

UNITED MONTHLY

Volume 13, Issue 12

December 2023

We are United to
EXPERIENCE Jesus,
SERVE others and
LIVE the Word!

We live out this mis-
sion statement with
our core values of
Joyful Worship,
Authentic Community,
Faithful Witness and
Ridiculous Generosity.



United Lutheran Church
is a congregation of the
Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America.



God's work.
Our hands.

Love, Joy, Peace and Hope

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people. Luke 2:10

The word "advent" simply means "the coming or arrival of something important." The arrival was (and is) worth celebrating! As Christians, we celebrate Advent as the arrival of Jesus, God's son, into the world. God's people had been waiting thousands of years for the Messiah and you can only imagine how exciting His arrival was. Our celebration of Advent recognizes the first arrival which was the birth of Jesus and the second arrival which is yet to come. We wait with great expectation for the second coming of Jesus, his return to earth to make things right once and for all. Advent, the first season of the church year, is a season filled with eager anticipation for people of all ages. As we prepare our homes for Christmas excitement, we ready our hearts to celebrate Christ's birth. Even in the midst of the challenges going on around us...personally, locally and worldwide...we are called to pause and let the true gifts of this season envelop us. One Advent tradition includes lighting candles in expectant anticipation of the greatest gift God has given to all people...the gift of His Son, Jesus, the Savior of the world. As we light the four candles each week, remember the gifts Jesus continues to share with us...LOVE, JOY, PEACE and HOPE. Let the light of the candles be a light in the darkness for each of you.

LOVE - God used the lowly shepherds as the first visitors to witness the miracle of the birth of Jesus to show that his love is for all people. God sent Jesus to make His love available to everyone...not just the rich and famous. Neither money nor status can buy love. We have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. We all need a Savior. The Christmas story allows us to recognize our need for love and live it out daily.

JOY - Joseph trusted God when the angel appeared to him and said, "Do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins...." Joseph wasn't joyful about this message, but obeyed God regardless. His joy came from trusting God that things would work out even when he couldn't understand all the details. Nothing can take away the joy God has given us.

PEACE - When the angel appeared to Mary with the news that she would give birth to the Savior of the world, she was excited and frightened. Mary was chosen by God and with that anointing came an incredible gift of peace. Trusting God's promise gave her true peace. When we face difficulties in life, we can find true peace in allowing God to walk alongside us and give us the strength to face the hard times, knowing He is by our side through it all...just like he was for Mary. When we place our trust in Jesus, he gives us the amazing gift of peace that surpasses all understanding.

HOPE - Have you hoped for something for a long time and it hasn't happened? Imagine how God's people felt waiting for hundreds of years for the promised Messiah. We are reminded through the Christmas story that our hope is not in vain. God will always fulfill His promises to us. He will never fail us.

My prayer is that all of you open the gifts of LOVE, JOY, PEACE and HOPE as you celebrate precious gift of Jesus.

In Christ, **Pastor Jodi**

December 2023

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3 10AM Worship with Holy Communion New Member Sunday	4	5	6 5:15PM Wednesday School 6PM Confirmation	7 12PM Al-Anon	8	9
10 10AM Worship with Holy Communion Christmas Program followed by BBQ lunch	11	12 9AM-3PM Quilting 5PM Esther Circle 5:30PM Budget Planning meeting	13 9AM-3PM Quilting 10:30AM Deborah Circle @ Senior Center 5:15PM Wednesday School 6PM Confirmation	14 10AM Pastors' Grafton Conference gathering in Mountain 12PM Al-Anon	15	16 Fellowship Hall reserved 9AM-12PM
17 10AM Worship with Holy Communion	18 5:30PM Church Council meeting	19 12PM Writer's Group	20 2PM Rachel Circle 5:15PM Wednesday School (Caroling) 6PM Confirmation students packing Christmas boxes at the food pantry	21 12PM Al-Anon	22	23
24 Christmas Eve Services with Holy Communion 3PM Contemporary 5PM Traditional	25 No Christmas Day Worship Merry Christmas!	26	27 No Wednesday school or Confirmation	28 12PM Al-Anon	29	30
31 10AM Worship						

Christmas Eve Services

Join us as we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, Sunday, December 24!

