

December 2022  
**NEWSLETTER**



**Milnor Lutheran and  
Immanuel Lutheran Churches  
Rick Bryant**

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### Rick's Column

Greetings and Peace to you all,

As I write this letter, Thanksgiving has just passed, and it is my sincere hope that you all had a wonderful Thanksgiving filled with abundant blessings. I think we can all agree that we in our churches and community are very blessed in so many ways. The weather is getting colder as of late and it appears winter is close at hand. Harvest is behind us and now our farmers and ranchers can hopefully take a well-deserved rest. Excellent harvest conditions and better than expected yields were true gifts from God.

In church news, we are now in the season of Advent. Advent means "coming," and we celebrate this season for four Sundays prior to Christmas. This is a wonderful time of the year as we anticipate Christmas and the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ. Christmas is always a glorious time of the year filled with eagerness and excitement for all of us. I sincerely hope that each and every one of you has a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. The upcoming year is sure to be filled with many amazing things and happenings in our church and community, and I am so excited to be a part of what God has in store for us.

Recently, MLC was honored to host Darrell Costain and hear about his involvement with Furniture Mission in Fargo. His presentation was eye-opening and made us all aware of the great need that the less-fortunate have for furniture. Thank you all for the donations and support for this wonderful mission, and we will continue to accept donations from anyone wishing to donate.

On December 11th, our Sunday school kids will put on their annual Christmas program during the 9:30 service at MLC. The kids and staff work hard on this event and it is truly a joy to watch. These memories last forever. Also happening on December 4<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m. is WELCA's annual Christmas Tea. All area women are invited to this event, which will feature Jocelyn Birkliid, Miss Teen North Dakota, speaking on feeding America. There will also be snacks, music, and door prizes.

We will cease confirmation for the Christmas break after our class on Wednesday, December 21<sup>st</sup>. We will resume classes January 4th, 2023. The Christmas Eve service for ILC will be at 7:00 p.m. As for MLC, the Christmas Eve service will be at 5:00 p.m. This year, since Christmas Day falls on Sunday, both councils have decided to cancel worship that day.

Tracy Nelson would like to again distribute "Sunshine Baskets" in our community this holiday season. She is asking for donations of money and items to fill these baskets that brighten the day for shut-ins and others with no family in our community. (See more information on Page 7).

In closing, I share with you the words of 2 Corinthians 3:18, *"We all, with unveiled faces, are reflecting the glory of the Lord and are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory; this is from the Lord who is the spirit."* These words describe all of you children of God, who glorify Him in the amazing work that you do and the way you live your lives. I am honored to be among you. May His blessings be upon you all.

Rick

## PARISH PRAYER LIST

People on our prayer lists are *Pastor Elwood Skarpness, Toni Claus, Mary Alice Mund, Lorie Skarpness, and Mary Engst*. Please keep them in your prayers. If you or your loved one would like to be on our prayer list, please contact the church office.



## December Birthdays

- |                   |                     |                        |
|-------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| 2 - James Foley   | 8 - Brian Fuhrman   | 24 - Harlan Hogness    |
| 3 - Alison Kottke | Blair Michels       | 25 - Curt Hogness      |
| Tallulah Schutt   | 9 - Chris Larson    | 26 - Avyn Hogness      |
| 4 - Bill Pribula  | 10 - Dana Gainor    | 27 - Aiden Heitkamp    |
| 5 - Teegan Olson  | 14 - Janis Claus    | 28 - Mary Alice Mund   |
| 6 - Pat Freese    | Adam Kottke         | 29 - Dale Torreson     |
| Marshall Lien     | 21 - Doug Martin    | 30 - Melissa Rasmussen |
| Brad Lunneborg    | 22 - Allison Yagow  | 31 - Jordaan Larson    |
| 7 - Melinda Mund  | 23 - Allen Peterson | Dawn Mund              |
|                   | Shelby Mund         | Lonnie Rotenberger     |



***Please join us!***  
***Sunday, December 4th, at 2:00 p.m.***

## ***WELCA CHRISTMAS TEA*** **Milnor Lutheran Church**

The speaker will be Jocelyn Birklid, Miss Teen North Dakota. Her platform topic presentation will be "Feeding America- Operation Give Back". There will also be music, Christmas goodies, door prizes, and fellowship!

