

*No one can serve two masters. Either they will hate the one and love the other, or they will be devoted to the one and despise the other. (Mt 6:24)*

In between the time of serving as a family minister in an ELCA congregation and becoming a certified pastor of the LCMC, I was a Christian counselor near Des Moines, IA. The journey to Christian counseling began with a letter. I have a Master of Theology degree through Wartburg Theological Seminary and a Master of Counseling degree through Sioux Falls Seminary. In the Summer of 2009 at the ELCA national assembly, the ELCA opened the door to ordination for people in committed long term monogamous same sex relationships. The church I served had two ordained pastors as well as me on their pastoral staff. Following this ELCA vote I wrote a letter to the other pastors stating how this action is against God's Word. Jesus proclaimed marriage is between a man and a woman in Matthew 19:4-6. (Ask an ELCA pastor why Jesus' words of Matthew 19 have no value in the ELCA and you will get an explanation on how we need to interpret those words through the social-historical context of the time in which Jesus was protecting women and not making a statement on marriage.) The lead pastor took this letter as a resignation letter not an opportunity for pastoral discussion. My ministry shifted from bringing healthy systemic family concepts into a church ministry to bringing God's Word into counseling opportunities.

During this two-year counseling experience, I was surprised by how many people I was counseling who were getting out of cult communities. These people were well educated some even had master's degrees. I sought to understand what caused people to be willing to live in a communal community surrendering wealth, personal choices, and blind obedience to a leader. I think this danger for toxic blind obedience is in each one of us. On the way to church this past Sunday, my son Joseph summed up this toxic servanthood hiding behind the idea of freedom. "Freedom is an ideal we all seek. However, we need to be cautious to what gives our freedom. After WWI, German citizens sought freedom from rapid inflation and humiliation. Freedom was offered by the Nazi party. In Russia, people sought freedom from the feudal system of the Tzar. This led to the rise of Communism and one of the bloodiest dictators of all time in Joseph Stalin. When we seek freedom be it from responsibilities, pain, fear, or a ruling party, one needs to consider who offers the freedom." I would add that this misunderstood idea of freedom has to do with the foundational truths by which one lives. Are your foundational truths guided by human knowledge or God's wisdom revealed in the Bible? Sometimes human knowledge seeks to be the base on which Scripture is interpreted. Educated people will use subjective tools like 'social-historical context' to twist Scripture to meet their agendas.

I invite you to seek a truth base that begins in Holy Scripture and is guided by the Holy Spirit. On Wednesday, January 19th through Wednesday, April 6th we will be offering at Wangen Prairie a 12-week discussion on "The Truth Project." The "Truth Project" will seek how we can be Scripture led as we develop a Christian worldview on subjects like: Philosophy, Ethics, Anthropology, Theology, Science, History, Sociology, Law, Community and Service. From 4:30-5:30 my family will gather in the basement for a meal. You are more than welcome to join us for this meal, let Cyndi or me know if you can eat with us. At 5:30 my daughter, Jalie will be in the basement available to babysit any children while their parent(s) participate in the "Truth Project". From 6-7:30 I will facilitate the "Truth Project" presentation and discussion in the sanctuary of Wangen Prairie.

Please give me a call if you have any questions or visit our website:  
[www.wangenprairie.org](http://www.wangenprairie.org)

In Christ's Loving Embrace,

Pastor Shannon Bauer (507) 298-7719

Pastor: Shannon Bauer  
[BlessedToServe@yahoo.com](mailto:BlessedToServe@yahoo.com)  
Office 507-263-2926  
Cell 507-298-7719

Office Hours by appointment - please call  
or email Pastor Shannon

Worship Sunday 9:00 a.m.  
Sunday School 10:00 a.m.

Music: Prudy Busch  
<http://www.wangenprairie.org>

## Council Minutes:

A short council meeting was held on Sunday, 12-18-21.

Pastor opened the meeting with prayer.