Candlelight services with Holy Communion will be held at:

3PM (Contemporary Worship)
5PM (Traditional Worship)



ULC Leadership 2023

President	LeeAnn Knudson
Vice President	Steve Hart
Secretary	Kari Agotness
Financial Secretary	Julie Johnson

Committee Council Representatives

Education	Angie Sanders, Kristy McDonald
Endowment	On Rotation
Hospitality	Terry Jacobson
Property	Sara Goodman
Stewardship	Katie Henry

Non-voting Representative

Pastor	Jodi Myrvik
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Financial Update 10-31-23

October Offering	\$15,358.56	
	<u>Year-to-Date</u>	<u>Budget YTD</u>
Offering Income	\$153,198.56	\$157,112.50
	<u>Current Year</u>	<u>Last Year</u>
Total Income thru October	\$158,481.23	\$164,572.82
*Total Expenses thru October	\$204,535.88	\$156,320.95

***Please note, actual expenses are \$154,535.88. The amount shared above includes a \$30,000 transfer from the general fund in January and a \$20,000 transfer from the general fund in July. Both transfers were moved in to the dedicated building fund.**

As of November 28, our Endowment Fund balance was \$102,104.93. If you would like to make a contribution to the Endowment Fund, please make checks payable to "InFaith Foundation" (which manages our endowment fund). Interest accrued yearly from this Endowment fund has been used at the end of each year to give back to needs within our community or special projects within the church.

Thank you for Your Gifts

We thank each and every one of you for your active participation in the life of United Lutheran. Everything you do...every gift you give serves to sustain the breadth, health and future of this ministry. We give thanks for you and celebrate God's abundant grace and faithfulness as a defining quality of our identity as United Lutheran. Thank you for your faithful support, your **joyful worship, authentic community, faithful witness, and ridiculous generosity**. You most certainly are living up to the core values of this congregation.

In November, giving statements for 2023 were mailed out. Thank you for these gifts and the other ways you have been a part of our ministry at United! Your offerings help meet our regular yearly budgeted needs and also support our online worship services. Convenient ways to provide your offerings are through the mail, dropping it by the church, setting up bill pay through your bank with reoccurring consistent offerings or using the online Tithe.ly app (search for Langdon United Lutheran). Your support is much appreciated!

Council Notes 10-16-23 Mtg

LeeAnn shared information from the Compensation Review Team with a recommendation for Council to approve the 2024 proposed salary and compensation package for Pastor Jodi. Christmas Eve sign-up sheet was passed around and finding a date to schedule budget planning for 2024.

Pastor Jodi and Julie attended the Pastors' Conference Fall meeting, "Envisioning the Vitality of Churches". Part of the meeting was discussing the shortage of pastors and pulpit supply.

The Department of Homeland Security assessment was completed on October 17. This was the first step for our church to be eligible for grant monies to make improvements in safety.

Steve has and will continue repairing lights around the interior and exterior building. A motion was made and passed to replace the existing projector and screen with two 85" TVs in the chancel area and a 65" TV on the front of the choir loft. (Funds had been allocated for this project two years ago from grant monies and a member's Thrivent Funds). Five new wireless microphones and cables for the band will be purchased using funds from the dedicated music fund.

Katie reported that Harvest Sunday went well and funds will be collected until December 3. "Time and Talent" surveys were placed in the bulletins.

Council spoke in length regarding committee reduction in numbers and the adjustment of consecutive terms. The proposed changes will need to be brought to the Annual Meeting.

Council minutes and treasurer's report are posted monthly on the bulletin board in the hall across from the church kitchen.

A Little Praise Band History - by Kathleen Johnson

The Contemporary Praise Band was formed around 2003 when Pastor Linda Wahlstrom was serving United Lutheran. The request for a contemporary service at United came from members who attended contemporary services at other churches and wanted the opportunity to worship with contemporary music at home. Pastor Wahlstrom had worked with contemporary services in other churches where she served and was familiar with the music and the flow of the service. It was decided to have a Contemporary Service, one Sunday a month, and the fourth Sunday became Contemporary Worship Sunday.

Most of the Praise Band members in the picture to the lower right were part of the band from the beginning. Others that have been with the band in the past includes Richard Wahlstrom on guitar, Eric Timian on drums, Landan Tollefson on drums, Bob Tapson on guitar, Sally Balsdon, singer, Brenna Schuler, singer and others that filled in.

In the beginning, music was printed in the bulletin for members to follow. A few years later, the music binder was put together so the music wouldn't have to be reprinted for every contemporary service. It was during Pastor Bob Bekkerus's ministry at United that the projection screen was purchased and installed so the congregation could follow along with the service and responses and also have the words of the songs on the screen.

United is blessed with a group of talented musicians who have been faithful to gather once a month and lead the congregation in the singing of praises to God during the worship hour. It is a joy and a blessing to be able to do this. Those that have been doing this for 20 years is a testament to the faithfulness of the group. We are blessed to be a blessing. It is returned in a multitude of ways.