***All area women are invited!***  
***Please bring a food pantry item.***

# Milnor Lutheran Council Meeting Minutes

November 10, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.

Present: Deb Wagner, Bill Pribula, Kelly Arth, Randy Syrstad, Diane Wallin;

Absent: DeNae Mahler, Jason Kottke

**Meeting was opened with prayer.**

**Approval of Meeting Minutes and Treasurers report from October:** Motion made to accept reports by Randy Syrstad and seconded by Kelly Arth – motion carried.

## Committee Business

- **Worship** – Diane will check with Darrell Costain, Furniture Mission of Red River Valley, to see if he can reschedule to present to congregation on November 20th.
- **Stewardship** – 4th Qtr mission is Furniture Mission of Red River Valley, looking at doing something special for Christmas. We are also currently promoting a bone marrow drive that is led by Andrea Yagow in memory of Steve Ellefson.
- **Education** – Christmas program is scheduled for Dec. 11th – will have practice on the 4th & 7th.
- **Properties/Grounds & Parsonage**
  - o Altar Windows – (tabled item- waiting on contractor)
  - o Exterior wood on bottom of the stained-glass windows. (tabled item- waiting on contractor)
  - o Landscape cement timbers for flower beds - Cement timbers are here-- will plan on completing process in spring.
  - o Basement Project update – Contractor expected to start this month.
  - o Church floor tile – Diane continues to look for possible replacement tiles.
  - o Lights on the altar were all replaced except the ones right above the Altar as the lift wouldn't work there. They are going to get a 35-foot ladder from fire department to change those out. Special thank you to Diana Halmrast for her help with using the lift from the MAAC.

**Pastor's Report:** We have 8 students for confirmation. Will restart classes after Thanksgiving. Wahpeton conference meeting this week. Funeral for Anne Ringdahl is planned for Monday at 10:30am. Discussed possible events we can plan as a congregation such as

movie night, Bible study etc. Pastor will keep us updated on possible events.

## Old Business

- Large TV for fellowship hall update – sitting in fellowship hall. Waiting on wiring until it can be mounted.
- Direct stream video camera – sound has already been upgraded in fellowship hall, Deb will follow-up with DRN to see if they can assist with direct stream since it wouldn't involve audio.
- Built-in cabinets fellowship hall – or Library/Cry Room update – still waiting on bids
- Outlet/network connection in Fellowship Hall – Per email from Jason – he met with Crossroads at the fellowship hall and discussed where outlet should go. We are currently in the queue to get it installed. There was some discussion about running ethernet. DRN did confirm when we upgraded the routers, that if Crossroads runs the cable, they would be able to connect it to the access point.
- Hot water in kitchen – This is fixed, the switch on hot water heater was shut off.
- Pastor's contract is up in December. Bill will be working with Grace on this.

## New Business

- We have some leftover money from donations at the Synod dinner. Diane made a motion to donate that money to Sargent County Food Bank. Kelly seconded, motion carried.
- Ice removal discussed. The city currently doesn't have sand/salt mixture and is not able to assist with the parking lot. Will continue working on the sidewalk this week.

**Next Meeting: December 14th @ 6:15 pm.**

Deb Wagner  
Council Secretary

October Income	\$ 8,927.22
October Expenses	11,082.91
Net Loss	( 2,155.69)
Year-to-Date	\$18,248.40

***December Altar Guild***  
***Kristie Johnson and Linda Robbins***

**Day of Doing Quilters will meet December 13th and 14th at 9:00 a.m.**

**Yarn Angels will meet December 13th at 1:00 p.m.**

**WELCA Christmas Tea--Sunday, December 4th, at 2:00 p.m.**

**WELCA MINUTES**

Milnor Lutheran WELCA met in regular session on Monday, November 14, 2022 at 10:00 AM. The meeting was called to order by President Dorothy Pribula. There were 5 members present.

The secretary's report was read and approved. The treasurer's report was read. The balance as of Oct. 31 was \$8,897.72. The Love Offering and Fall Bazaar Income minus expenses is as follows:

Love Offering Income- \$2,189.00

Fall Bazaar Quilt Tickets- \$1,621.78

Supper- \$980.08

Silent Auction & Bake Sale- \$1,781.95

Total Fall Bazaar Income- \$4383.81

**Old Business:** The Fall Bazaar was discussed. The profits were similar from the Silent Auction compared to the Live auction held in past years.

