

Big Canoe & Highland Lutheran Churches

Big Canoe - 1381 Big Canoe Road – Decorah, IA 52101
563-546-7974

Highland - 3824 Highlandville Road - Decorah, IA 52101
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NEWSLETTER

April 2026

Pastor Becker's Sunday morning Bible Class

8:45am each Sunday, class will be in the fellowship hall of the church of service and last about 50 minutes. Please consider taking advantage of this educational opportunity as a way to grow in your Christian faith. All are welcome to attend!



Upcoming Events

- Thurs, Apr 2 (6:30pm): Maundy Thursday service w/Holy Communion (Highland) (purple)
Fri, Apr 3 (6:30pm): Good Friday service (Big Canoe) (bare altar)
Sun, Apr 5 (8am): Worship w/Holy Communion at Big Canoe – Easter Sunday (white)
Sun, Apr 5: No Sunday School or adult Bible class on Easter Sunday.
Sun, Apr 5 (9am): Easter breakfast and pie auction at Big Canoe (to support the Luther League)
Sun, Apr 5 (10am): Worship w/Holy Communion at Highland – Easter Sunday (white)
Thurs, Apr 9 (noon): WELCA of Big Canoe (potluck and Bible study)
Sun, Apr 12 (8:45am): Bible class (Gospel of Matthew) meets in the fellowship hall at Highland
Sun, Apr 12 (10am): Worship w/Holy Communion at Highland – Second Sun. of Easter (white)
Sun, Apr 12 Highland Church Council meet after church, note change.
Tues, Apr 14 (2pm-8:45pm): Photos of both congregations for the pictorial directory (Big Canoe)
Tues, Apr 14 (3pm): Gather Bible study (Highland)
Wed, Apr 15 (2pm-8:45pm): Photos of both congregations for the pictorial directory (Big Canoe)
Apr 16-18: Pastor Becker attends the annual board meeting of *Lutheran Quarterly* in Des Moines
Sun, Apr 19 (8:45am): Bible class (Gospel of Matthew) meets in the nave at Big Canoe
Sun, Apr 19 (9am): Children's Sunday school meets in the Fellowship Hall at Big Canoe
Sun, Apr 19 (10am): Worship w/HS baccalaureate service for Karlee and Ryan (Big Canoe) – (white)
Sun, Apr 19 (after the service): Light reception for Karlee and Ryan in the fellowship hall at Big Canoe
Sun, Apr 19 (after the service): Youth confirmation class meets in the nave at Big Canoe
Mon, Apr 20 (9am): Shared Ministry Group meeting (St. John, Locust)
Sun, Apr 26 (8:45am): Bible class (Gospel of Matthew) meets in the fellowship hall at Highland
Sun, Apr 26 (10am): Service of the Word (Highland) – Fourth Sunday of Easter (white). Blessing of LWR quilts/kits
Sun, Apr 26 Highland WELCA meeting after church. Servers: Joyce & Barb
Sat, May 2 (7am): Special consecration service for the pastoral candidates in Jos, Nigeria (via Zoom)
Sun, May 3 (8:45am): Bible class (Gospel of Matthew) meets in the nave at Big Canoe
Sun, May 3 (9am): Children's Sunday school meets in the Fellowship Hall at Big Canoe
Sun, May 3 (10am): Worship w/Holy Communion at Big Canoe – Fifth Sun. of Easter (white)
--Rev. Dr. Steve Albertin from Indianapolis, Ind., is our guest preacher
Sun, May 10 (8:45am): Bible class (Gospel of Matthew) meets in the fellowship hall at Highland
Sun, May 10 (10am): Worship w/Holy Communion and blessing of seeds, etc., and steeple at Highland
(Sixth Sunday of Easter [Rogate Sunday]) (white)
Tues, May 12 (2pm): Gather Bible study (Highland)
Fri, May 22 (5pm): Wedding rehearsal (Big Canoe)
Sat, May 23 (3pm): Wedding of Molly Oehme and Beau Benzing (Big Canoe)
Sun, Aug 23 (after worship): Side-by-side event, starting at Highland (rain day is Aug 30)

Reminder: Both Highland and Big Canoe congregations have agreed to do a **pictorial directory**. The pictures for both congregations will be taken at Big Canoe on **Tues-Wed, April 14-15, between 2pm and 8:45pm**. People will be able to register online as well as on Sunday mornings at church. There is **no cost** for participating in the pictorial directory! Each family unit will receive a complimentary 8x10 portrait and a church directory.