Back row, left to right: Linda Timian, Kim Hart, Carolyn Balsdon, Nicholas Balsdon, Steve Hart
Front row: Darby Hart, Kathleen Johnson, Rebecca Tollefson, Lisa Schuler, Janet Jacobson



Wednesday School, Christmas Program & Lunch

The Christmas Program, presented by our Wednesday school students will be held on December 10 during worship. Plan to come a little early as Lisa Schuler's piano students will be playing prelude music that Sunday, starting around 9:45AM.

There will be a BBQ Lunch following the Christmas program and all are welcome! The lunch is being implemented again from 2017!

Wednesday School

December 6 - Christmas Program Practice
 December 10 - Christmas Program Practice 9-10AM, Christmas Program 10AM
 December 13 - Jesus' Birth
 December 20 - Singing at the Maple Manor
December 27 - Off...Christmas Vacation



Confirmation

Classes for December are: (6PM)
 December 6 - Movie "The Nativity"
 December 13 - Movie "The Nativity"
 December 20 - Packing Christmas boxes at the Food Pantry
 December 27 - **No Confirmation - Christmas break**

Sixth Grade Band

Ten band students from the 6th Grade Elementary School will be playing a few songs on December 17 at the beginning of worship. Lane Lindseth is conducting and Lisa Schuler is assisting with flute. Thank you Lane, Lisa and students with this new endeavor!

Mental Health Awareness.....Holiday Grief

There's no way around it. After someone important dies, the holidays are never the same again. Traditions, events, parties, songs, movies...the grief triggers are everywhere. Avoidance and denial are popular coping tactics but implementing a different approach is both beneficial for your mental health as well as meaningful to your family. There are many ways to keep your loved one's memory alive during the holiday season. Just in case you need a little inspiration, I have included seven ways to get started so you can continue to remember your loved ones over the holidays (and every day).

Talk about them - It might feel painful at first to bring up your loved one, especially with emotions running high due to the holiday. However, you are all feeling this loss, so bringing it up in conversation might help everyone feel a little more seen. You can reminisce about old holidays, talk about their favorite traditions and meals, remember how they used to celebrate, and just make them a part of the celebration in general.

New traditions - Was there something special your loved one looked forward to during the holiday season? What can you remember? Maybe they loved to sing holiday songs or bake cookies or write Christmas cards. Whatever it was, find a way to make it a new tradition to do in their memory. You can sign up to go caroling, bake cookies for a local shelter or help a local nonprofit send out their holiday mail. That way, you can be kind to others, remember the loved one you lost and celebrate the holiday at the same time.

Write a letter - If you're missing your loved one, try writing a letter to them about how you're feeling. You can structure it as a holiday letter...like an end-of-year update or even like a letter to Santa. You don't have to send your letter but putting your feelings down on paper might help you to think more clearly. You can also share your letter with other people who are missing your loved one too.

Display photos - When you're putting up decorations this year make sure to put out some photos of your loved one too. You can even decorate the photos to dress them up for the season. This way a visual reminder is never too far away.

Gifts - One way to help others feel the love of the individual you lost is to give out gifts from their belongings. It might be hard to part with some of their objects but giving them to others gives them a new life. You can bring someone joy just by going through your loved one's old possessions and finding something that they would like. It might make you feel happy, or kind of conflicted, but if you're able to part with some of their things this might be a nice way to incorporate your loved one into the season.

Food - Another great way to remember someone at the holidays is to prepare a dish that they loved. A large focus of the holiday season is on eating food, so making room to remember your loved one at the table can be a perfect fit. You can make the dish exactly the way they liked it or can put your own twist on it to blend old traditions and new ones.

Donations - Is there an organization they cared about or a cause they resonated with? You can take some time this season to donate time or money to the organization in your loved one's memory. Knowing their name is associated with some good out in the world can be a powerfully joyful feeling. It is a way to have their legacy live on.

First and foremost...Don't feel pressured to do anything! Let your heart be your guide! Only you know what's right for you! Be kind to yourself and give yourself time to grieve!

Harvest Sunday

On November 19, we celebrated our annual "Harvest Sunday" and we thank those who have contributed, to the Stewardship Committee for setting up and serving the potluck and those that helped clean up. Allocation of funds are:

Building/Repair fund (40%), Week-End Kids Hunger Project (15%), Cavalier County Transit (15%), Cavalier County Cancer Crusaders (15%), Langdon Area Schools lunch program for outstanding student balances (15%).

