

December, 2025

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From the Pastor's View:

Blessings to you in the New Year! No, I am not rushing our holiday season. Not at all. I am wishing you a Blessed Liturgical New Year! Advent is about to begin, and that marks the beginning of our new church year! The First Sunday of Advent begins on November 30th; and, it will be the "Year of Matthew".

Since the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke report many of the same episodes in Jesus' life, one would expect much similarity in their accounts. But, not so! There is much that is unique to Matthew:

- Only Matthew includes the story of the wise men from the East
- Only Matthew includes the story of the Flight into Egypt.
- Matthew is the gospel writer most concerned about linking Old Testament prophecy with Jesus as Messiah.
- The book contains 130 Old Testament quotes and allusions.
- Matthew repeatedly uses two phrases no one gospel uses – "The Kingdom of Heaven" (as opposed to "The Kingdom of God").
- The disciple Peter receives special prominence in this gospel.

Through our worship in the year ahead, we will be drawing mostly from Matthew. Let us open our eyes, ears, and hearts to the unique message from the one whose name means "gift of the Lord".

To get ready:

- Read the Gospel of Matthew. (It's only 28 chapters)
- Pay attention to Matthew's account of the Nativity. From your remembrance of the story of Christ's birth, what is missing? (Mt. 1:18 – 2:15). How much of our popularized Christmas story comes from just these 22 verses?
- Think of your favorite teachings or parables of Jesus. Will you find them in Matthew? Why, or why not?
- Think of your favorite miracle stories. Will you find them in Matthew?
- What is your favorite post-Resurrection story? Will you find it in Matthew?

Together, let's prepare ourselves to walk through the birth, life, death, and resurrection according to Matthew. We have some great discoveries ahead. As we prepare ourselves for a new year, beginning with the season of Advent, let us be open to new images, new stories and new songs. One lovely Advent hymn – new to the ELW (#261) – and written by a Minnesota artist - is "*As the Dark Awaits the Dawn*".

*As the dark awaits the dawn, so we await your light.
O Star of promise, scatter night, loving bright, loving bright,
till shades of fear are gone.*

*Shine your future on this place, enlighten every guest,
that through us stream your holiness, bright and blest, bright and blest;
come dawn, O Sun of grace.*

With you, I look forward to learning this beautiful Advent hymn... and sharing the richness of a new season!

Pastor Mark Holman

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THE RIVER PROJECT:

Great work is being done by creative artists, story-tellers, teachers, and musicians in preparation for “The River Project! Many more details to come! For now, continue reflecting upon KRLC’s long history... our current life & ministry... and your hopes and dreams for all that is ahead. With gratitude we look back. With hope we look ahead. We trust the guidance of God’s own Spirit! The River Project begins in the season of Epiphany, beginning January 11th

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Worship Services on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day:

Our tradition at KRLC has been to worship on Christmas Day at 9:30 AM. We will do that again this year. Some families prefer (or, find it more convenient) to worship on Christmas Eve. Our friends at Castle Danger Lutheran Church and French River Lutheran Church BOTH worship on Christmas Eve at 4:00 PM. Members and friends of KRLC are warmly invited to worship with either of these nearby ELCA congregations. Similarly, members of those congregations have been informed of our worship service on Christmas Day; and, they will share that information.

Let’s be prepared to welcome all people who join us on Christmas Day to celebrate the Nativity of our Lord!

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DECEMBER VOLUNTEERS

	Dec. 7	Dec. 14	Dec. 21	Dec. 25	Dec. 28
<u>Ushers</u>	M. McMillion T. Northey	R. Alreck K. Bloom	M. Dent D. Dent	R. Ojard N. Ojard	C. Whiting S. Carlson
<u>Lector</u>	M. McMillion	K. Bloom	N. Dent	N. Ojard	C. Whiting
<u>Communion Asst</u>	V. Gorman	A. Hubbartt	D. Grong	A. Hovis	D. Jackson
<u>Altar Preparation</u>	Julie Stewart	-----			
<u>Offering Counters</u>	M. McMillion	M. McMillion L. Anderson	K. Struve J. Lee	S. Jasperson M. Garey	K. Kari M. Dent
<u>Children’s Church/ Kid’s Connect</u>	No Lesson JULEBYEN	C. Smith A. Shaw	R. Alreck A. Hubbartt	No Lesson CHRISTMAS	No Lesson Special Worship
<u>Coffee Fellowship</u>	Available	Available	Available	No Coffee	Available
<u>Live Streaming</u>	Tech Team	Tech Team	Tech Team	Tech Team	Tech Team

GIFTS RECEIVED:

Gifts to the Memorial Fund in memory of Vicky Ojard were received from Del & Sue Hubbartt, Donald & Gerry Graden, Kay Struve

A gift to the Memorial Fund in memory of Pat Hanson was received by Paul & Mary von Goertz.

