



NORTHDALÉ NEWS

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Dear friends in our Savior,

The end of a passing year and the beginning of a new year is always a great time to step back and do some evaluating. It's a natural time to look back over the blessings and challenges of the year past so that plans and goals can be set for the year ahead. As we enter into this new year, I'd like to take some time to do that evaluating with our ministry at Northdale Lutheran.

Last year in the January newsletter I wrote this: *"As I'm writing this, we are finishing off the fellowship hall and mailbox room work. The roof of the sanctuary is being reshingled. Work on the flat roof over the original building will begin in the near future. We'll be looking at doing the same type of work this summer as we remove the pews from the sanctuary to replace them with chairs, remove the carpet and refinishing the ceiling. About that same time we plan to move forward with the addition of two classrooms and upgrading our parking lot. As August rolls around, we're looking to open our new preschool with 4 year old VPK classes as well as before school care and after school care."* By God's grace we were able to do all of this! Sometimes we can look back and see little progress. That isn't the case! Add to this that we had a number of new families move into our area from other areas of the country. God blessed us with confirming 6 adults and 3 youths. We baptized 2 adults and a number of babies. We've added 24 new students to our school along with 9 in our VPK. We said good-bye to one teacher and welcomed Bethany Schwartz as a new teacher in our school along with Joanne Mattes as a new teacher for our VPK. Our offerings have increased allowing us to stay current with our planned budget. We are on track to reach our goal of \$370,000 for the Building our Faith - Family - Future building addition. We can only give thanks to God as we recognize these many blessings over the past year.

Yet, we don't stop there. We have an exciting new year before us. We are currently in the permitting process and should be ready sometime around early February to begin our classroom addition. This will take 4 1/2-5 months to complete once construction starts. We have recently voted to change the name of the school to Northdale Christian Academy and will be rolling out that new name with a new website for the school and one for the church that will help us connect with people in our community. Our Elders are beginning to put the Peter Plan into action to reach out to members we haven't seen in worship for awhile. We have every reason to believe that we will reach capacity for our VPK program next year and are hopeful our school numbers will continue to rise. We know of more new families looking to move into our community this coming year. We're not content just to be thankful for what we've done. We're eager to continue pressing forward with God has given us to serve more people.

This is the most important thing to keep in mind. All of these things we do for one reason: for the salvation of souls. We are here to save souls. God's mission is our mission. Jesus said, *"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."* (Luke 19:10). Everything we do is done in support of this mission to reach souls and share with them the grace God has shown them in Jesus. I pray that we always keep this at the very forefront of our minds. None of this is for our glory or to build our kingdom here. It is all done for the sole reason of reaching souls. May God continue to shower his blessings upon us as we faithfully use what he has given us to seek the lost.

Pastor Charlie Vannieuwenhoven

STEWARDSHIP CORNER

The Greatest Gift

Once again we come to the beginning of the church year—a time of great anticipation, a time of simultaneous repentance and rejoicing, a time of preparing for the birth of the King Jesus, and a time to proclaim his coming again.

What a glorious gift the Lord Jesus is to us! The Apostle Paul called our Savior God's "indescribable gift" (2 Corinthians 9:15), and that he is. Who can comprehend the depth of love the Father has for us to give up his only begotten Son? Who can fathom the love of that Son who willingly laid down his life for us (John 10:15) in order that we might pass from death into life eternal with him?

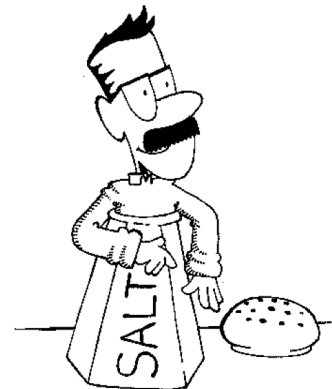


If eternity in heaven were all God gave us, it would be more than we deserve, but, besides heaven, he gives us good gifts on earth. In his explanation to the Fourth Petition of the Lord's Prayer, Martin Luther lists some of those great gifts: "food, drink, clothing, shoes, house, home, land, animals, money, goods, a devout husband or wife, devout children, devout workers, devout and faithful rulers, good government, good weather, peace, health, self-control, good reputation, good friends, faithful neighbors, and the like." As Luther urges, we would do well to realize that these are God's gifts and to "receive [them] with thanksgiving."