We will accept Harvest Sunday funds through December 3.

Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee will be meeting soon. Please help the committee and consider how you might serve our congregation this next year. Feel free to reach out to Carol Hart, Trevor Romfo, Bernie Goodman, Deidre Long, Patricia Scott or Val Olson.



New Member Sunday

New member welcome will be this Sunday, December 3. It is not too late to become a member at United. Please contact Pastor Jodi or Julie in the church office.

Prayers of...

Healing

Caven Dahl (Hodgkin's lymphoma), David Roy, Julie Nelson, Steve Bulat, Joyce Johnson, Ken Carlson, Lenora Olson, Arlaine Short and our brothers and sisters in Haiti.

Grief

The family of Dan and Peggy Fischer on the death of Dan's father, Victor Fischer.

The family of Juanita Domres on her death. Her funeral was held at United Lutheran on November 16.

Joy

A special 60th Wedding Anniversary to Jim & Faye Wilhelm on December 1.

We invite you to pray for those individuals listed. Please call the church office if you have additions to our prayer list.

Lefse Days

The Esther Circle and several volunteers made and sold some very delicious lefse. The proceeds will be used for mission projects locally, regionally and around the world. In the past year, donations have been given to the Cavalier County Emergency Food Pantry, Domestic Violence and Abuse Center, Dakota Oyate Lutheran Church, Doctors Without Borders and our Haiti Mission. Esther Circle also provides help with camperships and Vacation Bible School expenses. Thank you to all who helped!



Part of the Friday morning mixing and rolling crew.



Thursday evening potato prep crew.

All Saints Sunday

On November 5, we honored those who have started their life in Christ this past year through baptism at United Lutheran:

Kamden Mikkelsen, Annie Krom, Ender Krom, Janet Jerome, Russell Bata, Brooks Roy, Wesli J Witzel, Carsen Witzel, Jer-si Witzel, Aubrey Mostoller, Connor McMahon and Brynleigh Downs

And we remembered those whom this past year have passed on to life eternal through the promise of Jesus' resurrection:

Kathy Roy, Eileen Morris, Gary Ridley, Donald Haugen, Evelyn Witzel, Ole Pederson, Reuben Steinwand, Carol Goodman, Donald Gerth, Bil Reinhardt, Betty M. Nelson, Margaret Bata and George Schoenbeck



November Memorials

Elsie Robinson - Linden & Helen Johnson (general)

Victor Fischer - Corey & Julie Johnson (building)

Juanita Domres - Carol Hart (garden), Dale & Pam Luhmann (building), David & Ardyce Hennager (general)

Margaret Bata - Lawrence & Susan Fay Crockett (garden), Pat Jensen (quilting)

Betty Nelson - Keith Dahl (general), Pat Jensen (building)

Carol Goodman - Keith Dahl (music)

Bil Reinhardt - Mathew & Ashton Hedger (quilting), Pat Jensen (building)

Memorials may be mailed or dropped by the Church Office at United Lutheran at any time.

At-a-Glance and General Announcements

Thank You to:

Riley Jacobson, Brynlee Koons and Sophie Myrvik for their special music provided during the month of November.

Carol Hart for leading worship on November 26. You are appreciated!

Choice Financial for donating bank pens for the 25 Confirmation students to use.

Linda Timian for becoming our new funeral committee chairperson, replacing Joanne Field. We appreciate you Linda and we thank Joanne Field for all her years of service to United Lutheran as our past funeral chairperson!

The following outstanding individuals who have volunteered to do communion preparations on a monthly rotation basis: Helen Johnson/Shirley Robinson, PJ Rime/Carolyn Vik, Karen Pederson, Elaine Haugen, Karen Boe and Linda Olson.

Offering Envelopes

2024 offering envelopes are available to be picked up from the table in the fellowship hall. Please remember to not use your 2023 envelopes in the new year as each year the envelopes are renumbered.

If you have not used offering envelopes in the past but wish to, please let the church office know. If you have been giving regularly through bill pay, we did not prepare an envelope packet for you but we surely can, please let us know.

Bakeless Bake Sale

The Rachel Circle is still collecting funds for their bakeless bake sale. If you have contributed, thank you so much for your generosity. Funds from the bake sale are used to support mission work. If you have questions, please contact Pam Luhmann or Karen Boe.