A gift to the KRLC Quilter’s group in memory of Pat Hanson was received by Steve & Sandra Bjorum

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS	DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS	DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES
1 Elise Rigney	23 Ross Magnuson	7 Mike & Kris Garey
6 Nancy Ojard	25 Stephen Carlson	27 Bill & Pat Meyer
8 Geri Stout	27 Hudson Schutte	27 Bruce & Gayle Dreon
14 Joanie Lee	29 Paul von Goertz	29 Scott & Anne Jasperson
19 Michael Dent		
20 Jillian McCorison		
21 Sadie Pollard		

Council Buzz – November 2025

What's Happening

- Draft and implement archiving process – ongoing
- Complete committee Structure processes – will require Bylaws change.
- Annual Review of Policies - ongoing
- Review Committees and identify committee liaisons - ongoing

Administrative Support -- Volunteer Needed

- **We are still seeking a volunteer to help out in the administrative support area.** As you know, Melanie has stepped back from many administrative support duties as a volunteer. As such, we have hired a part-time Administrative Support professional. Her primary duties focus around the weekly bulletin, monthly newsletter and other miscellaneous tasks on behalf of the Pastor, the Council and other committees. However, there are times that we need backup for these types of duties. It could be the result of work load, illness and/or vacation.

If interested in volunteering in this capacity, please contact Helene at hhedlund.dl@gmail.com.

Plans to gather input from Congregation as we explore what's next for KRLC

- The Council has begun preliminary work for the 2026 budget.
- We will budget for a half-time Pastor (similar to Pastor Susan and our Interim budgets)
- As we continue to explore Table Talk Topics, we will want to expand how they are scheduled beyond Sunday mornings after church. We will be seeking input as to preferred times
- The Worship Committee will be asked to explore congregation preferences as it relates to Christmas Day/Christmas Eve services starting in 2026 . . . scheduling of communion . . . etc.

Table Talks

- We have completed the table talk focused on survey results.
- Part I of Living Wills etc. table talk was presented on November 23. Thank you to Dr. Anne Skadberg, Tara Caine and Pastor Mark for this presentation. There will be a follow up – yet to be scheduled.
- Pastor Mark led interested congregation members in an overview of Matthew ...
- In January, we will begin the River project.

Upcoming

- December 21 Council – Sit Down
- January 11 Council – Sit Down
- February 15 KRLC Annual Meeting

Thank you for your continued support of the 2025 Council.
Submitted by Helene Hedlund, Council President

CHURCH MOUSE

Celebrating Carol Carlson's Ministry of Music!

On Sunday, November 23rd, the Congregation of Knife River Lutheran Church gathered to honor Carol Carlson, affectionately known to all as "Miss Benchy" for her 47 years of dedicated music ministry. A special reception followed the church service where friends, family and parishioners celebrated her extraordinary contributions to the church's worship and community.

Carol's legacy of faith and music began when she succeeded her mother, Evelyn Ojard, as church organist in 1978, stepping into a role she has made her own for nearly five decades. With her passion for hymnody, skillful piano or organ playing and unwavering commitment, she has touched countless lives through the power of sacred music in worship, baptisms, confirmations, weddings, anniversaries, funerals and special musical events. She devoted herself to organizing a children's choir, the adult choir "Joyful Noise," and later, the women's ensemble "Seraphin." She also invited guest musicians to enhance worship and encouraged those who loved to sing to share their voices as soloists, in duets, or quartets. "Miss Benchy's" "enduring influence resonates far beyond the sanctuary walls!

We thank Carol for her countless hours of planning, practicing, and all the hidden purchases she made throughout the years. As Carol enters this new chapter, the congregation gives thanks for her 47 years of service, devotion and the joyful melodies that have uplifted us and strengthened our faith.

"Make a joyful noise unto the Lord!" (Psalm 100:1). For Carol Carlson, this verse has been a lifelong calling- and Knife River Lutheran Church is forever grateful.