Of course, we cannot repay God. We have nothing to give him that he did not first give us. David, in Psalm 51 comes before God with deep repentance and then expresses complete dependence on his Lord. "O Lord, open my lips," he pleads in verse 15, "and my mouth will declare your praise." And our Savior is quick to respond to our prayer, enabling us to glorify and praise him just as the shepherds did (Luke 2:20) and inspiring us to proclaim with the angels, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests" (Luke 2:14).

AS SALT, OUR HIGHEST RESPONSIBILITY IS TO REACH LOST SOULS BY BRINGING THEM THE SAVING GOSPEL OF CHRIST.

"You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again?" (Matthew 5:13).



Missions Highlight

Each month, we designate and send a portion of our offerings to WELS as our congregational mission offerings. These offerings help to support missions and ministry that is taking place in our country and around the world. Here is one area where your mission dollars are hard at work supporting workers who are proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus in your name:

Plot Twist

One of the things I love most about being a pastor is hearing the stories people tell. Each person that sits in the pew has a unique one, a fascinating account of the working of God's grace.

Christina certainly had an interesting story. I met her only one week after I was installed as the pastor at Living Shepherd Lutheran Church in Laramie, Wyoming. She had a connection to our church previously, when her infant son Leo was baptized. But she hadn't been to church in a while, mostly because it was difficult for her to come with her infant son, whom she was raising while her husband was deployed in Kuwait.

After sitting down with Christina, she told me her story. She was born and raised in Minnesota, but moved to Wyoming when she was 16 years old. She graduated from high school in Meeteetse, Wyoming, a town with a total population of about 300 people. She attended the University of Wyoming and graduated with a degree in Education. She began teaching at a special school for at-risk children in Laramie. And along the way, she got married and celebrated the birth of her first child.

But the bigger story is the difference God's grace has made in her life. It may seem like a strange plot twist that Christina and her family ended up in Laramie, but this is how God again brought her into contact with the good news of her Savior Jesus. It may seem like a difficult plot twist that Christina and her husband are raising their child together even though they are miles apart, but God is using it to strengthen their relationship, and to drive them even deeper into his promises.

And then, in what may seem like another amazing plot twist, God brings his gracious blessings through Christina to others gathered here at Living Shepherd. He gives a new, inexperienced pastor the blessing of a prospect eager to learn more about God's Word and grow in faith. He gives a congregation the opportunity to put God's love into practice by helping and supporting a military family. And he gives all of us fresh reminders of the power of his Word working in the hearts of his people.

Christina was officially welcomed as a member of Living Shepherd Lutheran Church in Laramie, Wyoming two weeks ago. Before she joined, I asked her to answer a few questions which we could use to share with the congregation so that we could get to know her better. One of the questions I asked was, "What title would you give to your autobiography?" She answered, "Plot Twist."

It's a fitting title to Christina's story. She's eager to see what else God has in store for her family, and she's excited to see how God's grace will sustain her through all the plot twists that may be ahead.

Written by Rev. Adam Lambrecht, home missionary at Living Shepherd Lutheran Church in Laramie, Wyoming



CATECHISM RESUMES

Catechism Class will resume on Wednesday, January 8. We will continue meeting in the 7-8th grade classroom from 6:30 until 7:30 p.m. each Tuesday evening.

Congregational Meeting Minutes

Special Congregational Meeting Minutes—December 22, 2019

- Pastor Vann opened with prayer
- Jeff Berg walked through the first agenda item regarding gifting the housing assistance loan of \$30,000 in lieu of housing allowance for Amy Vann's position that had not been paid since she accepted her call to teach. The plan is to add the accrued interest since the loan was first given and forgive \$10,000/year until the debt is completely gone. MOTION made by Steve Ward, SUPPORTED by Brian Busch. The motion was APPROVED.
- Tom Faucette has indicated his willingness to fill the position of treasurer for the remainder of Erik Ashley's term. He has been appointed to fill this role. We thank Erik for his service as treasurer.
- Jeff gave a brief update on the building project and permitting through the county which is progressing.
- It was noted that giving is ahead of budget by about \$2,000 as of today. The Building our Faith, Family, Future fund is anticipated to reach \$360,000 by the end of the campaign in March. The goal was \$370,000.
- Jeff shared the school name change recommendation from the Marketing Team, SMB, and MLT. MOTION made by Tom Faucette and SUPPORTED by Steve Ward to change the name of our school to Northdale Christian Academy. The motion was APPROVED.

