School News Pat Johnson

On Dec. 13, the Grace Sunday school will put on our Christmas program “The Christmas Story” during our 8:30 am worship service. We invite our congregation, family, and friends to attend. Come for a fun time of singing our favorite Christmas hymns and supporting the children in the retelling of the birth of our Savior. Please join us after the service for a Christmas celebration.

Thank you to the following for helping me with the program:

Teachers: Chandra Prosch, Tanya Berkenpas, & Mindy Johnson

Helper: Linda Sutherland

Music provided by: Karen Lichtsinn

Special music by: Adrianna Johnson & Jayla Prosch

Program Narrators: Emma Czech & Becca Berkenpas

And thank you to the Sunday school children. You make Christmas very special for all of us.

We wish you all a very joyous holiday season!

Upcoming dates: Sunday, Dec. 6 – Sunday school will be from 9:45-11:45
Saturday, Dec. 12- Christmas program practice 11:30-1:30
(After Lake Benton Santa Day – a light lunch will be served)
Sunday, Dec. 20 & Dec. 27 – NO Sunday school (Christmas Break)



Cross Winds

Peace

To Spread the Gospel by being a community of believers that offer hope and hospitality to all.

First Tuesday of the month—St. Matthew Circle, 9:30am and St. Mark Circle, 2:00pm

Second Monday of the month— St. John Circle 5:00pm

Second Wednesday of the month—PLCW every other month, 2:00pm—Jan., Mat.,May, July, Sept.,Nov.

Fourth Monday of the month—Quilting Day, 9:00am—None in December



Trusting in Christ, Growing in Faith, Serving in Love

Worship Service starts at 8:30am



Cross Winds

TFA Schedule and Assignments

To help students, parents and mentors of TFA to work together in faith development.

Date	Theme & Text	Teacher	Catechism Memory Work	WATERS Experiences	
12/2/2015 2-13 Isaiah of the Exile	Comfort, Comfort my People Isaiah 40:1-11	Anderson	The Apostles' Creed, Second article	Ask the best cook in your family to teach you how to make your family's special holiday food.	
12/9/2015 2-14 Re-building the Temple- Ezra	Returning from Exile Ezra 1:1-4; 3:1-4, 10-13	Rasmusson	Second article of the Apostles' Creed	Help a community member clean and decorate their home for Christmas - not your house!	Everyone is invited to an Epiphany Celebration on January 6th at Bethany, Arco. Special music, games, foods, and activities to celebrate the festival of light.
12/16/2015 2-15 Zechariah's Song & Birth of Jesus Events	John the Baptizer Luke 1:5-13, 57-80	Anderson	Meaning of the second article of the Creed	Send a faith centered gift to your mentor.	
12/23/2015 Jesus Announces the Kingdom	<u>Movie Night - The Nativity - Not required</u> Mark 1:1-20		Meaning of the second article of the Creed	Look for Jesus over the twelve days of Christmas and note each day where you see signs of his birth	
12/24/2015	Christmas Eve Services @ Home Congregations - <u>No TFA classes during Christmas Break</u>			Talk to older family members about their best Christmas	





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Preaching Schedule

DECEMBER 2015		Grace 8:30	Peace 10:30	Bethany 8:30	St Paul 8:30	Bethany-Elim 10:30	C o m m o n i t y
Sunday, December 6, 2015		Rasmusson	Rasmusson	Anderson	Pusch	Pusch	B l u e
Holy Communion/2nd Advent		Isaiah 40:1-11, Mark 1:1-4		2 Kings 22:1-10; 23:1-3; Luke 24:30-32	Ezra 1:1-4, 3:1-4, 10-13, Luke 2:25-28a		
Sunday, December 13, 2015		Anderson	Rasmusson	Rasmusson	Pusch	Pusch	B l u e
Christmas Program/3rd Advent				Isaiah 40:1-11, Mark 1:1-4			
Sunday, December 20, 2015		Anderson	Sunday School Program (Anderson)	Sunday School Program (Pusch)	Rasmusson	Rasmusson	B l u e
4th Advent		2 Kings 22:1-10; 23:1-3; Luke 24:30-32		Ezra 1:1-4, 3:1-4, 10-13, Luke 2:25-28a	Isaiah 40:1-11, Mark 1:1-4		
CHRISTMAS EVE							
Thursday, December 24, 2015	HENDRICKS NH - 7:00 p.m.	Grace 4 pm	Peace 4 pm	Bethany-10:00pm	St Paul-4 p.m.	Bethany-Elim 6 p.m.	
Shepherd's Visit	Rasmusson	Anderson	Rasmusson	Rasmusson	Pusch	Anderson/Pusch	W h i t e
Isaiah 9:2-7, Psalm 96, Ephesians 4:1-16, 31-32, Luke 2:1-20							
Christmas Day/ December 25	10 am Christmas Day at Diamond Lake (weather permitting: Backup Site Grace/Lake Benton)						
Sunday, December 27, 2015	Service of the Word (Readings and Carols) - First Christmas	Anderson	Anderson	Pusch	Rasmusson/Lay	Rasmusson/Lay	W h i t e
Jesus Announces the Kingdom Mark 1:1-20, Psalm 91:9-12							