A CELEBRATION OF MUSIC!

The beloved tradition - a - "Celebration of Music" returns to KRLC on Sunday, **December 14th at 5 PM!** Join us for an evening of uplifting performances that showcase our youth musicians, "Joyful," music to highlight the organ, our hand bell choir and more! Thanks to Anne Lu Basson for chairing the return of this lovely KRLC Advent tradition!

The musical performance will be followed by our renowned "Cake & Grog" reception at 6:15 pm. Kay Struve and Trish Northey invite you to make the reception as sweet as the music! They are seeking 16 bakers to donate Scandinavian Apple Cakes, Almond Crème Cakes and Blueberry or Strawberry Cheesecakes. They are also seeking a volunteer or two to concoct our famous Knife River Grog and cocoa (recipe provided)! A sign-up sheet is in the narthex!

Whether you are a long-time member or first-time visitor, this evening promises beautiful music and a festive spirit of togetherness! Mark your calendars and bring a friend!

A special thank you to those from KRLC who are providing gifts to the **Two Harbors Ministerium Elder Care Gift** effort this year! A reminder that gifts, in gift bags with tag firmly attached, should be returned to the church by Friday, December 5th. Gifts will be delivered to those in the local nursing home and assisted living facilities. Thanks to Hannah Weishaar, Trish Northey, Nancy Dent, Lee Bujold, Randi Alreck, Marcia & Mark Holman, Anne-Lu Hovis, Karen & Noel Walter, Sharon Shelerud, Delores Jackson, Sandra Bjorum, Kay Struve, Vicky Gorman, Viola Hanson, Lisa Anderson, Anne Jasperson, Janet Emery, Linda Grong, Carmen Smith, Kay Bloom, Pat Meyer, Beth Alexander & LeAllen Estrem, Don & LeeAnn Olson, Sue Hubbart, and Pat Berger. Merry Christmas!

LAKE COUNTY SALVATION ARMY BELL RINGERS!

Every time you ring that bell, you're not just filling a red kettle! According to Carey Hogenson, you're filling backpacks with school supplies, providing emergency food and services for families, assuring a senior doesn't choose between groceries and medicines, helping a struggling parent with heat, rent or car repairs and providing Easter gift cards for families and seniors! Salvation Army serves all of Lake County! Melanie McMillion is looking for ringers for KRLC's day this year -- **Thursday, Dec. 11 from 9 am - 7 pm (one hour slots)**. Sign-up sheet is on the kiosk in the narthex. Every dollar collected turns into tangible love for those who need it most! Remember, the ringing of that bell is the sound of hope ringing through Lake County!

Thank you to WELCA for your generous donation of \$350 for mattresses for “Another Door” and “Renaissance Youth Residential Programs”. Your actions will make a welcome and positive impact. Colleen Kelly, LSS Duluth Program Director

CALLING ALL LECTORS, USHERS AND COUNTERS!

Melanie McMillion is creating the schedule for ushers, lectors and offering counters for 2026! If you would be willing to serve in one of these capacities occasionally, please let Melanie know-- training provided! If you are a snow bird or sunshine bird and can only serve in certain months, please include that information. New helpers are always appreciated! Many hands make for lighter schedules!

PLANNING AHEAD!

2026 Offering Envelopes are available in the Narthex. Please pick up your box but don't use your new envelopes until January 2026! Envelope numbers have changed!

“THE PEOPLE WALKING IN DARKNESS HAVE SEEN A GREAT LIGHT; ON THOSE LIVING IN THE LAND OF DEEP DARKNESS, A LIGHT HAS DAWNED”. ISAIAH 9:2

Best Christmas Ever (BCE) update.

Our family has been selected and church members donated a total of \$185 which was matched by an outside company. Thank you very much!

I am now working with a team close to the family to determine gift ideas for this young family as well as additional fundraising to help them with some hefty upcoming medical bills.

Information will remain vague regarding the family as to not potentially ruin this surprise.



If you would like to make a monetary donation, please check out <https://bcmovement.kindful.com/2025-bce-families/bce-esko>

If you would like to purchase a gift please check out the Amazon wish list (QR code).

Celebration of Music concert is back!!!