Northdale Christian Academy

As you see above, the voter's agreed to change the name of our Northdale Lutheran School to Northdale Christian Academy. We are excited about the new name change and believe it will help us to connect with more people in our community. We will be rolling out this new name in conjunction with our new and updated website when it is ready to go along with our classroom addition once it is completed. We thought it was important to share with you a few reasons why we believe this name change will be beneficial and what the thought process was in changing it.

- We kept NORTHDALÉ in the name to keep it connected with our church and the branding we have already done in our community with both our church and school. We had considered a complete name change for the church and school to something like: Living Hope Academy or Beautiful Savior Academy. But this would require us to change all of our legal documentation for our church and school and would be too time consuming and expensive.
- We changed LUTHERAN to CHRISTIAN for a couple of reasons. We are constantly having people ask us: "Do I have to be Lutheran or join the Lutheran Church for my kids to attend school?" While those who ask are thankful for the answer of no, we can't help but wonder how many people are we missing who don't even bother to call? We are not ashamed of nor giving up our Lutheran identity nor our WELS Lutheran identity by making this change. We think it will remove a barrier that will help us to reach more people. The Apostle Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians, *"I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some."* (1 Corinthians 9:22).
- We changed SCHOOL to ACADEMY because we believe this sounds a bit more prestigious. We believe this will help to elevate the quality of our school to people which will lead them to inquire further about enrolling their students. The parents of our current students understand very well the quality of education their children are getting in our school. But to help those who have not had contact with us better understand the quality of education we offer their children so that they will inquire further, we believe this will help.

Our school marketing team is currently working through new logo ideas that will go with our name change. We thank Matt Burt for offering a few suggestions. These ideas were shared at the congregational meeting. We will continue to share them with members as we move closer to picking one as our new school logo. If you would like to add your input, we welcome you to meet with the School Marketing Team. We are thankful for the work of these faithful volunteers.

Ministry Leadership Team Meeting Highlights

The Ministry Leadership Team met on Monday, December 2. Here are the minutes from that meeting:

- The following Membership Matters and Ministry Actions were approved:
 - Adult Confirmation – John Hill (12/1/19)
 - Profession of Faith – Jack Hill (12/1/19)
 - Transfer In – Michelle Manly from Resurrection Lutheran Church in VA
 - Death— Stephanie Perez (non-member 11/23/19)
 - Wedding—Bill and Lynn Ragains (non-member 11/16/19)
 - Total Membership = 249 Communicant membership = 184
- Nick Koren reported We've had some good activity with inquiring kids for the school. We've taken on 2 new students and we might have a 3rd at the beginning of the year which would put us at 59 total students. There's a chance that we might lose 3 kids at the beginning of the year. Dane met with 1 family that is interested in next year and the younger sibling of one of the new students we picked up will be joining us next year as a 1st grader. Schools is funded for its own website build out along with the name change. The proposed new name of the school is Northdale Christian Academy. We are ready to pull the trigger on the website, pending approval of the name change. We've selected a local website provider and because we are a church and a school, we will have separate websites for each area. School website will be developed and maintained at a \$600/month fee (it's normally \$1,200 to develop a new website but she will charge us \$900 for the church website). So 1st payment is \$1,050 and the invoice is ready to be paid. Part of the service will be to monitor reviews and if there's any type of negative review, it's immediately addressed. It was also obvious that most of our current website was built with a focus and intent on our existing members, not necessarily focusing on new members or interested families. Website will also be mobile friendly.
- Steve Ward reported that we have the handouts printed (invite cards) this week to be distributed this Sunday 12/8 for Christmas service. Youth Ministry Team is doing a fellowship in the park activity this coming Sunday 12/8 after 2nd service. It will be an informal event to build fellowship with our existing members. The movie night on November 15th went well, and we had about 40-50 members attend. The costs were minimal and were completely covered by some of the remaining funds from the Fall Festival. It was a great fellowship event and we plan on doing the event again in the Spring before we change clocks forward.
- David Mosakowski reported Tlders have their assigned calls working on the Welcome Home Sunday. David will talk to the ushers for situations when they see visitors or 1st time attendees sitting by themselves, it would be helpful to have existing members sit near them to make them feel more welcomed and engaged in the service. 10 for 10 ended this past Sunday (12/1). Pledge cards will be mailed back to members along with a 'Thank you' note for those who participated.
- Pastor and Jeff updated the MLT that Erik is stepping down from the Treasurer position. Erik will be assisting with funds transfers in the interim. We will open the floor for nominations at the congregational meeting for the Treasurer vacancy and the MLT was encouraged to talk with members to see if someone has the skills needed to fill this vital position at Northdale.
- Mike Laurin Our building project loan has been closed and funds are ready to begin construction. November was our 1st interest only payment for our 2-year introductory period. Right now the balance is only the remaining portion of the prior mortgage, but as draws get submitted by our contractor, the balance will be increasing and monthly payment amounts will increase. We had to provide the contractor & architect with another copy of our survey. Chris said the county changed their appointment schedules so he will be there on Dec 3rd to submit our survey. Once submitted, we are anticipating DeLotto's suggested timeline of 6-8 weeks to get final approval so we can break ground.
- The motion to recommend to the congregation a 'debt forgiveness' for the Vann's based on CPA's written recommendation for their down-payment assistance at the 12/22/19 congregational meeting was made by Steve Ward, seconded by Mike Laurin; motion carried.
- Motion to accept the name of 'Northdale Christian Academy' report made by Steve Ward, seconded by Nick Koren; motion carried.
- Motion to hire web designer Dot Kom to authorize them to move forward with work on developing the new websites made by Steve Ward, seconded by Nick Koren; motion carried.
- Chris Haring's email to the MLT stated that our basketball team is sending students to LPS for a tournament/recruitment trip and they would like to hold a rummage sale fundraiser in the parking lot. Chris asked the MLT to grant permission to use the parking lot for this sale on January 11th or 25th. MLT agreed to have the team host the rummage sale at either date.
- MLT discussed a family in need and authorized the use of already donated and earmarked funds to assist this family in need.
- The motion was made, seconded and passed to adjourn. The meeting closed with the Lord's prayer.

Early Childhood Ministry Notes

What a joy it is to share the wonder of Christmas with little children! They love all the excitement that comes with the season, but more than that, their faith shined so brightly as we learned about the Christmas story and their Savior being born. We learned a song called "Happy Birthday, Jesus" which says, "All the tinsel and lights, and presents are nice, but the real gift is you." What a great reminder that Christmas truly is all about Jesus! It was wonderful that VPK was able to participate in our first Christmas Eve service here as well.

As we move through the Christmas season and into January, we'll be looking towards the future of our early childhood program and making plans for next year. The application process is now open, so please share our program with any family and friends who may be interested in our VPK class for next year. If you have any questions, please contact me. I'd love to share more about what our early childhood program is all about!

Bible Study

We continue our Bible Study on the Four Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) in our Sunday Morning Bible Study. This class takes a look at the life of Jesus in a chronological order. It is a great way to become more acquainted with your Savior Jesus and know all that he did to live as your substitute here on this earth. It is through the study of God's Word that we remain connected to our Savior and grow in our faith and godly living.

We start at 9:25 a.m. every Sunday morning. We hope to see you there!

LADIES BIBLE STUDY



The Ladies Bible Study meets the second Sunday of the month at 6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. They meet next on Sunday, January 5. This year, they will be studying through the book, "Prepared to Answer." This is a book that deals with many contemporary topics. This study will help the participants to think through these different questions ahead of time so that each person will be prepared to answer when the question is asked. All ladies are invited to join us for this study.

