

English Lutheran News

OUR CHURCH IN OUR COMMUNITIES



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

January 2024



English Lutheran

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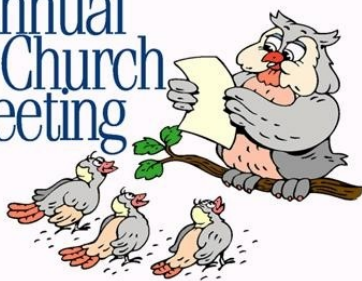
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**Annual
Church
Meeting**



January 28, 2024

@

English Lutheran Church

(following worship)

Our Mission:

Called to be shepherds, doing God's work, daily.

Christians in Action

Emerging Structure for Ministry Together

Our Local Coordinators have been reviewing proposed By-Laws in preparation for incorporation of Christians in Action as a legal entity. This is a new thing. In 2022 there was a moment when we were coming together as a partnership that we had the opportunity to incorporate, but the time was not right. There were too many unanswered questions and a sense that we wanted to start supporting each other in ministry quickly. Additional structure seemed to push meaningful ministry together down the road.

In hindsight, some things would have been easier over the past year if we had already incorporated. Bank accounts and web-site registrations would have been centralized. Online giving and email lists would have been easier to set up. Even the three successful call processes could have been handled differently.

The goal of Christians in Action has never been to establish a new institution (or parish-like) entity. Even so, our lives in ministry together will be aided by having a layer of legal organization (for bank accounts and online activities) and will offer a clear path for congregations to enter or leave the partnership and to continue participating in ways that strengthen their ministry.

At our upcoming annual meetings, each participating congregation will be asked 1) to vote to subscribe to the work of the partnership and 2) each congregation will elect a Local Coordinator who will sit on the board of the new non-profit organization.

This new layer does not change the organization of any individual congregation. Each congregation continues to have its own council and standing as an independent congregation. We all retain our own constitution and budget responsibilities.

As this newsletter is being prepared, there is still work to be done on specific provisions of the new organizational structure. Some things are clear:

- 1) Articles of Incorporation would be filed with the Secretary of State of North Dakota as a non-profit organization.
- 2) Bylaws would be prepared.
- 3) The new non-profit organization would request its own EIN (Employer Identification Number.)
- 4) The new non-profit organization would request to be part of the ELCA Group Exemption with the IRS. (This is the same Group Exemption that currently covers all 8 congregations.)

Please remain attentive to the conversations leading up to your congregation's annual meeting and direct questions to your Council or Local Coordinator.

Congregations participating in Christians in Action: (con't page 3)

Atonement, Jamestown Christ the King, Ellendale Emmanuel,
Gackle English, Medina Montpelier, Montpelier St. John's,
Jamestown Trinity, Jamestown Zion, Kulm

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ELC WELCA meeting minutes–December 12, 2023

- * **Present:** Julie Opp, Renae Olson, Jennifer Hayes, Ethel Heinle
- * **Secretary's Report:** minutes read from the meeting on 11-12-2023. Minutes were approved as read.
- * **Treasurer's Report:** All donations that were earmarked have been distributed (6) and the Angel Tree gifts.
- * Angel Tree gifts total \$87.96
- * Bryan Behm is giving a \$75 Menard's Rebate check to the WELCA group - will be used to purchase needed items for the church. Julie and Renae to get a list of items to purchase.
- * St. John's invoice for 2 confirmation Bibles and materials - \$102.96
- Old Business:**
- * Angel Tree gifts purchased - one girl and one boy
- * Hometown Christmas - Julie and Sharon donated a pan of bars each; Julie and Melissa worked three shifts
 - * Youth had a lock in and baked goods to hand out while caroling.
- * Caroling took place after the church was decorated on December 3rd. Handed out about 25 plates of goodies.
- * **New Business:**
- * WELCA booklets are completed and mailed/placed in church mailbox. If didn't get one, there are extras available.
 - * Annual meeting is January 21, 2024.
 - * World Day of Prayer is March 1, 2024 - ELC to host this year
- * Prayer Chain - calling list. Update who wants a phone call and who is okay to get a text message. Julie to call Karen to find out the list of names for calling only
- * How to contact Janet for prayer chain/information? Call or text?
 - * Church cleaning - all done **EXCEPT closets**, need to be done still
- * Contact Julie to help with this
- * Julie to clean ceiling fans
- * Fellowship Hall needs bulbs replaced in light fixtures
- * Think of special things to do or offer for coming year...special nights? Presentations?
 - * Project Ignite Light - possible service volunteering opportunity
 - * Freezer needs to be defrosted
 - * Blankets to be made during next youth group activity.
 - * **Next WELCA meeting - January 14, 2024 at 10 am**
 - * Meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer
- * Respectfully submitted by ELC WELCA Secretary, Jennifer Hayes

The Last Dress Rehearsal of the First Christmas

December 17, 2023 @ English Lutheran Church



**Youth
Readers**



English Decorating and Caroling

December 3, 2023



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2024 Monthly Book Study

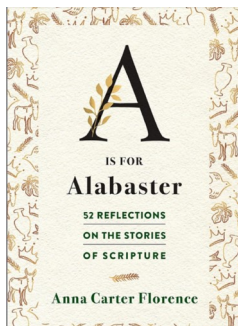
First Tuesdays at 5:00PM (start Feb. 3)

OR

First Wednesdays at 11:15AM (start Feb.5)

<< Each month we will read and discuss 5 reflections from Anna Carter Florence's new offering, *A is for Alabaster*.>>

Register on STJ SignUp Genius or in the church



**Unapproved minutes and are subject to change.*

ELC Council Meeting Minutes –December 6, 2023

Members Present: Phillip Hofmann, Kurt Hayes, Becky Greer, Ceph Dockter, Taylor Dockter, Pastor Stephanie, and Pastor Erik.

