

December 2024



HILL AND VALLEY PARISH NEWS **Svea and Eidsvold Lutheran Churches**

Greetings from the Parsonage,

Advent has arrived! It is my favorite season of the Church year, as it asks us to stop and consider what the arrival of God into our world truly means for each of us. The word itself comes from the Latin term for “impending arrival” or “coming.” Liking two-thousand years after the first arrival of God into our world, we are quick to forget that the Hebrews endured four hundred years of silence from God. The years between the last Prophets—those who spoke of a coming Messiah—and the birth of Jesus Christ were spent waiting and wondering when God would finally break into the world and set His people free yet again. I cannot imagine a world without our Savior, but for many generations, this was their reality. We take the four weeks before Christmas to sit and consider the world that Jesus met, a world of wanting, a world without a Savior, so we might greet Him as we should, as the One who forever changed our world and become our Savior. The candles on our Advent Wreath symbolize the change that Jesus brought to us—Hope, Love, Joy, and Peace, those attributes so often missing from the human experience here on earth. The wreath is a good reminder that Christ not only saves our lives, but also the way that we live them.

This season of anticipation is a time of beloved traditions. Svea will be hosting Wednesday night soup supper and services (Dec. 4, 11, 18). I encourage everyone to attend. These evenings are a great way to connect as a parish and score a killer free meal. Soup will be served at 6pm and Holden Evening Prayer will follow at 6:30. December 18 will be the Scandinavian Potluck as we are expecting Santa Lucia’s annual visit to Svea that day. Another beloved Advent tradition is the Nativity Play. Our Eidsvold Sunday School has toiled away to create a production for the inspiration, edification, and general entertainment of the congregation on December 15. For many of us, this program was our entrance in the great Nativity story, when we first heard of God’s entrance into our world, and felt Jesus not as a character or something only adults talked about but as a person who lived and breathed. It is my sincere hope that that Advent story never loses its effect on us—and that we never forget who Jesus is and why He was born into our world.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Al

P.S. Reminder: Hospitals no longer notify congregations or pastors about parishioners. If you are in the hospital or emergency room, please let me know. Call or text me at (608)799-9703

We are excited to announce **electronic** giving
through **Vanco!**

Your generosity will help us impact our community
with the good news of the gospel.

Try the QR codes printed below.

Eidsvold



Svea



CONTACT INFORMATION

PASTOR AL AAKRE 608-799-9703

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CHURCH: BELUTHER@BEVCOMM.NET

OFFICE 715-594-3182

LEAVE A MESSAGE





December Birthdays

Eidsvold

- 1 - Landon Gilbertson
- 1 - Derek Borchardt
- 2 - Colin Johnson
- 3 - Justin Mandelkow
- 3 - Joshua Bierbrauer
- 5 - Brenda Singer
- 6 - Charlie Alms
- 9 - Shayla Gilbertson
- 13 - Tim Singer
- 14 - Joshua Yotter
- 15 - Tracie Esterby
- 15 - Stina Anderson
- 17 - Brady Scharpen
- 20 - Kaitlin Albarado
- 20 - Dylan Gilbertson
- 22 - Daphne Hohmann
- 23 - Linden Johnson
- 23 - Tim Deden
- 24 - Gwen Brenner
- 25 - Henry Brown
- 27 - Nikki Alms
- 28 - Tori Benck
- 30 - Jeremy Plote
- 31 - Jerome Lacroix
- 31 - Tana Langer

Svea

- 8 - Orlando Anderson
- 11 - Madelyn Maxwell
- 11 - Dustin Anway
- 15 - Brock Strain
- 21 - Kelly Knutson
- 21 - Andrew Girdeen
- 22 - John O'Keefe
- 27 - Arnie Sarnstrom



If a birthday was missed or is incorrect, please let me know.
Tana at langerlt@att.net

CHURCH SERVICE INFO

EIDSVOLD LUTHERAN CHURCH
W6111 COUNTY RD EE
BAY CITY WI 54723
DECEMBER SERVICES AND
SUNDAY SCHOOL
10:30AM

SVEA LUTHERAN CHURCH
N2610 770TH ST
HAGER CITY WI 54014
DECEMBER SERVICES
9:00 AM



Parish Social Media

[Facebook](#)

[Church Website](#)

<https://www.eidsvoldsvea.com>



PRAYER LIST

Prayers for Healing:

Mic Borst, Ben Bauer, Ruby Dailey, Rich Johnson, Kaiza Hanson, Jerry Lacroix, Maisley Maxwell, Missy Dailey, Elwyn Manore, family of Sandy Halverson