We are delighted to announce the return of the much loved “Celebration of Music” concert that will be held on Sunday 14 December 2025 at 5pm. Several of our church and community members have already signed up to provide us with wonderful music of the Christmas and winter season. We would like to extend this invitation to you and possibly even a friend to join us in celebrating music by sharing your talents in song or instrumental music. If you are interested in participating, please contact Anne-Lu Hovis at 801 230 4666 or annelubasson@yahoo.co.uk with subject line “Celebration of Music”. There might even be some Scandinavian cakes served afterwards.

Mark your calendar now and join in the beautiful evening of music to lighten our winters.

Call Committee update: 11/19/2025

The call committee, including Melanie McMillion, Scott Shelerud, Steve Carlson, Patti Stoddard, and Deb Allert, have now met 5 times.

We continue to follow the well laid out process from the ELCA of completing a Ministry Site Profile (MSP) and defining who we are as a congregation - including our strengths, weaknesses, and our community's needs.

We are looking to define where we would like to see growth and where our congregation's mission and vision for the future might lead us. We will eventually share the MSP with potential candidates so that they might better understand our congregation and our community and what it is that makes us unique and wonderful. Each call-committee meeting is opened with a short Bible study on a relevant passage, and a prayer for guidance. We strongly request YOUR prayers to continue asking God to give us wisdom and discernment, as well as the ability to follow carefully to the leading of the Holy Spirit as we go forward.

We also ask that you pray for whomever will eventually become our new pastor - that God will be preparing his/her heart even now.

As always, any of the call committee members would be happy to talk to you if you have input you would like us to hear, or questions you have.

Once we arrive at the time we begin interviewing candidates, we must maintain strict confidentiality until we bring a candidate forward for Church Council approval.

It All “Boils” Down to Feeling the “Heat” in the Holiday Season !!

At a special congregational meeting following the service on October 26th, the congregation unanimously voted to replace our aging heating/domestic water heating boiler at a cost not to exceed \$12,000. Our current boiler is approximately 20 years old, has had several major breakdowns and the availability of replacement parts & service was a major concern with the heating season fast approaching. The new boiler will be a wall-mounted, combination unit which in addition to supply building heat, will also supply domestic hot water “on demand.”

This should result in a significant savings in propane costs as the current boiler system configuration heats approximately 55 gallons of domestic water 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. As well as improved efficiency, the installation of the wall-mounted combination unit eliminates the need for the large domestic hot water tank in the already crowded small boiler room. So as the cold holiday season approaches, we can all relax knowing we will not suddenly be awakened from our holiday naps to hop in our sleighs and head to the church to set up electric space heaters and hope that Santa Claus can deliver and install a new boiler for us quickly. A special thanks to David Grong, Ed Lee, Pete Stoddard and the rest of the Property Committee for all the hard work done to get this very important building improvement researched and approved.

Also, a shout of thanks to Pete Stoddard for replacing/adjusting the blower thermostats on our church heating registers. These blower thermostats have been non-functional over many years and their operation will help circulate more warm air throughout our church and improve our heating efficiency.

The History of Churches Feeding the Poor

The history of churches feeding the poor is deeply rooted in the teachings of Jesus and the early Christian movement. Early Christians were known for their charitable efforts, including the establishment of soup kitchens and the provision of meals to the needy. These efforts were driven by a commitment to charity and a desire to alleviate poverty.

The modern soup kitchen movement gained prominence during the 19th century, with religious organizations like the Salvation Army playing a significant role in opening and operating these kitchens. During economic crises, such as the Great Depression, secular groups and individuals also contributed to addressing widespread hunger.

Today, soup kitchens continue to be operated by a diverse array of entities, reflecting a collective effort to combat food insecurity.

In 1939 the Federal Government stepped in with the Food Stamp Program as an answer to the Great Depression. It became a permanent program in 1964 with the Food Stamp Act and in 2008 it became known as SNAP or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

The reason for this history lesson is that SNAP’s funding will run out in November, and it is being caused directly by the Government shutdown.

It’s time for us to step up and remember our history of feeding the people who have less than we do.

Going forward, we can play a big part in our local area by helping to fund CHUM and the Two Harbor’s Food Shelf. Please send in your donations now so we can help with this urgent need. Make your check payable to KRLC and list Chum or the Food Shelf as a designation. Thank you!