Members Absent:

Called to Order: 7:03 PM

Pastor Devotion and Report – Pastor Stephanie

- “All the colors of Christmas” – excerpt from book
- Discussion on favorite things about Christmas
- Helping with confirmation at St. Johns and helping Decan Tara. It’s been great to see all of the work and support the parents and confirmands have been doing for the NOLA trip.
- Council asked about a report from Decan Tara, and if we could get one every once in a while.

Past Minutes

- November 1 st meeting minutes were read by Taylor.
- Becky moved to approve the minutes. Ceph seconded. Motion carried.

Treasurer’s Report

- November’s Report was reviewed and discussed.
- Kurt moved to approve the Treasurer’s Report. Becky seconded. Motion carried.

Old Business

- Parsonage
 - Garage door – still needs attention. Phil reaching out to different garage door companies.
 - A ‘walk-through,’ will be conducted on December 14th , Phil and Ceph will complete this.
- AED Grant – Will check with Bill and Renae on grant progress.
- Christians in Action (CiA) – some of congregation not aware of website, working on informing congregations of connections to the website. English Lutheran website has a link to the CiA website. Reviewing what goals are moving forward. Should be an established 501c3 soon.
- Annual meeting date changed due to council members not being able to be present on the 21st . Becky motioned to change the date to Sunday, January 28th , 2024. Taylor seconded. Motion carried.
- Back up to annual meeting date will now be February 4 th , 2024.

New Business

- Youth gathering funds – funds available from a fundraising back in 2020. Question if this could be used for the youth NOLA event? Discussion on this. Will see how upcoming fundraisers go and discuss at future meeting.
- Question on issues with building being open when no one’s here, concerns with things being taken.
- Snow removal – have a leaf blower for lighter snow. Phil will reach out to Joey if he would be able to help with removal again.

- Next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 3rd , 2024 at 7:00 PM.
Meeting adjourned with the Lord's Prayer at 8:20 PM.
Submitted by Taylor Dockter

Exploring Acts: Synod-wide Scripture Read **with Dr. Eric Barreto**

WEEK 1: 1/7: Introductory Zoom (no assigned reading), **1/8:** Acts 1, **1/9:** Acts 2, **1/10:** Acts 3, **1/11:** Acts 4, **1/12:** Acts 5, **1/13:** Acts 6
WEEK 2: 1/14: Acts 7 & Zoom Conversation, **1/15:** Acts 8, **1/16:** Acts 9,
1/17: Acts 10, **1/18:** Acts 11, **1/19:** Acts 12, **1/20:** Acts 13
WEEK 3: 1/21: Acts 14 & Zoom Conversation, **1/22:** Acts 15, **1/23:** Acts 16,
1/24: Acts 17, **1/25:** Acts 18, **1/26:** Acts 19, **1/27:** Acts 20,
WEEK 4: 1/28: Acts 21 & Zoom Conversation, **1/29:** Acts 22, **1/30:** Acts 23, **1/31:** Acts 24, **2/1:** Acts 25, **2/2:** Acts 26, **2/3:** Acts 27, **2/4:** Acts 28 & Zoom Conversation

Rostered Leader Article- Pastor Stephanie Gossett



As the Christmas season wanes, we continue to celebrate the new year with the season of Epiphany. In many parts of the world, Christians will mark a blessing on their doorway at this time of year and hang bright stars to represent both the Star of Bethlehem that guided the wise men to the baby Jesus, and the light of Christ himself.

When I was in Germany in January of 2018, these Moravian Stars were everywhere, and especially in every church building. I was so excited this fall to find one of these stars at the religious supply store, and have it proudly hanging in my front window at the parsonage. Every time I look at the star, I am reminded of God's love come down to earth to dwell among us.

We do not always have a star as bright as the Bethlehem Star in our sky, but we do have the reflection of the sun's light on Earth's moon. This year I have been fortunate enough to experience the full moon on a clear night in the prairie. There are moments when the moon feels close enough to reach out and touch. It is so bright that capturing a clear image is difficult without a fancy camera. On those cloudless nights, the moon is definitely bright enough to wander outside without a flashlight as the moon reflects off the road and illuminates a safe path.



In our day to day life, Christ is the nourishing light in the darkness. The moon waxes and wanes, but the light of Christ is constant. During Advent we sing a prayer asking Christ to be our light and shine in our hearts, the darkness and the church, because we long for light, peace, hope, truth, etc. Beloved, the Holy Spirit is with us, even on the darkest of nights of our soul, to illumine our path and help guide us on our journeys of faith and life. In turn, we are Christ's light on earth as we allow the Spirit to work through us, and as we work together in this ministry partnership to shine that light brightly in Stutsman County and beyond.

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“Angels Among Us” Altar Guild

I want to thank all of you who helped with decorating our church for Christmas, the inside and outside decorating. Thanks to the youth who baked the cookies and made the trays for caroling. Thank you to our 19 people who went caroling and we did not wear boots! We went to about 30 homes. Thank you to Daniel Olson for having the trailer and driving us around. Thanks to all of you who shared poinsettias with us. Thanks to Patty for serving the month of December.
God Bless and may you all have a blessed 2024—Julie