

West Prairie Church Council Minutes

December 14, 2016

President Jan Riemann called the meeting to order. Present were Jan, Julie Reimann, Lanette Branstad, Bill Schutter, Lisa Durby, Wendell Finer, Carroll Carson and Pastor Steve Bang. Absent was Denise Holst.

Julie gave devotions.

Lanette gave secretary's report. Wendell moved to accept and Lisa seconded the report. Motion carried.

Carroll gave the treasurer's report. Last month we had \$4770.00 of income with \$4329.22 expenses. Lanette moved to accept report, Julie seconded and motion carried.

Pastor Steve gave his report. There will be Holy Communion on Christmas Eve at West Prairie at 7 p.m. and on

Christmas Day at Sion at 8:30 a.m. A non-member wants to use the church at West Prairie for a wedding but not Pastor Steve. They have their own officiate. The council unanimously voted to deny the request.

The annual meeting will be set for January 15, 2017 after the worship service. January 11 will be the budget meeting for the council. All books need to be given to Julie Riemann by January 8, 2017.

The Sunday school program is set for Dec. 18 at 4:30 p.m. weather permitting.

Wendell moved, Bill seconded to adjourn the meeting, motion carried. We closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Lanette Branstad, sec.

People are often unreasonable, illogical and self-centered; Forgive them anyway.

If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives; Be kind anyway.

If you are successful, you will win some false friends and some true enemies; Succeed anyway.

If you are honest and frank, people may cheat you; Be honest and frank anyway.

What you spend years building, someone could destroy overnight; Build anyway.

If you find serenity and happiness, they may be jealous; Be happy anyway.

The good you do today, people will often forget tomorrow; Do good anyway.

Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough; Give the world the best you've got anyway.

West Prairie Lutheran Church, LCMC

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The mission of West Prairie Lutheran Church shall be to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all through worship, education, outreach and fellowship.

JANUARY 2017

Have you heard about the man who moved into a retirement community to spend the rest of his life there? It wasn't long until he had made a number of friends among the other residents. There was one lady he was especially attracted to and she was attracted to him. So they spent a lot of time together. Finally one evening he proposed, asking her to marry him. The next morning he woke up remembering his proposal, but he couldn't remember her answer. So he went to her and said, "I'm really embarrassed. I proposed to you last night but I can't remember if you said "yes" or "no". "Oh, thank goodness!" she replied. "I remembered saying "Yes" but I couldn't remember who asked me."

Sometimes that's the way it is with New Year's resolutions. You tell yourself that you are going to lose weight, exercise more, do all kinds of things to improve yourself physically and spiritually. But then somehow we forget. This year let's make it simple and just promise ourselves and God that we will make a change for the better.

Here's a few ways we can make a change for the better: 1) Develop a positive outlook toward life. If our goal is heaven, if our goal is eternal life with Jesus, then all the little setbacks in life are only stepping stones getting us closer to the time when we will be with Jesus. If that is our goal, then Romans 8:28 is true. "All things work together for good to those who love God and are called according to his purpose." The world says that the way to feel good about yourself is

The PASTOR'S PEN by Rev. Steve Bang

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January Usher...

Jeff Holland

January Lectionary...

Janet Haugen

January Acolyte...

Faith Finer

January Altar

LeAnn Peterson and Irene Eide

January Flowers...

Lanette Branstad

Coffee Servers...

1/1—Julie Reimann and Sarah Kirschbaum

1/8 —Denise Holst and Helen Finer

1/15—Colette Reimann and Rita Schutter

1/22—Judy Norstrud and Colette Reimann

1/29—Lisa Durby and Helen Finer

Sarah Circle...

Wednesday, January 4

Naomi Circle...

Wednesday, January 4

Church Council...

Wed., Jan. 11, 7 p.m.

Bible Study Club...

No meeting

**January 13**

Wendell Finer

January 15

Misty Juveland

January 23

Caroll Carson

Thank You

Dear Pastor Bang,
Thank you and your congregation for your generous donation of \$150.00 to support the Military BibleStick program.

Partners like you have enabled us to send Military BibleSticks to more than 720,000 active-duty service members and veterans. Veterans from every branch of service tell us how this helps them, especially when they are alone.

Your support is invaluable!