To schedule your photo session online (one per family) for the pictorial directory: Go online to www.ucdir.com. Click on the box on the right side of the homepage entitled “photography session sign-up.” The church code (for both Big Canoe and Highland) is **ia395**. The church password is **395mem**. Click on the desired date (either April 14 or April 15), click on the reserve time for your appointment, and then enter the appropriate information in all the required fields. Write down the date/time information for your records. (You will also receive an email containing your appointment info.) A printout of all appointments will be available to see on Sunday mornings before and after our worship service.



In case you didn't know.

Olson Explosives has been donating a truck and driver since 1993. Thank you Olson Explosives for your dedication!

The **Highland WELCA** is asking for donations to put together Lutheran World Relief kits. We need items for 12 baby care kits and 6 personal care kits for the LWR truck May 2 at Olson Explosives parking lot. Loading is between 7:30 and 10:30 am.

Currently, we need:

- 6 hand towels, must be new
- 5 pairs of socks, must be new
- 24 (4 ounces) bars of mild soap like Ivory
- 6 nail clippers
- 12 (4 ounces) bars of soap

There will be a tote and container for donations at Highland after Easter Sunday. Questions? See Anna

To the Women of Big Canoe,

In case you are unaware there are no longer any circles. We have decided to combine into WELCA “Hands for Hope.” We hope to meet each month from March through December. The quilters (anyone can join us!) will meet those mornings about 8:30 or 9am. WELCA members can join us with a potluck noon lunch. If necessary, we will have a short meeting with bible study to follow, about 1pm. We are using the book on “Angels” that both circles started last year. We will be on chapter 2 for April 9th (Thursday). If you need a book call Emma. Please join us!

Please take note: As of July 1, 2026, lots and perpetual care at the **Big Canoe** cemetery will be \$750 for everyone no matter if you're a member or a non-member if they want the old pricing, please pre-pay your lot and perpetual care before July 1.

Highland Church Council Meeting Minutes

March 8, 2026

Call to Order: President Myron Krauskopf called the meeting to order at 11:43 AM.

Attendance: President Myron Krauskopf, Vice President Ed Stoen, Secretary Kristy Selness, Treasurer/Council member Dan Dutka, Council members Gary Halverson, Eric Selness and Gary Selness, Pastor Matthew Becker, congregational members Darlene Larson Sollien and Dennis Karlsbrotten.

Opening Devotions: Pastor Becker provided a prayer.

Old Business Update: Darlene Larson Sollien and Dennis Karlsbrotten provided Council with information on the Side by Side ride. The ride would start after Church services, starting at the Church and end at the Church. Landowners have been contacted and things are coming together with people excited about it. The ride would be about 2 ½ hours long and is tentatively scheduled for the end of August, with a rain date. The event will tentatively be in place of the WELCA Ice Cream Social. Motion by Dan Dutka to have Darlene Larson Sollien and Dennis Karlsbrotten be Co-Chairs for the Side by Side Ride, seconded by Gary Selnes, carried. All members of Big Canoe and Highland Churches are invited.

Secretary's Report: Council waived reading of January 25, 2026, Annual Congregational meeting minutes. January 25, 2026, Council Re-organizational meeting minutes read with no corrections. Motion to approve minutes by Gary Selness, seconded by Gary Halverson, carried.

Treasurer's Report: Dan Dutka provided a financial update thru February 2026. Current fund balance of \$18,683.65. Benevolence fund balance of \$375.00. We received a donation from Highland WELCA of \$750.00 to be designated to 2025 benevolence that had not been paid out. Discussion by Council. Filed for audit.

RESOLUTION: Assigning Signatories to bank accounts. Since Dan Dutka is only living person to sign checks for the Highland Church accounts, and broke his left wrist, which is his predominant hand for writing, he needs help signing checks. Virginia Karlsbrotten is to be added as a signatory for Viking State Bank accounts. Motion by Ed Stoen, second by Eric Selness, to approve the Resolution, carried and signed this date.

