

Lamplighter

Randall Presbyterian Church ~ Randall, MN

December 2023

Message from Michael

My mother told me that growing up in the small town of Holbrook, Arizona, Christmas Eve Worship services were a major event for the community.

With the exception of a few college students home for the holidays, families didn't travel much back then, and everyone attended the Christmas Eve service. It was one of the big social events of the year. People wore their finest clothing and jewelry. They really got spiffed up, and there were usually social activities following the service.

Whether Christmas was on Sunday or not, there was always a Christmas Day service as well. The Christmas Day worship service was not nearly as well attended, but my mother's family never missed.

No matter how late they were out the night before, my grandfather got the whole family up for church on Christmas morning. He would always say the same thing, "Last night was for show, this morning is for Jesus."

Neither Christmas Eve nor Christmas Day is celebrated in the same way now-a-days. Most churches don't have regular Christmas Day services.

Even though I am not sure I agree with my grandfather's reasoning, he does have a point. The whole point of Christmas is the birth of Christ, is there any better time to worship him?

This year Christmas does come on a Sunday, and we will worship at 10:00 am. I know many will have family obligations, but I encourage you to join us for a casual service of scripture and carols as we celebrate the birth of Christ.

Since it is the last Sunday of the month, we will have the potluck following the service. Since many might have family dinners later in the day, let's keep it simple, maybe finger foods or holiday leftovers.

Like my grandfather said, "This one is for Jesus."

Michael



Advent Worship Series

Christmas is for Everyone

Prophet



Priest



Shepherd



King



The Good News of Jesus Christ is that his message of salvation wasn't for a specific group of people, but for all who call him savior. The prophets announced the coming of the Messiah. Angels told the Priest Zechariah as well as Mary and Joseph that the child was coming. Zechariah represented the religious leaders of the time. Although not wealthy nor noble, Mary and Joseph were faithful to their religion.

The birth of Christ were not just for the religious, for it was the shepherds and Magi who also witnessed the coming of Christ. The shepherds were the outcast of their society. The Magi were most likely foreigners of a different race and not of the Jewish faith. These were signs that the coming of the Messiah was for all people. So our theme for our Advent Season is "Christmas is for Everyone: Prophet, Priest, Shepherd, and King."

These are also titles for Jesus. In Matthew 21:11, "The crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee." Hebrew identifies Jesus as the High Priest. Jesus said, "I am the Good Shepherd," [John 10:11] and the people recognized Jesus' kingship when he entered Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!" (Luke 19:38).

So each Sunday we will look at this aspect of Jesus and how that connects to us today.

November 27
Prophet:



"The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light"
Isaiah 9:2-6

December 4
Priest:



"There was a priest named Zechariah"
Luke 1:5-25

December 11
Shepherd:



"In that region there were shepherds
living in the fields"
Luke 2:8-20

December 18
King:



"Wise men from the East came to Jerusalem"
Matthew 2:1-12



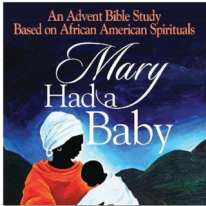


Advent & Christmas Activities at Randall Pres



Hartwell Christmas Open House -December 4, 4:00—8:00 p.m.

The Hartwell's invite friends and family to their home for a time to take a break from the busyness of the season and enjoy some good food and conversation. There will be plenty to eat and drink. The address is 59 Edgewater Dr, Little Falls. There is also a Zoom option. So, if you can't make it, Zoom in and say "Hi!"



Advent Bible Study -Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m.

Randall Presbyterian Church is joining a number of other Presbyterians Churches for this Zoom Study. Each week we will look at a traditional African American Spiritual:

- November 30 **"Mary had a Baby,"** led by Pam Prouty, the Presbytery Clerk and pastor in Windom.
- December 7 **"Rise up, Shepherd, and Follow,"** led by Darin Seamon of St Cloud.
- December 14 **"Children, Go Where I Send Thee,"** led by Michael Hartwell of Randall.
- December 12 **"Go, Tell it on the Mountain,"** led by Mark Ford of Baxter/Crosslake.