Prayers for Sustained Strength and Comfort:

Terrence Emery, Jim Nelson, Naomi Ruth, Chris Larson, Jim Larson, Rose Ann Powers, Gerry Hoffman, Connie Rieck, Mavis Flack, Julie Patterson, Jim Swenson, Paul Curry

Prayers for our Ministry Partners:

Bishop Martin Halom, the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin Debi Emery (CRU), Isaac and Isabella Thrill, The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malawi

Prayers for those serving in the military: Carson Anway, Tyler Ballman

Svea Church Happenings

Svea is looking for a Treasurer. If you are interested or know of someone who would be a great fit for this important role, please contact Mary Shaver, Pastor Al, or another council member. Training will be provided.

150th Anniversary
Celebration will be in June, 2025.

Svea No Bake - Bake Sale

A big thank you to all who donated to the event. Your generosity is much appreciated. This will be a great help to the charities we support.

We managed to end up with a total of **\$786.00**

So grateful to all!!

Lori Lopez won the quilt that was donated by Bettie Swedien. Thank you to her for sharing her talents with us. Also, thank you to Mary Shaver for her talents in the beautiful signs she created. God bless all for your great support.

Svea WELCA

Thank You

Svea members, it was discussed at the Annual Meeting to have one person be the contact to get items to the Parish secretary for the newsletter. Please contact me by the due date (usually the 3rd Sunday of each month - newsletters are handed out the last Sunday).

The best phone number to reach me at is **612-720-7411** as we go to Texas in the winter.

Summer I can be reached at home our phone **715-792-2875**.

Bonnie Hasenberg

The **Svea Christmas Party** for the Svea Special Friends will be held on **December 15th following the 9AM service.**

A special meal is being planned and the entire congregation is invited.

If you have any questions, please call

Kathy Schuh at 715-821-5966



EIDSVOLD HAPPENINGS



The **Eidsvold Cemetery Committee** would like to give a huge thank you to everyone that came out on Sunday, Oct. 6th to the cemetery to help with fall clean-up. The adults and kids made the work fun and go quickly. Thanks for the great lunch, it is appreciated!!

Eidsvold will be trying the Word in Season daily devotional starting in April. This will be replacing our current daily devotional Portals of Prayer.

Thank You

Community Events

Ruby's Pantry
First Saturday of the Month
Dec 7
10-11:30 at
Pierce Pepin Co-op



Euchre

The first Friday of the month.

December 6

7:00 pm at Eidsvold

Bring a snack to share, coffee will be provided.

Don't know how to play? Come and learn!

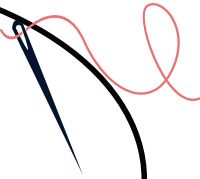
Svea Quilters

2nd Tuesday

December 10th

9 am-noon

No experience is needed. All are welcome.



Choir Practice

Dec 4 - 5 pm at Svea

Dec 11 - 5 pm at Eidsvold

Dec 18 - 5 pm Svea

Dec 22 - Performance

Advent Services at Svea

Wed, Dec 4 - 6:00 Soup supper and 6:30 Service

Wed, Dec 11 - 6:00 Soup supper and 6:30 Service

Wed, Dec 18 6:00 Scandinavian Meal
and 6:30 Santa Lucia Service

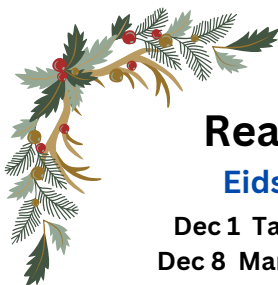


Christmas Services

Tuesday, Dec 24 - 4 pm at Svea

Tuesday, Dec 24 - 7 pm at Eidsvold

Wednesday, Dec 25 - 10:00 am at Eidsvold



Thank you for your Time and Talents

Readers

Eidsvold

- Dec 1 Tana Langer
- Dec 8 Mandy Jepson
- Dec 15 Michelle Plote
- Dec 22 Carol/Angie Peterson
- Dec 29 Justin Mandelkow

Ushers

Eidsvold

- Dec 1 DeLoris B & Rita A
- Dec 8 Fay A & Mary W
- Dec 15 Karen B & Kathy H
- Dec 22 Dennis Potts & Tricia L
- Dec 24 7pm _____ & _____
- Dec 25 10:00 am _____ & _____

December

Altar Committee

Phyllis Beastrom

Bake Communion Bread

Rita Anderson

Dec. 1, 15, & 29

Washing Communion Glasses:

Dec. 1 _____

Dec. 15 _____



Church Cleaning

Eidsvold

- Dec. 1 _____
- Dec. 8 Girdeens
- Dec. 15 Eidems
- Dec. 22 Faith Edwards
- Dec. 29 Phyllis



thank you!