Pastoral Report: Pastor Becker provided the Council with several items. The big news is that Judi Krauskopf will be taking over as the Churches Secretary. He reminded members about the Pictorial Directory on April 14-15 and to sign up. He will be taking a couple vacations this summer and will have Pastor Gies fill in. He also reminded Council that his yearly Pastor review needs to be completed and will be emailing evaluation forms. He will email the February monthly Pastoral report out to the members also.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Steeple Repair Update: Dan Dutka reported that the steeple repair has been completed by Alvin Yoder Construction. The roof on the steeple was replaced with steel and the louvers installed over the windows. The cost for the repair of the top portion was \$9,500 and the cost for the repair of the bottom portion was \$6,747. The bottom portion cost of the steeple repair was not talked about at the Annual meeting but needed to be repaired due to the water leaking into the Church. The funds were taken out of the Improvement Fund.
2. Parking Guard Rail Update: Dan Dutka reported we have the posts, but they have not been installed yet. The hand railing down the steps would be a PVC type lumber or something similar.
3. Internet/WiFi: Dan Dutka reported the line has been installed and a wireless router that was donated to the Church is up and running.
4. No other old business.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Email/Phone Numbers from Council Members: Myron Krauskopf requested that each member update their email and phone numbers for the record.

2. Sunday School Proposal: Myron Krauskopf mentioned that some members have asked about Sunday School at Highland Church. Pastor Becker mentioned some ideas about sharing Sunday School at both church locations. Council discussed the ideas and will be reviewed over the summer. Placed in Old Business.

3. Discussion on Highlands Pastoral Percentage-Declining Membership: Myron Krauskopf mentioned conversation has been brought up about this matter and Council briefly discussed. Big Canoe active membership 157, Highland active membership 49.

4. Discussion on Sanctuary Improvements, Carpet/Paint: Myron Krauskopf and Dan Dutka mentioned improvements in the Sanctuary are needed. Carpet and painting, along with new doors on the West entrance. Also, a false ceiling in the West entrance to avoid heat loss. Dan Dutka stated the other new windows in Sacristy needed to be installed, trim work around the basement door, and replace the folding door at the bottom of the steps. He will get a cost estimate for the next meeting.

5. No other new business.

Next Meeting: May 10, 2026.

Closing Prayer: The Lord's Prayer.

Adjournment. Motion to adjourn meeting by Eric Selness, seconded by Gary Halverson, carried. Adjourned at 1:13 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Kristy Selness, Highland Church Council Secretary

CHRIST IS RISEN!
CHRIST IS RISEN
INDEED!
Alleluia!



Shared Ministry Newsletter

April 2026



*To submit information for the monthly Shared Ministry newsletter, please email Linda Folstad at linda.folstad49@gmail.com
By: April 15th for the May 2026 Newsletter

All are invited to join us for Bible



Study held at Highland Lutheran Church at 3:00 pm on Tuesday, April 14th. **PLEASE NOTE the change in meeting date and time!** All are welcome!

NOTE: If school is delayed or cancelled, Bible Study is also cancelled.



SHARED MINISTRY MEETING

The next Shared Ministry GROUP meeting will be held Monday, April 20, 2026 9:00 am at St. John's in Locust All are welcome to attend



Lenten Bible Study



Several members from Shared Ministry churches attended the Bible Study offered at Winneshiek Wildberry Winery during the Lenten Season. The study focused on Handel's Oratorio "Messiah," based on the life, death and resurrection of Christ, and the scriptures used for the lyrics. Thank You to Pastor Randy Kittelson for leading this special Lenten study, concluding by listening to the famous Hallelujah chorus!



Upper Iowa River Cluster D Gathering

April 11, 2026


St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Eldorado

Women of the ELCA are invited to attend. Coffee time at 8 am and the Gathering begins at 9 am. Theme is "Sowing Seeds of Peace." Speaker is Lilli Gross who will talk about the challenges her family faced fleeing from Poland during World War II

Upcoming Events

- May 2: 7:30—10:30 am: Lutheran World Relief Ingathering at Olson Explosives in Decorah
- June 6: C3 (Creative, Collaborative, Congregation) Conference at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Waverly
- July 16-19: Women of the ELCA Triennial Gathering in Des Moines
- Oct. 30—Nov. 1: Youth Gathering Expedition at Camp EWALU
- June 28—July 2, 2027: ELCA Youth Gathering in Minneapolis, MN