Movie Night- Saturday, December 10, 6:00 p.m.

Bring a snack and join the congregation for a family friendly Christmas movie. Pastor Michael has never seen "Elf," is that what we want to watch?



Caroling Caravan—Saturday, December 17, 5:00 p.m.

We caravan to different homes to sing carols. Everyone is encouraged to join the parade.

Children's Christmas Program—Sunday, December 18, 10:00 a.m.

Come enjoy the show as the children and youth of Randall Presbyterian Church present their Christmas program as part of worship.



Food Shelf -December 30, 4:30 p.m.

Continue the Christmas Spirit by serving at the Food Shelf!



Retreat Opportunities for Youth~

Clearwater Forest Snow Camp January 13th-15th

"Oh, precious is the flow, that makes me pure as snow"...CAMP! Save the date for snow camp 2023 happening January 13th-15th—you won't want to miss it! Registration will be opening soon, and we can't wait to see you ALL this winter!



Save the Dates

February 10-12, 2023

Minnesota Valleys
Youth Retreat
Current 6th-12th Graders

First Presbyterian Church
Willmar, MN

Details to come soon!!

Contact:
Kali Luther
MVP Youth Coordinator
kali@minnesotavalleys.org
(320)-905-0599

Perkins Bible Study Thursday Mornings at 9:30 a.m.

Bring your Bible and join us at the Little Falls Perkins for a late breakfast, early lunch, just coffee, or come just for the study and fellowship. The study is lead by Nancy Skoog.

December Birthdays

Misty Selinski	December 9
Norman Fenske	December 12
Mitchell Magee	December 15
Dean Ganz	December 22
Sharon Thilquist	December 23
Bridgette Magee	December 27

*"May God Bless Each of You &
May You Have a Happy Birthday"
Christmas Joy Offering*

Christmas Joy is a special offering collected every year during Advent. The offering provides assistance to retired and active church workers and their spouses and families, and Presbyterian-related racial ethnic education institutes. Randall Presbyterian Church will collect the offering on December 23.

Children's Christmas Program Sunday, December 18

The Sunday School class has been preparing for a special program that will be part of the worship service on December 18.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service Saturday, December 24 4500 p.m.

The service will be filled with traditional carols, special music, scripture and prayer, as we relive the coming and birth of Jesus. The service will conclude with the lighting of candles.

RANDALL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

MINUTES OF SESSION – November 16, 2022

Members present: Terry Coffin (Zoom), Christi Hartwell, Chris Magee, Marlys Olson and Moderator Reverend Michael Hartwell. **Members excused:** Sue Fenske, Jake Farrow. **Members absent:** None. **Others present:** None.

The regular meeting of the Session was called to order at 6:35 p.m. in the basement of Randall Presbyterian Church by Moderator Reverend Michael Hartwell, who opened the meeting with prayer. A quorum was declared as is shown by those in attendance. A quick check-in was also done to see how everyone was doing and if there were any prayer concern updates.

Approval of Minutes: The October 5, 2022, Session Meeting minutes were previously sent out by email to session for their review. Session approved the minutes as written; the minutes were included in the October Lamplighter newsletter.

Approval of Treasurer's Report:

Summary of the September 2022 Balance Sheet – Current Total Assets: \$128,632.98

	<u>October</u>	<u>Year-to-Date</u>
Income:	\$7,905.01	\$72,290.03
Expense:	\$8,872.08	\$85,712.57
Net Income:	\$ -967.07	\$-13,422.54

- Motion to approve Treasurer's report was received by Chris Magee, seconded by Marlys Olson, motion carried.

Reports:

- **Pastor's Report:** Presbytery Commission on Leadership Zoom Meeting, October 6; Perkins Bible Study, October 6; Presbytery Meeting, St Cloud, October 8; Pastor's Zoom Group, October 10; Randall Area Business Group, October 11; Little Falls Area Ministerial Association Meeting, Little Falls, October 13; Pastor's Zoom Group, October 17; Perkins Bible Study, October 20; Pastor's Group attended the play "Crucible" in Brainerd. Mark Ford was in the cast, October 21; Perkins Bible Study, October 27; Food Shelf, October 27; 6th Grade Band Concert in Little Falls, October 27; The Academy October 27-30; Pastors Zoom Group, October 31; Presbytery Commission on Leadership Zoom Meeting, November 3; Pastors Zoom Group, November 7; Randall Area Business Group, November 8; Pastors Zoom Group, November 14.