Address Information

If you are leaving to go south and would like to continue receiving the newsletter, please let the church office know of this change. The newsletter is also found on our website unitedlangdon.org

Time & Talent Survey

United is truly blessed and has a history of ridiculous generosity. In celebrating the gifts we have and seeking to uncover even more, the Stewardship Committee would like you to fill out a time and talent survey so that we can utilize all our amazing gifts. The surveys were placed in the November 19 bulletin and we appreciate those that filled them out and placed in the baskets. If you missed out, feel free to fill one out at your leisure. The surveys are located on the shelf in the narthex and can be returned by sliding them under the office doors.

Poinsettias

All are welcome to purchase/display poinsettias for Christmas. They will be displayed on the altar through Advent and the Christmas season. Please be sure your name and who you would like to acknowledge are on the card.

Haiti Update

We are still in a holding pattern waiting for approval for Kerlange and family.

United Quilters

Quilters meet the 2nd Tuesday and Wednesday of each month (9AM-3PM), September-April. If you can cut, sew or tie, you are welcome to come and help fulfill our mission. All materials, tools and machines provided; little experience required!

Weather Cancellation Notice

If inclement weather should arise, Pastor and Council President will make any decisions to cancel worship by 7AM Sunday morning. A post will be made on our Facebook page and radio (KNDK) will also be notified.

Kitchen Pans & Lost Items

With all the recent events happening in the church, are you missing a pan? It may be in the church kitchen. Missing baby items, toys, sunglasses, readers, etc. they may be laying on the lost & found shelf in the narthex. Please check if one is yours!

Visitation

If you know of individuals that should be added to our visitation list, please share with the church office or write on the "tear-off" section of the bulletin and place in the offering plate.

Upcoming Events

Grafton Lutheran Bake Sale, Saturday, December 2, 10AM. Enjoy coffee, cider and homemade donuts. Lefse, cookies and candy available for purchase.

Carols & Candles, Sunday, December 17, 7PM, songs of comfort and joy, all are welcome, fellowship to follow.

Kids Christmas Fun Fest, All ages welcome, free event! Fun, games, crafts, snacks and music. Santa will be present. Option for parents to have an ID card made for their child. Sunday, December 3, 12-3PM at the Langdon American Legion. Sponsored by Post 98 American Legion Riders.

Covid Vaccine Information

CDC recommends adults age 65 and older to speak with their healthcare provider about receiving additional doses of COVID vaccine. People with compromised immune systems should receive a second dose of the updated COVID-19 vaccine, and potentially additional doses, for increased immune protection, with the approval of their healthcare provider.

Annual Meeting

United Lutheran Church will hold its Annual Meeting of the congregation after worship on Sunday, January 28, 2024.

Bring a dish to share and join in for a potluck and fellowship after the meeting.

Visit United online at www.unitedlangdon.org or call us at 701-256-2594.



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Return Service Requested

Worship and Ministry - December Schedule

December 3 - Worship with Holy Communion

Reader - TJ Henderson
Ushers - David Haslekaas & Hayes Haslekaas
Communion Assts - The Shane Henderson family
Acolytes - Dentyn Schill & Harper Jacobson
Projectionist - Tyson Gemmill
Coffee - Jeff & Betty Vikan

December 10 - Worship with Holy Communion (Christmas Program)

Reader - Liam Johnson
Ushers - Dan & Peggy Fischer
Communion Assts - Isabella Vikan,
Caleb McDonald & Karson Hansen
Acolytes - Sophie Myrvik & Jack Borchardt
Projectionist - Meredith Romfo

Christmas Program Lunch

December 17 - Worship with Holy Communion

Reader - Jamie Coyle
Ushers - Jamie & Amanda Coyle
Communion Assts - Deidre Long,
Terry & Janet Jacobson
Acolytes - Lexi Close & Maddyn Lykken
Projectionist - Brock Freer
Coffee - Elaine Haugen

December 24 - Worship (3PM Contemporary)

Reader - Steve Hart
Ushers - Dan & Peggy Fischer
Communion Prep - Corey & Julie Johnson
Communion Assts -

Acolytes - Josie Mikkelsen & Landree Lowery
Projectionist - Adam Hart

Council/Committees to fulfill remaining responsibilities

December 24 - Worship (5PM Traditional)

Reader - Reader
Ushers -
Communion Prep - Corey & Julie Johnson
Communion Assts -

Acolytes - Oakley Koons & Chloe Koons
Projectionist - Victor Long

Council/Committees to fulfill remaining responsibilities

December 31 - Worship

Reader -
Usher -
Acolytes - Gavin Gemmill & Kyler Farris
Coffee - Corey & Julie Johnson

*Thank you to Karen Pederson for being our
communion prep individual for the month of December!*