'til all have heard,
s/s Troy Carl
Vice President

January 2017 — It's a new year!

Aside from the inauguration of the U.S.A.'s new president on January 20th, what other significant events happen this month?

A world-renown social activist, Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday on

Jan. 15 is a national holiday. At age 35, he was the youngest person to receive the Nobel Peace Prize.

We have a Friday, the 13th this month, one of two this year. The other is in October.

EPIPHANY *from page 6*

salves, as an analgesic and by veterinarians for healing wounds.

Epiphany is celebrated in a wide array of customs around the world. A difference between the Eastern and Western Christian Churches is which events the feast commemorates.

As Lutherans, the Epiphany season continues until the last Sunday before Ash Wednesday which is the Transfiguration of our Lord (Feb. 26, 2017).

Traditionally in Mexico, the evening of January 5th is when the figurines of the wise men are added to the nativity

scene. The significance of giving gifts comes from the magi's gifts to baby Jesus. However, this old tradition has given way to the West's secular gift giving on Christmas.

Interesting, in German-speaking lands, groups of young people dress as the three Wise Men plus a leader carrying a star, travel from door to door singing. They are generally offered treats and also solicit donations for worthy causes. As a sign of gratitude, they perform a traditional house blessing and mark the year over the doorway with chalk.

The 12 Days of Christmas, Dec. 25th — Jan. 6th

We celebrated the birth of our Savior on December 25th (the first day of Christmas), and will continue the celebration until January 6th (the 12th day of Christmas), which is the Feast of the Epiphany. The word “Epiphany” means a sudden understanding or revelation of something.

This is the time when we remember the Magi, wise men or sages, visited the Christ child. They paid homage to Jesus and bestowed gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

What is the significance of these gifts? Although the Bible does not attribute any significance to these gifts, tradition expounds a deeper meaning for each of the three.

Gold—a precious metal and a very valuable commodity. It may well have financed the family’s trip to Egypt when an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream telling him to flee with his family. Gold, unlike silver, is highly resistant to oxida-

tion. It is soft and malleable, holds its value over long periods of time, and has become a universal symbol of love (for example: wedding rings).

Frankincense—a resin obtained from trees (in Somalia) in which the bark has been scraped off. When dried and burned, the sap (an essential oil called the king of oils) produces a fragrant smoke as the name implies — incense. Today, the resin is processed and used in perfumes, skin lotions, medicines and chewing gum. These trees are in danger to extinction due to over-tapping which prevents the trees from recovering.

Myrrh—a resin extracted from a number of small, thorny trees, it has been used as a perfume, incense and medicine. Myrrh was also used by ancient Egyptians in the embalming process. It is used today in many pharmaceutical applications such as mouthwash,

PASTOR’S PEN *from page 1*

by climbing the ladder of success, by making lots of money and belonging to the right circles of influence. But the Bible teaches us that we are to feel good about ourselves because God loves us. You are such a treasured person in God’s sight that He gave His only begotten Son for you. That makes you valuable and you can feel good about yourself.

2) Develop a positive attitude toward the church. We have a different value system than the world. The world would consider something wasteful that we consider valuable. The world thinks you’re wasting your time going to church. You want to hear about God and Jesus Christ and the world thinks that’s a waste. But the things the world calls wasteful today are probably the only things that will last for all eternity.

3) Display a positive attitude toward others. Robert Schuller wrote, “It would amaze us how many people we could influence for Christ if we would just treat people nicely.” The church must be a place where we all can come and be accepted and loved and encouraged and built up, a place where people help us carry our burdens and everyone feels welcome. If we treat each other with love, then wonderful things will happen for the kingdom of God.

Doesn’t that sound like a good plan for 2017? I think God would be pleased and I think you will find 2017 to be less stressful and much more enjoyable.

See you in church! Pastor Steve Bang

West Prairie WOW . . .

In spite of nasty weather, WOW ladies met Wednesday, Dec. 14. We packed 11 packages of Christmas goodies for shut-ins. Some were delivered that day, some later. Christmas poinsettias were given to Larry West and Jonie Bang.

LCMC 5th Annual Three Days of Prayer

Tuesday, Jan. 3—focus on confession; Wednesday, Jan. 4—day of petition; Thursday, Jan. 5—a day for God’s vision.