Eidsvold Sunday School News!!

Dec. 1 - No Sunday School - *Thanksgiving weekend*

Dec. 8- Program Practice starts early: at **9:45**

Dec. 15 - Program at 10:30 Service

Birthday Cake served following service

Break until January 12th

If you have questions regarding Sunday School,
please contact Megan Franklin.
meganmfranklin@yahoo.com



It is time to start thinking about filling open council positions for 2025

Officers are elected for a 2-year term and should be replaced after serving 2 terms.

Elections are in January at the annual meeting.

Due to the volume of work by the Treasurer, this is a paid position.

Other officers are on a volunteer basis.

Thank you in advance for considering to fill an open position.

Annual Meeting will follow service on Sunday, January 27, 2025.

- President - Treasurer - Nominating Committee -
- Sunday School Superintendent - Head Usher -



JOINT COUNCIL MEETING **September 26th** at 7 p.m. at Eidsvold.

Agenda is focusing on benefits for next year. Enrollment starts October 1st - 15th.

- We are to talk about the musician for the churches for next year.
- Review Pastoral 2025 salary
- Svea 150th Anniversary-June 2025. Plan is to celebrate 2 Sundays, maybe the 22th & 29th.

TBD

After all issues are discussed there will be a closed council meeting to discuss whatever else needs to be addressed if it wasn't addressed during the open meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

- New member Sunday will be on Sunday, November, 17th.
- Discussed the devotion books "Word & Season" vs. "Portals of Prayer" (which is \$168 per quarter) Mary will check in to the price of the Word & Season booklet.
- Reformation Sunday will be October 27th. Joint Service. The Sunday School will sing and they will provide a brunch after church service. ___
- November 3 is "ALL SAINTS DAY" and the choir will be singing.
- A member from HOPE AND HARBOR will be talking to the congregation about some volunteer opportunities.

BENEFITS FOR PASTOR AL:

- A discussion was had about the pastoral benefits packages.
- There was a motion from Kendra Hanson to keep the benefits at the GOLD Package which he already has. This was seconded by Wade Strain.

Next joint council meeting will be Wednesday, November 20th at 6 p.m.

Meeting minutes submitted by

Kendra Hanson,

Eidsvold Council Secretary.

JOINT COUNCIL MEETING OF EIDSVOLD AND SVEA CHURCHES-**NOVEMBER 20, 2024**

Attendees: Jason H., Anne G., Tracie E., Kendra H., Pastor Al, Tana L., Lee L., Kathy S. Fay A., Wade S., Dennis R. Kelly K, Phyllis B.

- Reviewed last meeting minutes, read and approved.

OLD BUSINESS:

- Word and Season devotional books. We can cancel these per Mary S by Dec. 17th. Motion to cancel by Anne, seconded and approved to save this expense.

NEW BUSINESS:

·HOLIDAY SEASON WORSHIP SCHEDULE

- o Christmas Eve service will be at Svea at 4 p.m.
 - o Christmas Eve service will be at Eidsvold at 7 p.m.
 - o Christmas Day service will be at Eidsvold at 10 a.m.
 - o Next service will be a joint service on December 29th at Eidsvold
- continued on next page...

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ADVENT

Svea will have the services on Wednesdays

6 p.m. meal 7 p.m. service **Now changed to 6:30 pm**

Phylis has agreed to play on Wednesdays in December for Advent, December 4, 11, 18th.

PASTORAL COMPENSATION:

\$49,185.00 base salary	\$49,185.00 salary
\$14,755.50 housing****	\$4,891.45 taxes
\$4,891.45 tax	\$54,076.45 yearly salary paid to Pastor
\$68,831.95 Total Defined Compensation	
	\$2,253.19 = \$2,253.19 would be paid twice monthly on the 3rd and 15th.
\$17,896.32 Medical	\$54,076.56 (\$2253.19*24) actual year salary paid after roundin
\$6,883.20 Pension	
\$3,097.44 Housing equity	
\$137.64 Life	
\$206.52 Disability	
\$28,221.12 Total Benefits	\$28,221.12/12 = \$2,351.76 Approx monthly Portico expense
\$3,000.00 mileage *INCREASE DUE TO NECESSARY TRAVEL	
\$300.00 books/pub	
\$600.00 Official meetings	
\$1,000.00 Continuing ed	
\$4,900.00 Total Reimburseables	
\$101,953.07 Total Compensation	
-\$14,755.50 Subtract housing allowance****	
\$87,197.57 TOTAL CASH COMPENSATION NEEDED TO PAY PASTORAL EXPENSES	

Motion was made to accept this Pastoral Budget for 2025 by Kendra, seconded by Jason. All in favor and accepted to pass for this next year. We did have a discussion on the Svea/Eidsvold percentage and how it has changed from when we first merged in to one "congregation".