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

**** There is a Sign-Up Sheet for the Live Nativity in the Narthex**

(please sign up) 😊

**** "2026 Offering Envelopes are available in the Narthex. Do not use until 2026, as numbers have changed!"**

****Salvation Army Bell Ringers sign-up sheet for ringers at Super One is on the kiosk! Our day is Thursday, Dec. 11! 😊**

***** Music Celebration with cake reception Sunday, December 14th 5-7pm** Signup sheet with recipes will be in the Narthex in the church on Sunday, November 23. Looking for bakers and other opportunities to help, including planning, food preparation, set up and clean up. any questions, please call Trish on 218-390-3379.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 9 am Bone Building 2pm Handbell rehearsals	2 9 am Lectio/Dig Deeper 6:30 pm JOYFUL Practice	3 10 – 1 Quilters	4 8:30 Men Meet 8:30 Dulcimers 5 pm Pop-Up Dinner	5	6 Julebyen
7 9 am Worship Children's Church & Kid's Connect 10 am Julebyen 11:00am Julebyen- Nativity	8 9 am Bone Building 2pm Handbell rehearsals	9 9 am Lectio/Dig Deeper 10:00am Worship Committee 6:30 pm JOYFUL Practice	10 10 – 1 Quilters	11 8:30 Men Meet 8:30 Dulcimers 5 pm Pop-Up Dinner	12	13
14 9 am Worship Children's Church & Kid's Connect 10 am Coffee fellowship 10:15am Table Talk Activity- Living Wills cont.. 5pm Celebration of Music	15 9 am Bone Building 2pm Handbell rehearsals	16 9 am Lectio/Dig Deeper 10 am Planning Team 6:30 pm JOYFUL Practice	17 10 – 1 Quilters	18 8:30 Men Meet 8:30 Dulcimers 5 pm Pop-Up Dinner	19	20
21 9 am Worship Children's Church & Kid's Connect 10 am Coffee fellowship 10:30am Sit Down Council	22 9 am Bone Building 2pm Handbell rehearsals	23 9 am Lectio/Dig Deeper 6:30 pm JOYFUL Practice	24 10 – 1 Quilters	25 Christmas	26	27
28 9 am Worship Children's Church & Kid's Connect 10 am Coffee fellowship	29 9am Bone Building 2pm Handbell Rehearsals	30 9am Lectio 6:30pm JOYFUL Practice	31 New Years Eve			

December 2025

KRLC Treasurer's Report**10/31/2025**

General Operations Summary	2025	2024
Income from donations	\$ 111,795.11	\$ 111,472.92
Expenses	\$ 111,909.10	\$ 117,742.37
Donations vs expenses	\$ (113.99)	\$ (6,269.45)



Designated Account Summary	2025	2024
Designated Donations or revenue	\$ 30,892.99	\$ 40,371.83
Expenses from designated areas	\$ 29,710.71	\$ 27,115.51
Donations vs expenses	\$ 1,182.28	\$ 13,256.32



The Bottom Line	2025	2024
Total Income	\$ 142,688.10	\$ 151,844.75
Total expenses	\$ 141,619.81	\$ 144,857.88
Fund Balance change	\$ 1,068.29	\$ 6,986.87



Fund Balances	Balance
General Operations fund	\$ 9,886.01
Outreach	\$ 10,508.66
Building and property fund	\$ 7,827.75
Building and property fund- Money Market	\$ 69,879.00
Memorial	\$ 9,722.58
Passthru	\$ (2,946.80)
Reserve	\$ 5,000.00
Primary account total	\$ 109,877.20
Decrease from last year	\$ (177.02)

Total of all cash assets	\$ 211,014.42
Total of all debt/NO DEBT!	\$ -
Increase over last year	\$ 4,896.74



Other Fund Balances	Amount
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Columbarium fund	\$ 22,472.20
Reserve required by State Law	\$ 4,500.00
Available after required reserve	\$ 17,972.20
Columbarium debt is fully paid	\$ -

Endowment fund	\$ 78,665.02
Principal amount	\$ 50,000.00

Color Key

Income	Green
Expense/Debt	Red
Total	Blue
Change	Yellow
Balance	Lt Blue

October

Donations and expenses are just about even for the month of Oct. and for the year! That is just the way we like to see the finances work, so a big thank you to everyone! We have made the down payment on our new on-demand LP heat and hot water. Instalation will be done yet this Fall so we can start saving money on our cost for LP. The mini-split heat pump for the office area also has arrived and is ready for installation. We have had a good initial response to our request to Outreach donations. Thank you! This report is full of smiling faces! Thank you!