Vacation:

Michael did not take vacation October 24-27 (was tentatively scheduled in Oct. 5 minutes)

Sick Days:

Michael was diagnosed with Covid and was out of the office from November 1-6. He retested on Saturday, November 5, and was still positive. Candace Adams volunteered to fill in for Michael on Sunday, November 6.

- **Church Rolls and Register Report:** Nothing to report.
- **Worship/Membership/Mission Report:** Currently the average weekly attendance is 37. Because of low bandwidth, most Sundays the worship service are not being live streamed.

24 were served Communion on November 6, 2022; Rev. Candace Adams officiated in Michael's absence.

70 members; no change.

Missions: Weekly – Meals on Wheels; Monthly – Morrison County Food Shelf

Fall mission: Presbyterian Giving – donations to this mission will be collected on November 20th during worship.

- **Fellowship:** Morrison County Food Shelf; the last Thursday of the month has three members from church volunteering.
- **Christian Education Report:** The Sunday School class will sing on November 20 and present a Christmas program during worship on December 18. Children will also help with the candle lighting during Advent.

- **Building/Maintenance Report:** Chris and Mitchell Magee changed bulbs in sanctuary; Ballou Plumbing did a yearly maintenance inspection on the furnace.
- **Presbytery:** Michael and Terry were commissioners at the Presbytery meeting on Saturday, October 8th, First Presbyterian Church of St. Cloud. Nancy Skoog, the outgoing Presbytery Moderator was the preacher for the worship service.
- **Correspondence:** None.
- **Deacon's Report:** nothing to report.

- Motion to approve the committee reports as received was made by Chris Magee, seconded by Terry Coffin. Motion carried.

Old Business:

- Morrison County Food Shelf volunteers – The Food Shelf has had increased use, and more volunteers are needed. Everyone is invited to volunteer at the Food Shelf. The new working hours are 4:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Please let Pastor Michael know if you are interested. We will not be serving in November because of Thanksgiving, but will serve the Thursday after Christmas, December 29.
- Previously used Sunday School room – Things are slowly being removed from the room. Much of what is left will need to be disposed of. Discussed building shelves so as to use room for storing flower arrangements for sanctuary and Christmas decorations.
- The Advent candle wreath was purchased with memorial funds and a donation from Sharon and Dan Thilquist. Thanks to the Thilquist for the donation.
- A Congregational Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, November 20th following worship for the purpose of changing the pastoral call. A draft budget will be presented for review only. The church will be decorated for Christmas following the meeting.
- Church Mutual property insurance: Terry Coffin reached out to our representative that our renewal change to the beginning of the year for budgeting purchases, but they have not responded.
- Nominating Committee (Jim Skoog, Marlys Olson and Ken Ballou) will begin their search for 2023. Two elders and two deacons have first terms ending and one deacon's second term will be ending. Please prayerfully consider becoming an elder or deacon.
- Reviewed Financial Internal Control

New Business:

- Zoom Advent Study with other Presbyterian Church Wednesdays during lent beginning November 30. The study will be "Mary Had a Baby: An Advent Bible Study Based on African American Spirituals"
- Officer's Retreat January 6 & 7. January 6 at Hartwell's and January 7 at the Church.
- Database/Directory Update – There will be forms on table in gathering space for everyone to check the information we have for them and fill in any details we are missing; Birth years are particularly desired as it helps with our denominational reports (years are not included in any publication).
- Church Mutual Sensors – we have two of them in the basement, they will give us a signal if water enters basement.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Chris Magee, seconded by Terry Coffin. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m. followed by prayers for the people and the Lord's Prayer led by Reverend Michael Hartwell.

Next Meeting date and time: December 21, 2022 @ 6:00 p.m. via Zoom

Respectfully submitted by,

Christi Hartwell

Christi Hartwell
Clerk of Session Pro-Temp