NEW BIBLE INFORMATION CLASS

Pastor Vann will be starting his next Bible Information Class on Tuesday, January 14. The class will meet from 6:30-8:00 p.m. for 13 weeks. The Bible Information Class is an overview of all of the main teachings in the Bible. It is a great introduction for someone who is interested in learning more about what the Bible teaches. It is a great way to share with a friend or relative what our church teaches. It is also a good review for our members of all those truths that were taught at Catechism class so many years ago. This class is also required for anyone who wants to join our congregation. If you are interested in attending, or if you have a friend or neighbor interested or that you would like to invite, please talk to Pastor Vann about that. The class is a free class and a great way to dive deep into the truths of scripture. If you need some more information, please talk with Pastor Vann.



OFFERING ENVELOPES

The offering envelopes for 2020 have been placed in your mailboxes in December. Be sure to check your member mailboxes. You can begin using these envelopes after the first of the year. If you have any questions about your envelopes, you can direct your questions to our Church Ministry Elder, David Mosakowski.





JANUARY 2020

STAY CONNECTED...

to your school.

to your teachers.

to your youth.

NOVEMBER FOOD & DECEMBER TOY DRIVE

The results from the November Food Drive are in and we have set a new Northdale Lutheran record, 614 pounds! Last year's donation was 548 pounds. Thank you for your contributions to this event. Many families will benefit from your generosity. We thank the Busch family for delivering the donations to Metropolitan Ministries. We also thank you for your support of the December Toy Drive. We were able to fill the several donation boxes. We thank Aimee Hardman and the Mattes family for delivering the toy donations to Metropolitan Ministries.

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS SERVICE

Just over 200 people attended the Child's Christmas Service December 24 where our students shared the message of our Savior's birth in both word and song. It was a full church! In preparation for next year, we will be considering our growing enrollment, Sunday School involvement, and the service date as ways to involve more people in our Christmas celebrations. What a joy to share God's dwelling among us with our congregation and community!

ENROLLMENT UPDATE

Our school family has been blessed to receive some new students this fall and winter. We welcomed new 7th and 4th grade students in November. This month we are welcoming a new 2nd grader. There is potential for a new 1st grader once the family relocates to the Northdale area later this month. Our total enrollment stands at 68 students, preschool through 8th grade. This is an increase of four students from the start of the school year. We are thankful for each soul entrusted to our care as we share Jesus through our academic program. We are now accepting applications for the 2020-2021 school year as we kick off the beginning of our enrollment process. Check out the general article to learn more about our school name change and the work of the Marketing Team.

AMAZON SMILE

Northdale Lutheran Church and School has is registered for the Amazon Smile charitable giving program. 0.5% of qualifying Amazon purchases will be donated to Northdale Lutheran when you use this link: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/59-2379252> or select Northdale Lutheran from the www.smile.amazon.com website. You will only need to do this once, all future logins will be saved. Be sure to make your purchases using the smile.amazon.com website in order to support Northdale Lutheran with your purchases. Thank you for your online support of our educational ministry!

LUTHER PREP VISITOR

Luther Preparatory School is a high school owned and operated by the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) in Watertown, WI. Luther Prep exists to encourage, prepare, and train its students to serve God as a pastor or teacher in the WELS. Three current Northdale Lutheran members currently attend Luther Prep. You are cordially invited to attend a presentation about Luther Preparatory School on Thursday, January 16 @ 10:45 AM in the church. The presentation will be catered to the students, but people of all ages can enjoy this informative and entertaining presentation. You can learn more about LPS online, by phone, or email: Web: www.lps.wels.net Phone: (920)261-4352 Email: info@lps.wels.net

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Joanne Mattes: 920-588-7596
Bethany Schwartz: 920-222-9279
Amy Vannieuwenhoven 813-787-5025**

**Sunday Worship: 8:00 & 10:30 a.m.
Communion Services: First and Third Sundays of the month
Sunday School & Teen Bible Class: 9:15 - 10:15 a.m. (September through May)
Sunday Bible Class: 9:25-10:15 a.m.**