



A message from the Pastor—A gift with no strings attached to it

“How shall I repay the Lord for all the good things he has done for me.” Psalm 116:10

Well, Christmas has come and gone; now it is time to sit down and write thank you letters to those who showered us with their gifts. At a moment like this sometimes one can have difficulties how to go about and express gratitude. I remember what happened in my first year of ministry when my family and I received lots of Christmas greetings filled with gifts. We were overwhelmed with the kindness and generosity of people. Then we began wondering how to show our appreciation and I came up with this crazy idea. I said to my wife, “Why don’t we buy some kind of gift and give to those who gave to us,” and I suggested buying fruit baskets and delivering them ourselves. So we went to our local supermarket and bought a lot of fruit baskets and began our door to door delivery. Then as we began to get more and more small and large gifts, we began to wonder where to draw the line. Besides that, our local supermarket began to run out of the kind and size of fruit baskets we were giving. So we drove to Grand Forks and bought more baskets until our parsonage basement looked like a distribution center for fruit baskets.

But the dilemma was still who to give to and who to leave out. In desperation I called my friend Pastor Phil Blom and asked for his advice on how to get out of this mess. Phil laughed for a moment and then he said to me, “Ale, you are their pastor, the people give to you because they want to express their appreciation for your ministry. Therefore, they don’t expect you to return a favor. Your thank you letter is good enough for them.” Oh what a relief to hear that. With that we abandoned our mission and wrote simple thank you letters.

The best gift we all have ever received at Christmas is the gift of Jesus Christ. The bible says, “God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son.” Now, what we need to ask ourselves is how we can respond to God’s gift of love. Is there a time when you get overwhelmed with God’s marvelous gift and ask yourself like the psalmist who said, “How shall I repay for all the good things God has done for me?”

The truth is that God doesn’t want anything in return. His gift for us is a free gift with no strings attached. All God wants from us is that we be his loving children and enjoy his gift with gratitude.

Thanks be to God for his precious Christmas gift. Amen.

Pastor Ale



Church Events

- Sundays—9:30 a Worship
10:30 a Fellowship
- Tuesdays & Fridays at 9:30 a—
Coffee with the Staff
- Wednesdays (Jan 3-Feb 7)
5:30 p Meal
6:15 p Worship
6:30 p Wed. School & Music
6:45 p Confirmation
7:00 p Bells Practice
7:00 p Choir Rehearsal
- Wednesdays (Feb 14-Mar 20)
5:45 p Meal
6:30 p Worship
6:45 p Wed. School & Music
7:15 p Bells Practice
7:15 p Choir Rehearsal
- Thursdays at 7:00 a—Men’s
Breakfast at the Fryn’ Pan
- Jan 4 & Feb 1
7:00 p Rebekah Circle
- Jan 9 & Feb 13
1:00 p Prayer Shawl
6:30 p Church Council
- Jan 11 & Feb 8
1:00 p Abigail Circle
- Jan 15 & Feb 19
7:00 p Book Club
- Jan 16 & Feb 20
6:00 p Evening Quilting
- Jan 17 & Feb 21
9:00 a Quilting

Contact Information

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Office Hours:
9:00-3:00 Mon-Thur

From the Vice President—Orrin Ausen

What's one thing that everyone looks forward to in January? It certainly is not the bitter cold. New Year's Eve is the big holiday that redeems January's otherwise long and bitter period. If you're looking for resolution ideas, it's most likely you'll find them within the theme of the New Year.



To put a religious spin on New Year's Eve, try thinking about New Year's resolutions. When the clock strikes midnight, people are committing to becoming better people in many ways. Most people focus on fitness, eating habits and relationships.

Christians are called to look beyond the physical world to make themselves better people. Beyond taking care of your body, you must take care of your soul.

The practice of making New Year's resolutions goes back over 3,000 years to the ancient Babylonians. There is just something about the start of a new year that gives us the feeling of a fresh start and a new beginning. In reality, there is no difference between December 31 and January 1. Nothing mystical occurs at midnight on December 31. The Bible does not speak for or against the concept of New Year's resolutions. However, if a Christian determines to make a New Year's resolution, what kind of resolution should he or she make?

Common New Year's resolutions are commitments to quit smoking, to stop drinking, to manage money more wisely, and to spend more time with family. By far, the most common New Year's resolution is to lose weight, in conjunction with exercising more and eating more healthily. These are all good goals to set. However, [1 Timothy 4:8](#) instructs us to keep exercise in perspective: "For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come." The vast majority of New Year's resolutions, even among Christians, are in relation to physical things. This should not be.

Many Christians make New Year's resolutions to pray more, to read the Bible every day, and to attend church more regularly. These are fantastic goals. However, these New Year's resolutions fail just as often as the non-spiritual resolutions because there is no power in a New Year's resolution. Resolving to start or stop doing a certain activity has no value unless you have the proper motivation for stopping or starting that activity. For example, why do you want to read the Bible every day? Is it to honor God and grow spiritually, or is it because you have just heard that it is a good thing to do? Why do you want to lose weight? Is it to honor God with your body, or is it for vanity, to honor yourself?