Cross Winds

Prayer Concerns

Bethany: Please pray for Pray for Tim Hickman (Uncle of Morgan Hoffman), Morgan Hoffman, John Harvestine (husband to 1st Vicar Jaqueline Harvestine) Ricky Conn (brother in law to Brenda Possail) Jonathan Henriksen (nephew to Marie and Ardis) Ila Rasmussen, Mable Dressen, Les Blegen, Eloise Hauschild, Buck Barber, Norma Renken, Travis Noble, Connie Clausen (mother of Brenda Possail). All of those with silent health issues. All our civilian volunteers & Military personnel who are seeking to do God's work in God's world.

Bethany-Elim: Pray for Tim Hickman (Uncle of Morgan Hoffman), Morgan Hoffman, Eric Lovestrand (nephew of Donna and Blaine Kurth) Kendra Leibfried (Niece of Michelle Bloch) John Harvestine (husband to 1st Vicar Jaqueline Harvestine) , Clara Amundson, Sara, Kinsley Asmus, Michael Hunter, Bob Clausen, Esther Wayland, Anna Zafft (granddaughter of Harvey & Muriel Koopman), Ray Johnson, Bruce Kelm (brother of Gretchen Suhr); Gabriel Johnson (Grandson of Norma Jean Johnson); Mike Kropp (son-in-law of Ken Swanson); Mary Grace Nelson (daughter of Ryan and Kate); Nancy Resmen (sister-in-law of Bernadine Olsen), Ralph Holland. Pray for those with silent health issues. Pray for the safety of all military men & women who are defending this nation, and the families and loved ones they leave behind to serve our country.

St. Paul: Please keep John Harvestine (husband to 1st Vicar Jaqueline Harvestine), Megan Boerboom, Jeff Kompelin & Clara DeRoode in your prayers. Pray for the safety of Adam DeRoode, Corey Gregor, Scott Johnson and all military men and women defending this nation, and the families and loved ones they leave behind to serve our country.

Peace: John Harvestine (husband to 1st Vicar Jaqueline Harvestine) Brian & Bobbie Lensing and twins Sawyer & Samuel, Bonita Fuhrmann, Carolyn Holck, Rosmary Hartson, Edwin Ewald, the family of Ellen Hansen, Edna Haraldsen, Cliff Kittelson, Lois Studemann, Byron Stelton, Philip Lingen (Armed Forces)

Grace: the family of Darrell Larson, the Busselman family, John Harvestine (husband of Pastor Jackie Harvestine), George Larson (father of Annie Weets), Garnet Petersen, Kevin Venekamp (son of Berniece Johannsen), Carl Burk, Marg Selken (sister to Dorothy Henningsen), Jodi Reese (daughter of Joyce Nielsen & sister to Kim Hefti), Allan Johnson, Marian Bennett, Naomi Enke, Annette Fehrman and Earl & Joan Klitzke, all those with health issues that are silent, and all our civilian volunteers & Military personnel who are seeking to do God's work in God's world.



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Prayer Concerns

Tyler Nursing Home

Cliff Kittleson, Carolyn Holck and Bonnie Fuhrmann (Peace), and Annette Ferhman (Grace)

Hendricks Nursing Home

Ila Rasmussen (Bethany), Norma Burdick (Grace), Naomi Enke (Grace) and Ruth Josephson (Bethany-Elim)

Divine Providence Nursing Home

Mabel Dressen and Esther Wayland (Bethany-Elim)

Missionaries

Pray for those who follow God's calling to spread His word and love.

Military

Pray for the leaders of this great nation and all nations of the world. Pray for those who follow the calling to protect our freedom . Pray for all of the families of military and government members.





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Winds of the Prairie Ministry

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WOTP Office: 507-694-1238

Bethany Lutheran 507-487-5530 Bethany-Elim Lutheran 507-694-1353

Grace Lutheran 507-368-4243 Peace Lutheran 507-658-3329

St. Paul's Lutheran 507-872-6605

WOTPM's email: windsministry@gmail.com

WOTPM website: windsoftheprairie.org

Secretary's Office Hours

Monday—Thursday 8:30am to 1:30 pm