Worship Services ~ April 2026

	April 2nd Maundy Thursday April 3rd Good Friday	Sunday April 5 <i>Easter Sunday</i>	Sunday April 12 2nd Sunday of Easter	Sunday April 19 3rd Sunday of Easter	Sunday April 26 4th Sunday of Easter
<p>Highland & Big Canoe</p> <p>Pr. Matthew Becker</p> <p><u>WEBSITE:</u> bchlutheran.org</p>	<p><u>Maundy Thursday:</u> 6:30 pm—Service w/Holy Communion at Highland</p> <p><u>Good Friday—</u> 6:30 pm Service At Big Canoe</p>	<p>8:00 am—Worship/HC at Big Canoe. 9:00 am Easter Breakfast and Pie Auction. 10:00 am Worship/HC at Highland. No Bible Study, Sunday School or Confirmation Class</p>	<p>8:45 am—Bible Study/Highland (Gospel of Matthew)</p> <p>10:00 am Worship/HC at Highland</p>	<p>8:45 am—Bible Study/Big Canoe (Gospel of Matthew) 9:00 am—Sunday School/BC</p> <p>10:00 am: Service of the Word at Big Canoe</p>	<p>8:45 am—Bible Study Class at Highland (Gospel of Matthew)</p> <p>10:00 am: Service of the Word worship Highland</p>
<p>Hesper</p> <p><u>WEBSITE</u> bohlutheran.org</p> <p>Burr Oak</p> <p>Pr. David Werges Lisa Kammerer—Deacon</p>	<p><u>Maundy Thursday</u> 7:00 om—Service w/Holy Communion in Hesper Students receive First Communion</p> <p><u>Good Friday</u> 7:00 pm—Tenebrae Service in Burr Oak</p>	<p>6:30 am—Easter Sunrise Worship/HC in Burr Oak. Easter Breakfast following worship. 8:30 am Worship/HC in Burr Oak. 10:00 am Worship/HC in Hesper</p>	<p>8:30 am Worship 9:30 am Coffee Fellowship</p> <p>10:00 am Worship/BO</p>	<p>8:30 am Worship/HC 9:30 am Coffee Fellowship</p> <p>10:00 am Worship/HC Burr Oak</p>	<p>8:30 am Worship 9:30 am Coffee Fellowship</p> <p>10:00 am Worship/BO</p>
<p>St. John's & Hauge</p> <p>Pr. Randy Kittelson</p> <p><u>Facebook:</u> Hauge and St. John's Lutheran Churches</p>		<p>Worship/HC 9:30 am at St. John's 10:30 am Coffee Hour</p>	<p>Worship/HC 9:30 am at Hauge 10:30 am Coffee Hour</p>	<p>Worship/HC 9:30 am at St. John's 10:30 am Coffee Hour</p>	<p>Worship/HC 9:30 am at Hauge 10:30 am Coffee Hour</p>
<p>Glenwood</p> <p><u>WEBSITE:</u> Glenwoodlutheran.org</p> <p>Canoe Ridge</p>	<p>GOOD FRIDAY April 3rd 5:30 pm—Tenebrae service at Glenwood</p>	<p>7:00 am worship at Glenwood 9:30 am worship at Canoe Ridge</p>	<p>8:30 am Worship 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am worship/HC at Canoe Ridge</p>	<p>10:30 am Worship 9:30 am—last day of Sunday School 8:30 am worship at Canoe Ridge</p>	<p>8:30 am Worship 10:30 am worship at Canoe Ridge</p>

Big Canoe Council Meeting – March 29, 2026

The council meeting was opened with Pastor Becker giving a prayer. Council members present: Seth Ferguson President, Matt Bigler Vice President, Deb Monson Secretary, and council members Sawyer Wise, Bill Bullerman and Steve Nordheim. Also attending, Treasurer Laurie Emery.

The secretary's notes were read and placed on file.

Laurie Emery gave the treasurer's report which is placed on file.

The following information was provided by Pastor Becker: Tammy Nordheim representing the cemetery committee is working with an attorney to separate the church property from the cemetery property. This was agreed upon during the Annual Meeting.

To separate the two properties the abstract will need to be updated. The original abstract from 1853 may be at Luther College archives. Pastor Becker has located an abstract from 1930.

Pastor passed around thank you cards from LWR for the quilts that were donated.

A guest speaker from LWR will be giving a sermon sometime this fall.

The church services during Holy Week were changed from 7:00 to 6:30 P.M. Maundy Thursday service will be at Highland. Good Friday service will be at Big Canoe.

Detra was hired by NE Iowa Behavioral Services. She will work Monday through Thursday. One day each week she will work at the children's center.

Big Canoe will be celebrating its 175th anniversary in 2028. Pastors who previously served Big Canoe may be invited to attend.

Pastor will be working with Bill Stoen to update the church's constitution.

Pastor provided council members to complete on him and send it to Brian Bigler.

The one-half of the farm rent has been paid.

The current balance of the church's finances is **-\$6,688.36**. The savings has been dipped into to pay bills. Hopefully there will be generous offerings at Easter. Upon reading this newsletter and seeing the negative balance it is hoped that the congregation will increase their weekly offering.