[Philippians 4:13](#) tells us, "I can do everything through Him who gives me strength." [John 15:5](#) declares, "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." If God is the center of your New Year's resolution, it has chance for success, depending on your commitment to it. If it is God's will for something to be fulfilled, He will enable you to fulfill it. If a resolution is not God-honoring and/or is not in agreement with God's Word, we will not receive God's help in fulfilling the resolution.

So, what sort of New Year's resolution should a Christian make? Here are some suggestions: (1) pray to the Lord for wisdom ([James 1:5](#)) regarding what resolutions, if any, He would have you make; (2) pray for wisdom as to how to fulfill the goals God gives you; (3) rely on God's strength to help you; (4) find an accountability partner who will help you and encourage you; (5) don't become discouraged with occasional failures; instead, allow them to motivate you further; (6) don't become proud or vain, but give God the glory. [Psalm 37:5-6](#) says, "Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him and he will do this: He will make your righteousness shine like the dawn, the justice of your cause like the noonday sun."



Youth Ministry



Thanks to the generous support of the congregation, the 8th and 9th grade confirmation students were able to shop for and pack 43 shoeboxes that were sent overseas to children who would normally not get any Christmas gifts.

Thank you to all who came to put up lights in Chahinkapa. Money donated from the city (\$500) goes to our church and will be used for the LYO trip.



Children's Christmas Program 2023



Memorials and Gifts

In memory of:	Given by:
Building	
Phil Koppelman	Steve & Kay Klein
Debt Reduction	
Edward Meyer	Dennis & Rene Hasbargen
Marilee (Larsen) Kraft	Dennis & Rene Hasbargen
Marlene Miller	Dennis & Rene Hasbargen
Phil Koppelman	Sandy Olson
Wendy Campbell	Dennis & Rene Hasbargen
Elevator	
Phil Koppelman	Phil Koppelman
General	
Bernice Genereux	Dorothy Rakow, Peter & Connie Jensen
Lillian Ricke	Joel & Melanie Herder
Lois Hoffman (Gary Karel's Sister)	Dennis & Rene Hasbargen, Joel & Melanie Herder
Marilee (Larsen) Kraft	Dorothy Rakow
Michael Muehler (Mary Jean Muehler's Son)	Alice Ellsworth, Dennis & Rene Hasbargen
Phil Koppelman	Alice Ellsworth, Darlene Bontjes, Dorothy Rakow, Gary & Evie Fox, Jan Michels, Krystal Schaible, Ron & Cindy Krier
Sharon (Cremers) Peterson	Shirley Schmitt
LYO	
Bailey Bernstein	Peter & Connie Jensen
New HVAC	
Phil Koppelman	Michael & Diane Belseth
Quilting	
Marilee (Larsen) Kraft	Michael & Diane Belseth
Phil Koppelman	Dell Krueger, Jeff & Cathy Affield
Property/Sewer Repair	
Phil Koppelman	Christine Hansen, Dennis & Rene Hasbargen, Gary & Jane Fick
TV & Radio	
Phil Koppelman	Marvin & Joyce Aarons
Sunday/Wednesday School	
Marilee (Larsen) Kraft	Peter & Connie Jensen

Mission Report—Connie Jensen

The following is a summary of contributions/donations given by members of Breckenridge Lutheran Church in 2023:

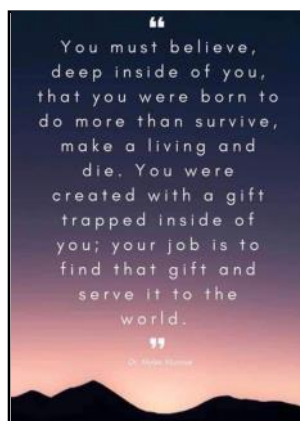
January/February—Someplace Safe	\$270
March/April—RW Food Pantry	75# groceries \$110
May—Valley Lake Boys Home	\$250
June—Kinship	\$97
July/August—Luther Crest	\$375
September—Rebeka Circle	numerous personal and school supplies
October/November—Operation Christmas Child	43 gift boxes
December—Wilkin County Needy Families	24 gift cards

20+ quilts to Micah's Mission

Our congregation also donated \$7,000 to the ELCA/Synod Benevolence and Mission Support

Our congregation has been so generous to share with others what God has first given us. This list does not fully represent all the donations other groups in our church have given. Thank you to all who have shared so that others may benefit. Thank you to Lois and Deb for their financial and organizational assistance. Thanks be to God!

Blessings,
Connie Jensen



Dear BLC Family,

Our body is broken. We are missing a few parts and our body is not functioning as it should. Our body is missing ears, eyes, hands, and feet. We need to insert these parts to become one body again. We need body parts to fill the empty sockets for the church council. Sockets to fill are Council President. We also have sockets to fill for several committees: nominating, Evangelism, Faith Care and Share, and Worship. All committee sockets are very short term and involve little of your time to serve. We need many body parts to make up one body, so **please** contact Pastor Ale or Orrin Ausen (701-403-3278) with your interest and questions to make our body whole again. Position descriptions can be found on the tables at both entrances.