This year next year we will leave the same: Eidsvold 58%/Svea 42%. Motion made by Wade S. to keep the same, seconded by Dennis R.

As of right now at this meeting the number of confirmed communion members at Svea that are contributing are 64 (36%) versus Eidsvold are at 114 (64%).

Last year it was a ration of Svea 48% ratio/Eidsvold 52%. Discussion was had in terms of what this could mean in the future. We will have to see how 2025 plays out.

OPEN DISCUSSION:

There were congregation members that were present that brought up some things regarding how they think things have been going in regards of the service with Pastor Al and the music currently with the stand in piano player. All opinions were heard and discussed.

As far as the pianist is concerned. Tana will talk to Melody to see if she is ready to add another Sunday to her schedule and Phylis said she would probably be willing to fill in on other Sundays. We are hoping to come to a solution that everyone will be happy with in the long run.

TREASURER OPTIONS

Both congregations are looking for Treasurers right now. Had a discussion on hiring either Gaslin Accounting or Feuerhelm/Langer (F/L is \$145 per month for payroll). We are currently outsourcing our payroll.

Phylis B will think about the treasurer position for Eidsvold to possibly start after the first of the year some time once her schedule clears up a bit after the holidays. Ann Girdeen will figure out a monthly hour schedule so she could be compensated accordingly.

It was decided that outsourcing of the payroll will still be OK.

UPCOMING 2025 JOINT COUNCIL MEETINGS

Feb 27 6 p.m. at Svea May 16 6 p.m. at Eidsvold Sept 18, 2025 at 6.p. at Svea

Nov 20, 2025 at 6 p.m. at Eidsvold (membership roll discussion)

Meeting minutes submitted by Eidsvold Council Secretary, Kendra Hanson



Christmas Message from the Bishop



THE GIFT THAT IS YOU! 2024 Christmas Message As I reflect on my time in Malawi back in early November, I had so many experiences that merit being shared. As I write this letter, perhaps the most important lesson I can offer was that of my new reality as a guest overseas. Everywhere I turned, I truly felt like I was the most important person present. Yes, there were times where I was the honored guest as a bishop. I was granted the best seats in the church, in the van, on the stage. When I walked the grounds at the Lutheran Compound in my purple clerical, EVERYONE immediately stopped what they were doing to greet me, even if that was their first encounter with me. I was fed better than most and I never had to carry my own luggage. I had women pour water over my hands before certain meals (including communion) much like Christ did during the Last Supper in washing the disciples' feet. And despite my innermost desires to remind them that I was just another guy, I simply could not insult them in that manner. The way in which they treated me was at the core of their faith practice. Thankfully, Deacon Laura taught me a valuable insight that helped my understanding more clearly. They didn't treat only bishops that way, they treat all guests that way! Having been to Malawi five times before she took me, Laura has experienced that generous hospitality time and time again. And now that I'm a few weeks removed from their genuine welcome, I still firmly believe that their faith has taught them to love their neighbor and lift them up no matter how far away we may come. What if we all treated our neighbor as though they are the most important person present at that time? What if we lifted the spirits of the people God places in our lives each and every day? As we prepare for the Christmas story once again this year, we emphasize the gift that comes in the Christ child, God made flesh to live among us mortals. Just think about the lives that the Christ child touched! It started with Mary and Joseph, continued to the shepherds in the fields, and even gave the heavenly host something to praise! Of course, Jesus went on to touch so many lives - people in need of healing, children in need of welcoming, outcasts in need of community, sinners in need of redeeming. Jesus became the gift who helped them all feel that they were the most important person present at the time, people worthy of his unconditional love, people whose spirits were uplifted. As we march through the season of Advent toward the birth of God Emmanuel, Jesus the savior of the world, remember the gift of God's presence in your lives. Recognize that God is even present within you and that you are a gift as well! And much like my new friends in Malawi, be that gift for others. Reveal Christ's presence to others through your continued faithfulness and dedication to the God of love because that love can overcome division. You are a gift to this synod and to God's church when you let God's light shine in and through you! May this Christmas also reveal to you the light of Christ through others.

Bishop Martin