Cyndi gave the treasurer's report

It was moved to give 15% of the December offering to victims in Kentucky where the tornado hit so hard. This money will go through Thrivent as they will match the offering dollar for dollar.

Cyndi told us our insurance will be going up \$800 this year.

Dave Flom will plow our snow this year.

Pastor said the Truth Project will start in January on Wednesday nights.

In Christ,

Larry Beckman

### UPCOMING EVENTS:

**January 16, 2022: Annual Meeting -**  
Potluck following service with meeting to follow meal.

**January 19, 2022: The Truth Project -**  
See Pastor Shannon's article for more information on this event!



*December Missions: Union Gospel Mission = \$508.50*

*Kentucky Tornado Victims\*\*\* (Thrivent will match funds through Samaritan's Purse) = \$508.50*

*Helping Hands Fund: \$385.00*

## MONTHLY MISSION: Voice of the Martyrs

The Voice of the Martyrs is a nonprofit, interdenominational Christian missions organization dedicated to serving our persecuted family worldwide through practical and spiritual assistance and leading other members of the body of Christ into fellowship with them.

### VOM'S PURPOSES

To encourage and empower Christians to fulfill the Great Commission in areas of the world where they are persecuted for sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ.

To provide practical relief and spiritual support to the families of Christian martyrs.

To equip persecuted Christians to love and win to Christ those who are opposed to the gospel in their part of the world.

To undertake projects of encouragement, helping believers rebuild their lives and Christian witness in countries where they have formerly suffered oppression.

To promote the fellowship of all believers by informing the world of the faith and courage of persecuted Christians, thereby inspiring believers to a deeper level of commitment to Christ and involvement in His Great Commission.

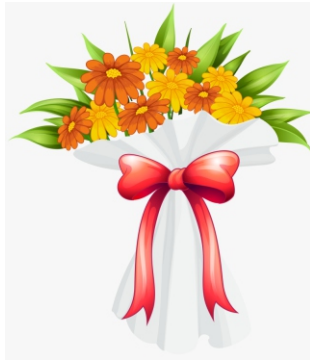


For more information go to [persecution.com](http://persecution.com)

## SECOND MONTHLY MISSION: LCMC Disaster Mission Fund\*\*\*

\*\*\*We are switching the December and January second missions, due to a Thrivent matching dollars opportunity. So for December we donated to the Kentucky Tornado Victims with a matching grant through Thrivent-Samaritan's Purse, and will donate to the LCMC Disaster Relief Fund for January.

Thank  
You!



Thank you for the donations of pillows & hair products. They are greatly appreciated! ☺

Claven  
of  
Hope

Kenyon-Wanamingo Elementary School

Wangen Prairie Lutheran Church ~

Thank you so much for your thoughtful donation! We are so fortunate to have the support of the congregation to lift up our students and families. We appreciate your generosity!

Happy holidays! Thank you, ☺  
Kenyon-Wanamingo  
Students  
Families  
Communities  
Schools



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## Weekly Verse to Ponder



January 2 to January 8: *For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.* Romans 6:23

January 9 to January 15: *But God demonstrated His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.* Romans 5:8

January 16 to January 22: *That if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.* Romans 10:9

January 23 to January 29: *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* 1 John 1:9

Please email Sarah at [dandsbanner@gmail.com](mailto:dandsbanner@gmail.com), call 507-789-4611 during the day, or call 913-685-3031 (cell phone) to leave a message if you want anything included in bulletin or newsletter. Bulletin deadline is Thursday evening, newsletter is the 25th of the month.



**Greetings!**

This is not the Christmas letter we expected to be writing this year. We expected to be telling you "Everything is much the same as last year: continuing our ministry at First Lutheran in Mitchell, preparing for Christmas services, and looking ahead to 2022."

That all changed on Sunday afternoon, January 10. Heidi's speech became garbled. The right side of her face was drooping. We thought she was having a stroke. We raced to the Mitchell hospital.