**New Business:** The Christmas Tea will be held Sunday, Dec. 4, at 2:00 PM. Our speaker will be Jocelyn Birkliid from Lisbon. She will also play a piano solo. Door prizes will be given, and lunch served. A Food Pantry drive will be held that day and donated to the Ransom County Food Pantry. A motion was made to pay the guest speaker \$250.

The Budget was reviewed. The total budget for 2022 was \$3,180.00. It was decided to increase several donations for 2023. The new budget was approved. The next meeting will be April 17, 2023 at 10:00AM.

Acting Secretary,  
Dorothy Pribula

**DECEMBER SHEPHERDING SCHEDULE**

Leaders: Tracy Lien, Dorothy Pribula, Paula Tayer

December 4 -- Ushers: Bob & Darla Schutt; Lector: Bob Schutt;

Communion: Bill & Dorothy Pribula

December 11 -- Ushers: Kris & Tracy Lien

December 18 -- Ushers: Bruce & Dayna Speich; Lector: Deb Wagner;

Communion: Brian & Paula Tayer

December 24--Ushers: Bill & Dorothy Pribula, Jerome & Kristie Johnson; Lector: Bill Pribula

Communion: Dorothy & Kristie

December 25-- NO WORSHIP SERVICE



**Christmas Poinsettias**

MLC members wanting to donate toward Christmas poinsettias in memory of or in honor of loved ones or friends should contact Kristie Johnson (427-5259) or Connie Robbins (427-5536) by December 11th.

## MLC MEMORIALS

### In memory of Diana Crandall

From James & Judith Anderson (ML Cemetery)  
Jeanette Buskohl (ML Cemetery)  
Laverne & Carolyn Colby (ML Cemetery)  
Costain Family (ML Cemetery)  
Ed & Janice Larson (Day of Doing Quilters)  
Marshall & Rachel Lien (ML Cemetery)  
Hap & Gail McCleery (Yarn Angels)  
Jon & Kim Mund (ML Cemetery)  
Randy & LaRae Odegard (ML Cemetery)  
Pat Olson (MLC)  
David & Connie Robbins (ML Cemetery)  
Jolene Schwalk (MLC)  
Phylis Springer (Day of Doing Quilters)  
Teresa Toyne-Dick (MLC)  
Alice Wehlander (ML Cemetery)

### In memory of Deanne Schutt Else

From Janis Claus (Yarn Angels)  
Dick & Pat Kuehn (Sunday School)  
Ed & Janice Larson (Day of Doing Quilters)  
Curt & Vi Mahler (Yarn Angels)  
Alice Wehlander (Sunday School)  
Mervin & Karen Wohler (MLC)

### In memory of Anne Ringdahl

From Linda Costain (Day of Doing Quilters)  
Pat Sebens Freese (Day of Doing Quilters)  
Monty & Bobbi Haugen (ML Cemetery)  
Loren & Leone Kramer (Luther League)  
Ed & Janice Larson (Day of Doing Quilters)  
Marshall & Rachel Lien (ML Cemetery)  
Kathy Marquette (Day of Doing Quilters)  
Judy Ringdahl (MLC)  
Kevin Ringdahl (MLC)  
David & Connie Robbins (Altar Guild)  
Mike & Deb Schutt (MLC)  
Diane Wallin (MLC-Furniture Mission)  
Mervin & Karen Wohler (MLC)

### In memory of Jean Holmgren

From Jon & Kim Mind (Day of Doing Quilters)

### In memory of Inga Johnson

From Carl & Oline Nelson (Day of Doing Quilters)

### In memory of Marian Millerhagen

From Mervin & Karen Wohler (MLC)

## Help Us Fight Blood Cancer!

Join the Be the Match (<https://bethematch.org/>) registry to donate marrow or stem cells. **We are hosting a virtual drive.** A blood stem cell donation can be a cure for blood cancer, sickle cell, and other deadly diseases.

Guidelines to register:

- you must be **between the ages of 18-40**
- you must meet the health guidelines
- you must be willing to donate to anyone you are a match for

Please see the end of this article for more information about how to register to be a donor. The drive will last until the end of December.