Pastor and Detra contribute 10% of their net income to the church.

The budget may have to be re-evaluated mid-year.

Judi Krauskopf is the new church secretary for both Big Canoe and Highland.

Big Canoe will have Vacation Bible School this year. June 15th through the 18th. Classes will be in the morning. Burr Oak and Hesper will be the host churches.

Luther League has generously set aside \$1,200.00 for the women's restroom renovation. The floor and the sinks need to be replaced due to water damage.

The Men's Breakfast was well attended with 12 or 13 people attending. Will have another breakfast in the fall.

Parishioners have been signing up for the pictorial directory.

A young couple night will be held at the parsonage on April 10th. Luther League members will provide childcare at the church.

The church still does not have insurance. Bill Stoen advised that to get insurance many upgrades would need to be made. (Auto call to the fire department and law enforcement, a fire suppression system for the kitchen stove and proper hood ventilation for the stove). All these upgrades are cost prohibitive.

If possible, a rainy day fund could be established.

For anyone using the church for a gathering they would need to sign a letter of release from liability to protect the church from being sued. An insurance policy should be obtained to protect church council members from being sued.

Discussion was had on increasing the amount for which Treasurer can write a check. Currently anything over \$500.00 needs a co-signature. It was decided to increase the amount for which Laurie Emery can write a check is increased to \$2,000.00. There is one exception to this amount and that is Pastor Beckers salary. A co-signer will not be needed as Pastor's salary is a recurring expense.

A motion to increase the check amount to \$2,000.00 was requested by President Seth Ferguson. Bill Bullerman made the motion which was seconded by Sawyer Wise. Motion passed, all voting aye.

Sawyer Wise will be updating the septic system soon.

President Seth Ferguson made the motion to update the church's abstract whereby all land north of the blacktop will belong to the cemetery committee. The cost of the abstract update will be split between the church and the cemetery committee. The motion was seconded by Bill Bullerman. Motion passed all voting aye.

On May 2nd, Pastor Becker will take part in the consecration service for the 20 Nigerian Lutherans. The service will be held at 7 A.M. Iowa time. Pastor would like to have parishioners attend.

Pastor will be attending the following events:

- April 16th - 18th will be in Des Moines for the Lutheran Quarterly meeting.
- April 26th – 29th will be at Valpo leading a retreat for pastors in Chicago.
- May 11th – 13th Iowa STS retreat at Creighton University.
- May 30th – June 8th Detra and Pastor will be in Hawaii. Pastor's mother's 90th birthday. Pastor Gies will be conducting service on May 31st and June 7th.

Council meeting closed with The Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Deb Monson
Secretary

You're invited to



The Highlands

An Aase Haugen Community



Grand Opening!

Ribbon Cutting, Dedication and Open House!

Wednesday, April 8, 2026

(Aase Haugen's Birthday!)

3:00 Chamber Ribbon Cutting 4:00 Dedication and Blessing
4:30-6:00 Open House

*We would be honored to have you join us for our Grand Opening.
This milestone reflects our shared commitment
to serving the community and providing exceptional senior care.*

Refreshments will be served. Tours available from 4:30 to 6:00



The Highlands

607 Highland Drive, Decorah, IA

563-382-3603 info@highlands.org www.highlands.org

April 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
				1	2	3	4
				6:30 Maundy Thursday at Highland Church	6:30 pm Good Friday Service at Big Canoe		
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
8:00 Easter Service Big Canoe Holy Communion 9:00 Easter Breakfast & Pie Auction, support Luther League 10:00 Easter Service at Highland				Noon BC WELCA potluck & Bible study 4:30 – 6:30 Highland's (Aase) Open House			
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
8:45 Bible Class 10:00 Service Highland w/Holy Communion Highland Church Council meets after church		2:00 - 8:45 p.m. Photos of both congregations for pictorial directory. 3:00 Gather Bible Study at Highland	2:00 - 8:45 p.m. Photos of both congregations for pictorial directory.	Pastor Becker attends annual board meeting of Lutheran Quarterly in Des Moines through the 18th	PB at meeting	PB at meeting	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	
8:45 Bible Class 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Service Big Canoe Reception for Karlee & Ryan after church - Youth Confirmation after Church	9:00 a.m. Shared Ministry Group Meeting at St. John's Locust				Newsletter deadline		
26	27	28	29	30			
8:45 Bible Class 10:00 Service Highland Blessing of LWR quilts/kits Highland WELCA after church							