At the hospital, a quick CT scan revealed her symptoms were caused by a tumor in her head – another meningioma in the same left-side location as the tumor that almost killed her in 1997.

Heidi was transferred to a Sioux Falls hospital and had surgery to remove the tumor. The tumor had damaged part of her skull, so a titanium plate had to be placed over the large opening in her cranium. The surgery was a success, but Heidi needed about a month of physical therapy & speech therapy (the tumor had compressed the part of her brain most related to speech).

By the end of February, Heidi was happily done with therapy. But Lon noticed the swelling on the left side of her head was increasing rather than decreasing as expected, and Heidi was eating less and sleeping more. Despite her protestations, Lon took her to the neuro-surgical clinic in Sioux Falls. The doctor quickly diagnosed a serious infection and scheduled surgery for the next morning.

The surgery revealed a great deal of infection – both outside and inside of the titanium plate. The plate was removed, and her scalp was stitched back together. Following this surgery, she had to wear a helmet to protect her unprotected brain.

The new plan of action: heavy doses of antibiotics to rid her of the infection. Then a third surgery to insert a piece of bio-polymer 3-D printed to exactly fit the opening in her skull.

That surgery was successful; however, Heidi suffered a stroke during surgery. She was unable to talk or move her right hand and arm, but could move her right leg a few inches. She remained hospitalized for 4 more days. She was then transferred in-patient rehab.

Heidi was in the rehab unit for 3 weeks and made good progress working with physical, speech, and occupational therapists. The therapists were impressed with how hard Heidi worked. She never quit. She never said "No more."

She was the kind of patient they dreamed about. When she was discharged in mid-June:

- She could speak some – enough to usually make herself understood.
- She was walking with a cane.
- She could move her right arm fairly well, but could not do much with her hand.

In the meantime, while all this was going on...

- We decided to resign from our congregation in Mitchell and retire after 38 years as pastors.
- We bought a Sioux Falls townhome that was still under construction.
- We moved Paul to Sioux Falls.

Fortunately, we had a place to go while we waited for the townhome to be completed: our lake cabin near Cloquet. Heidi started doing rehab three days a week in Cloquet. On off days we did rehab exercises at home and went for walks. By early July, she was no longer using a cane.

(One apparent byproduct of the stroke: Heidi finds Lon to be funnier than in the past. She claims it's "better to laugh than cry," but Lon thinks she is finally able to recognize the full depth of his humor.)

We moved into our townhome on August 31, and Heidi started rehab in Sioux Falls. At this point, her improvements are more incremental – which she finds incredibly frustrating. But the good news is she is still improving! (And after having her head shaved 3 times, her hair is growing back nicely... and white!) Our kids and their spouses have been incredibly helpful and supportive during these many months. Kara and Dean gave us a special gift of joy when Cailin Meribel Pies was born August 5. She is our fifth grandchild. She has a lot to live up to since all of our grandkids are beautiful and above average in every way.

We are thankful for God's continuing care and for the prayers of thousands!

New address: 2711 E Meadowside Place  
Sioux Falls SD 57108

Email Heidi at HeidiKvanli@gmail.com  
Email Lon at LKvanli@me.com

*PASTOR JON  
+ PASTOR HEIDI*



Lon, Heidi, and Grandchildren



STATE OF MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
MINNESOTA VETERANS HOME - HASTINGS

1200 East 18th Street • Hastings, Minnesota 55033 • (651) 539-2400  
MinnesotaVeteran.org • 1-888-LinkVet

December 2021

Dear Wangen Prairie Church Members,

Thank you so much for the wonderful donation of bags and bags and bags of wonderful clothing and other items for our veterans at the Hastings Veterans Home. I am so sorry that this thank you is late. Your donations were quickly put into use in our clothing distribution room. These donations are so important as our veterans are on very tight budgets. Thank you for bringing the spirit of Christmas into our Home. Blessings to you all.