In April 2022, Steve Ellefson, member of Milnor Lutheran Church, passed away from a long journey from the diagnosis of Myelodysplastic Syndrome (MDS). His 60<sup>th</sup> birthday would've been upcoming on November 24, 2022. Steve left behind his wife Debbe; daughters Shannon (Scott) Berndt, SaRae Ellefson, Sharlie (Trent) Toso and his grandchildren Layton, Paisley, Vaiah, Hailyn, and Tripp, all who called him Papa and were his pride and joy. In memory of Steve, we are sponsoring a stem cell/bone marrow drive through Be the Match (<https://bethematch.org/>) which is a national marrow donor program.

Steve's journey: It all began in October 2020 with severe stomach pains. This resulted in Steve taking a trip to the ER. From that ER visit, his blood count was low which led to further tests. From October to December there was a lot of testing and waiting. Steve was diagnosed with MDS in December 2020, and after being diagnosed Steve did several

rounds of chemo in order to try to clean the blood, resulting in red blood cell count improvement. He was at 7.3 when he was diagnosed (normal is 14 -17.5 for males). When his blood count was low, he would need to get blood transfusions to improve his energy levels. In September 2021, the stem cell transplant preparation started at University of Minnesota Medical Center (M Health Fairview which is part of a nonprofit integrated health system). The transplant procedure was on October 5<sup>th</sup> and he stayed in the hospital until October 28<sup>th</sup>. After the transplant, Steve had to stay within 30 minutes from the hospital at all times and have a caretaker so Steve & his wife, Debbe, made their temporary home at The Residence Inn Hotel which was approximately 5 minutes from the hospital. He had daily appointments at first and those progressed to a few times a week. Debbe had to take care of the saline flushes once per day on the days he didn't have appointments. Steve was supposed to get to 100% but only got to 67% so in December, it was determined he had to do it again. His next transplant was January 28<sup>th</sup> and he was released on February 13<sup>th</sup>. On March 16<sup>th</sup>, Graft vs Host Disease (GVHD) set in. The doctors were treating this, and he was in the hospital with this until April 8<sup>th</sup> and then he had a stroke. He took a turn for the worse after that. Myelodysplastic Syndrome (MDS) is a group of bone marrow disorders in which the bone marrow does not produce enough healthy blood cells. The bone marrow functions as a factory that manufactures three kinds of blood cells: red blood cells, white blood cells, and platelets. Healthy bone marrow produces immature blood cells called stem cells, progenitor cells, or blasts that normally develop into mature, fully functional red blood cells, white blood cells, and platelets. In MDS, these stem cells may not mature and may accumulate in the bone marrow or they may have a shortened life span, resulting in fewer than normal mature blood cells in the circulation. MDS is not inherited. In fact, it is a very rare occasion when family members, including siblings, are diagnosed with MDS.

Doctors match bone marrow donors to patients based on their human leukocyte antigen (HLA) tissue type. It was explained to Steve & Debbe that in a world of Fords, Chevys, and Cadillacs, Steve was a Lamborghini (rare). His one and only donor was a 57 year-old female and she was an international donor (outside of the U.S.).

**The process of a donor is actually very simple when you consider you could be saving a life!** If you are chosen as a match, there are 2 ways to donate. The most common is Peripheral Blood Stem Cell Donation. In the 5 days leading up to the donation, you will be given injections of a drug (Filgrastin) that will increase the number of stem cells in your bloodstream. Some of your blood is removed through a needle in one arm and passed through a machine that separates out the blood forming cells. The remaining blood is returned to the other arm. The 2<sup>nd</sup> way occurs about 15% of the time when the doctor will request a marrow donation. This is an outpatient procedure that takes about 1 hour. You do not feel any pain as you are under anesthesia. The recovery for this procedure should not prevent you from normal daily activities; most donors will feel sore only for a few days.

When you sign up online, you will receive a swab kit at your home, and you swab your own inner cheek and the kit will be returned in a postage-paid envelope. To sign up, click on the QR code below or text ELF to 61474 (Elf was Steve's famous nickname). Remember, you must be between the ages of 18-40.



A marrow or stem cell transplant may be someone's only hope for a cure. Learn how marrow donation works, the steps of a patient transplant, steps of donation, and factors that can impact the likelihood of finding a match. See <https://bethematch.org/transplant-basics/> for more details.