We will be creating both an online and print version of the Church Directory—but we need photographs of all Breckenridge Lutheran Church's members. If you have a current family/individual photo we can use, please submit it either electronically (officebrecklutheran@gmail.com) or drop off a hard copy in the office. We will also be offering photo shoots here at church.

We thank Jill Blaufuss for the beautiful photos she has already taken. If you would like an electronic or printed version of your photo, please contact the office. We ask that you make a donation which will be applied to the Debt Reduction fund.



Financial Summary (as of November 30, 2023)

November 2023 Financial Summary	
General Account Income in November 2023	\$17,153.20
General Account Expenditures in November 2023	\$19,462.55
Cash Loss for the month	(\$-2,309.35)

Year to Date Income	Year to Date Expenses	Year to Date Net Loss	Monthly Budget	Weekly Budget
\$202,056.35	\$218,141.63	(-\$16,085.28)	\$24,016	\$5,542

FEED MY STARVING CHILDREN

MOBILEPACK™

FargoPack

Breckenridge Lutheran Church will be packing on Sat. January 6, 2024 from 1-3 pm. Please contact Lexi Hought to sign up for this event.

lexihought@gmail.com

701-430-1821

LUTHER CREST WINTER ELEMENTARY RETREAT

Jan. 19-21, 2024

For students in grades 3-6
Cost: \$205

At this retreat, explore the Bible and your faith, eat amazing meals provided by camp staff, and spend quality time in the fresh, frozen wonderland of Luther Crest grounds in the winter.

Register online at luthercrest.org/youth-retreats/

Luther Crest Middle School Winter Retreat

Come and enjoy Luther Crest in the winter at this middle school retreat! At this retreat, we will be diving into the Bible, playing outside, singing lots of camp songs, eating delicious camp meals, and lodging in our heated cabins on site.
Come join the fun!

Feb. 9-11, 2024

For grades 6-9

Cost: \$205

Register online at luthercrest.org/youth-retreats/

If you have had a recent change to your address, phone number or email address, please be sure to let the church office know!



Upcoming Events



ANNUAL MEETING

BLC
Breckenridge
Lutheran Church

**January
28
2024**

10:30 am

The poster features a vibrant background with a yellow and blue gradient, overlaid with a purple and blue brushstroke effect. In the center, there are two hands reaching out towards each other. The text is bold and colorful, with the date and time in a bright yellow font.



Luther Crest

CREATIVE RETREAT
March 22-24, 2024
\$175 per person

Come express your creativity through any project of your choice! Bring your gear and get ready for a productive retreat with other creative minds. Price includes lodging and meals.

Register at luthercrest.org
or call (320) 846-2431

The poster has a light blue background with decorative floral corner graphics. The Luther Crest logo is prominently displayed at the top center. The text is in a clean, sans-serif font, with the event title and dates in a larger, bold font.



Wishing you 12 months of prosperity, 52 weeks of fun, 365 days of laughter, 8,760 hours of happiness, 525,600 minutes of good fortune, and 31,536,000 seconds of good health. Happy New Year!!!

As we stand on the threshold of a new year, we come before you with hearts full of anticipation and gratitude. We thank you for the gift of life and for the journey that has brought us to this moment. Lord, we acknowledge the highs and lows of the past year—the joys and sorrows, the victories and challenges. Through it all, your presence has been our constant source of strength and hope. As we welcome this new year, we place it in your capable hands. We trust in your plan and purpose for our lives, knowing that your ways are higher than our ways, and your thoughts are higher than our thoughts. We pray for your guidance in the coming year. Lead us in the paths of righteousness and wisdom. Help us to discern your will in all that we do and to walk in obedience to your Word. Fill our hearts with hope, joy, and peace. May your love and grace shine brightly in our lives and be a source of light in a world that often needs it. Lord, grant us the courage to face the unknown with faith and trust. In times of uncertainty, remind us that you are our anchor, our refuge, and our strength. We thank you for the lessons and blessings of the past and look forward to the opportunities and adventures that the future holds. May we use our time, talents, and resources to bring glory to your name and to be a blessing to others. In the name of Jesus, we welcome the new year with open hearts, renewed faith, and the confidence that you will be with us every step of the way. Amen



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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U.S. POSTAGE PAID
BRECKENRIDGE MN
PERMIT NO. 42

Breckenridge Lutheran Church

Located at 301 6th St N | Breckenridge, MN

Our Mission

Learning to be disciples and to make disciples,
Reaching out to witness and support our community,
Welcoming all to worship and serve Jesus Christ!



Worship Schedule

Worship Service—Sundays at 9:30 am | Fellowship at 10:30 am

Wednesday Meal at 5:30 pm | Worship Service at 6:15 pm | Education at 6:30 pm | Confirmation at 6:45 pm

Holy Communion on the 1st and 3rd Sunday