The Hastings Veterans Home is the home for 120 veterans here, and 40 more in the Minneapolis DOMS. Our three paths program allows each veteran to progress as they are able. The Fire Path allows veterans to obtain education, job skills and self-management skills to return to the community. The Earth Path allows the veterans to maintain a safe living environment while continuing their lives after recovery. The Water Path allows the veterans to learn to manage sobriety and mental illnesses and put them back to the road to a healthy life. We have a loving staff who works continually to bring joy into the lives of our veterans. Your partnership makes all this possible. Thank you so much.

Sincerely,

Sue Register

Volunteer Services

Susan.register@state.mn.us

651-539-2442, Cell 651-212-8812

Thank  
You!



December 2021

Dear Friends,

Greetings to you in the name of Jesus, our Savior and Lord. As I write this end of year letter to you, the words that continue to go through my mind are simply: Thank You! Thank you for your love for the Lord. Thank you for loving, connecting, and caring for the people of God you've been called to serve. Thank you for all the ways you and your congregation are praying for, reaching out to, and loving and serving those in your community who don't yet know Jesus as Savior and Lord.

This past year has been one, in which, we have experienced continued growth in our association. Receiving many new congregations and planting others. Receiving new pastors and seminarians. Revitalizing and preparing to launch new districts and fellowships. In all this and more, God has been at work impacting people with His love and His power, here in the United States, and overseas.

As you can imagine, your financial support for the association has been important to us. Your finances have enabled our small but extremely dedicated staff (only six staff members for almost 1,000 congregations) to serve our congregations in several different ways, that according to your testimonies, have been helpful and timely. You've also enabled us to serve LCMC congregations and leaders by working with and training district and fellowship coordinators and leaders, who in turn, have been reaching out to serve the congregations and leaders in their regions.

This past year your finances have enabled us to develop and launch a new ministry that is going to be especially helpful to smaller congregations and leaders, to church planters, and to our mid-large size churches and leaders as well. This new ministry is called *The LeaderCare Initiative*. This ministry is going to enable us to serve you at the grassroots, regional, district, and fellowship levels by loving, connecting, and caring for leaders – ordained and lay. Leaders who are being loved, connected, and cared for are helped to grow in health and maturity, which will increase their effectiveness as leaders. We are also at work developing more ministries and services that will be especially important to our smaller congregations in the next 2-3 years.

Your financial support is enabling us to provide all of this as well as the many administrative services that make having an association possible. It is also helping us to offer various training seminars throughout the country, a well-trained intentional interim ministry, support and training for call committees, conflict resolution training and services, and much more.

Thank you for your financial support. Rest assured we are very careful how the financial resources entrusted to the association are being used. Thank you for your generosity this past year and in the years to come. Amen!

In God's Unshakable Love,

Rev. Michael Bradley  
LCMC Service Coordinator

An Equal Opportunity Er

This document is available in alternative formats to individuals with disabilities by call





JANUARY



**WHAT IS A NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION?**

★

Something that goes in one year and out the other.

GH



# How to Read the Bible Word Search

I A A G U I D E P R I N C I P L E S  
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M L S U A G H R W R O O G S T X M U  
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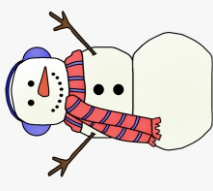
CLAIM  
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COMFORT  
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COMMANDS  
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GUIDE  
PRAYERS  
WARNINGS

HEED  
PRINCIPLES

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
26	27	28	29	30	31	1 New Year's Day
9am - Worship/Communion		9am - Quilting		9:30am - Bible Study		8
9am - Service of the Word 10:15am - Council Meeting	10	Remembering Kay Moistrom 9am - Quilting	12	9:30am - Bible Study	14	15
9am - Worship/Communion Potluck after worship followed by annual meeting	17 Martin Luther King Jr. Day	9am - Quilting	19	9:30am - Bible Study	21	22
9am - Service of the Word	24	9am - Quilting	26	9:30am - Bible Study	28	29
30	31	1	2	3	4	5