Any questions can be directed to Andrea Hogness – 680-0246 or [andrea.hogness@gmail.com](mailto:andrea.hogness@gmail.com).

Milnor Lutheran Stewardship Committee – Andrea Hogness, DeNae Martinson, & Diane Wallin

# Milnor Lutheran Sunday School

Worship Service - 9:30 a.m.

Sunday School - 10:30 - 11:15 a.m.

- There will be practices for the Christmas program during the Sunday School time on December 4th (10:30 am) and on Wednesday, December 7th, at 4:30 p.m.
- The Christmas program will be Sunday, December 11th, during the worship service (9:30 a.m.)  
Rolls, juice and coffee will be served after the program for a free will donation to Sunday School.
- After the program, we will be on Christmas break until January 8, 2023.

*If you have questions about Sunday School, please contact  
Greta Buskohl (427-5646) or Mary Yagow (427-5023).*

## Sunday School Lunches

December 4th--Braylon W & Cannon F, Layton,  
Vaiah & Hailyn B, Willow T, Hadley L



## MLC SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

*You are invited to our Sunday School Christmas Program,  
which will be part of the worship service  
on Sunday, December 5th, at 9:30 a.m.*

*The Sunday School will be serving rolls, juice, and coffee afterwards  
for a free will donation.  
Everyone welcome!*

## Sunshine Christmas Baskets

Tracy Nelson is heading up her Sunshine group to deliver Christmas baskets to shut-ins and those without family. They are collecting items to put in the baskets and would appreciate donations of money or baked goods, fruit, slippers with grippers, Christmas hand towels, small Christmas items, etc. They are also collecting money to help a needy family with four kids, ages 11 months to 4 years. They are planning to put baskets together on December 9th at 10:00 a.m. If you can help, please call or text Tracy at 680-1384. Donations can be given to Tracy or left at the church.

## Thank You!

--WELCA wishes to extend a special thank you to all that attended the WELCA Bazaar on October 9th. Thanks to those who provided baskets and baked goods for the auction and to those who worked in the kitchen and provided bars.

--Day of Doing Quilters and Yarn Angels wish to thank J & M Printing, Jeff Roeder, and Dayna & Bruce Speich for delivering their handmade goods to charitable organizations in Fargo.

## Furniture Mission to the Rescue!

On Sunday, November 20<sup>th</sup>, Darrell Costain shared an update on Furniture Mission of the Red River Valley (ice-delayed from November 13<sup>th</sup>). He reported FMRRV has now served over 1,000 clients and distributed over 12,000 pieces of furniture to families experiencing a traumatic event. This level of service produced the need to purchase a second truck. It's their goal to pay off the loan this year through a "Fund the Fleet" campaign. Happily, donations of \$863 were received to help FMRRV with this cause. Yarn Angels continue their support by sending several more bags of afghans home with Darrell.

Milnor Lutheran will continue to receive funds for this purpose until the end of December. Since our in-church ministries are well-funded, please consider giving gifts in honor or memory of a loved one to Furniture Mission. Just put that designation on your gift.

After Darrell's presentation, Rick shared a story from his life that highlights the importance of FMRRV's ministry. He talked about the financial difficulties he, his Mom and siblings went through after his parents divorced. He remembers using cardboard boxes as end tables. He and his brother slept on Army cots his Mom bought at a garage sale. He said they would have been thrilled to have received the help FMRRV now offers.

## Our Special Christmas Project

Milnor Lutheran is also sponsoring a special Christmas project that will benefit young clients of Furniture Mission. We are accepting new and gently used stuffed toys for this purpose. Hopefully, receiving something cuddly will be a blessing to children going through a time of crisis. Please put the unwrapped toys in the tote in the narthex.

Thank you for helping our neighbors who are experiencing difficult times!

Milnor Lutheran Stewardship Committee  
Andrea Hogness, DeNae Martinson and Diane Wallin



### ***Immanuel Lutheran Church December***

***Ushers: Bud Kuehn and Mike Martinson***

***Altar Guild: Linda Martinson***

***Communion: December 4th***

***Christmas Program & Potluck: Dec. 18th at 11:00 a.m.***

***Christmas Eve Service: Dec. 24th at 7:00 p.m.***

***Worship: 11:00 a.m. every Sunday except Dec. 25th***