

THE MESSENGER



From the Pastor's desk...



8 Ways To Increase Generosity in our Parish

16 All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right....2 Timothy 3:16

1. Assemble a Leadership Team
2. Create a plan
3. Promote a First Time Giver System
4. Encourage Weekly Offering Talks
5. Provide Online Giving offering
6. Identify High Capacity Givers Potential
7. Special Offerings and Year End Giving Options
8. Lead with Consistent and Compelling Communications/Messaging

In my experience it is imperative for church leadership to spend a significant amount of time and energy toward Vision Clarification. Securing a clear, current, and compelling vision for the future is the FIRST STEP toward the assurance of the well-being and longevity of the life of the Parish.

My invitation for the Fisher/Bygland Parish is to prayerfully consider yourself as an eligible leader and carrier of the vision. Ask God to give you the willingness to help facilitate generosity within our Parish.

If you feel a sense of urgency to take action to ensure Fisher/Bygland Parish may continue to remain active and beloved houses of worship for many of all ages for generations to come. Please reach out to me via email, text or cell. pastor@fisherbygland.org 812-639-7816
Sharing Christ's Service, Pastor Gretchen



It has been said that, "Good leaders receive annual reviews." Pastor Gretchen strives to demonstrate good leadership with the help of the Holy Spirit. In addition to the guidance of the Spirit, the Fisher/Bygland Parish Council is asking each member of the Parish to complete a 2025 Performance Survey on behalf of Pastor Gretchen. Thank you for your willingness to take time to thoughtfully complete the survey either online, or hardcopy. If you have any questions please contact Heidi Reitmeier or Reed Tinkham.

Scan the QR Code to fill out the online Pastor Performance Review.

Responses need to be in by ¹November 5th!

Bygland Lutheran Church

“Christmas in the Country”

**LUTEFISK AND MEATBALL DINNER
BAZAAR AND BAKE SALE**

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2025

Located 8 miles south of
East Grand Forks on Highway 220

Menu includes lutefisk, meatballs
and all the trimmings!

Serving from
11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Bygland Lutheran Church

Unofficial/Unapproved Minutes
September 10th, 2025

Treasurer's Report: Randy presented the Treasurer's report from the last month. We are currently at 32% of our budget through September 10th.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Gretchen reported that she met with education leaders and that classes have started back up.

Old business:

Furnace update-It has been determined that it would be best to replace all the furnaces and air conditioners in the church as they are over 30 years old. Quotes have been gathered from multiple companies with several different options to choose from. Council reviewed them all and has chosen an option from Vilandre that would replace all 6 furnaces and 6 air conditioners. The cost would be covered by savings. A congregational vote to approve the council recommendation is the next step. The vote will be held on September 28th following the 9:00 am service. Pastor Gretchen will announce the vote during church and put notice in the bulletin for the next 2 weeks.

Community/Church picnic-Marsha reported that 161 invites were sent out, but only 46 people attended.

New business:

Confirmation-Pastor Gretchen presented Ava Hansen and Mason Arnold for Confirmation to be held on Reformation Sunday, October 26, 2025. *A motion to approve the Confirmands was made by Randy and seconded by Nancy; motion carried.*

Portico-Randy reported that Pastor Gretchen will be moving to a single health insurance plan and that the options have changed as well. He and Pastor Gretchen have reviewed them and selected the option closest to the previous plan. Council was in agreement. Randy will discuss with Fisher and then get the updates made.

The next regular council meeting will be October 8th, 2025.

Fisher Lutheran Church Council Minutes September 17, 2025

Secretary's Report –

Change 1 item on the minutes, Pastor will be assisting Trinity Church in Crookston some not the Presbyterian Church. Also, Pastor will not be gone on Sept 28 as originally planned, Brian Morken made motion, 2nd by Ann Mondry, motion carried to approve the minutes.

Old Business

Committee Reports were discussed.

Bell Tower shrub removal and replacement and rock replacement will hopefully be done in October.

Parsonage walk thru with Bygland and Fisher Parsonage Committees, next Wednesday, September 24, 2025 at 7:00 reported by Brian Morken.

Pastor performance review will be announced at both churches, the ushers will hand them out.

Parish Secretary job description with the changes from last meeting has been completed and is all agreed upon.

New Business

Background checks for all staff and Sunday School Teachers was discussed. Carmen Knutson and Phil Baird will reach out to other Churches and more discussion is needed at future meetings.

Endowment fund – ELCA, Thrivent. We would need to set up a Committee for about 3 people and they would manage it. We are looking at setting up this Endowment fund and would still do some exploring.

Staff Gifts for Clergy week – Tami Newhouse has worked with this in the past. The Council approved and Reed Tinkham will reach out to Tami to do as she has done before.

Motion made to approve Sawyer Speldrich and Lexi Korynta for confirmation, Motion made by Ann Mondry, 2nd by Brian Morken, motion carried.

Next meeting October 15, 2025.

OUR MISSION

Mobilizing women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ.

OUR PURPOSE

"As a community of women created in the image of God, called to discipleship in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves to grow in faith, affirm our gifts, support one another in our callings, engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness in the church, the society, and the world."

FISHER LUTHERAN WELCA FALL 2025 BIBLE STUDY



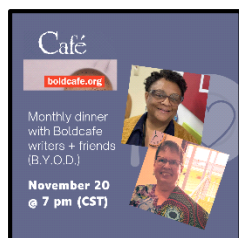
**"Money, Stewardship and
Generosity"**
by the Rev. Christa von Zychlin

Session Three
Generosity – A Wideness in God's Mercy?
November 19, 2025 @ 9:00 AM



Gather
Zoom Bible
Study

You can also join the Gather Zoom Bible Study session each
4th Monday of the Month
7:00-8:00 PM
Zoom Meeting ID 830 8115 5921



Café (<http://boldcafe.org>), an on-line magazine, shares stories written by bold young adult women & friends who write about faith, relationships, advocacy and more.

Join us for community via Zoom at our next Boldcafé Monthly Dinner. Our hosts, Eva Yeo and Nola Smith will share about their recent trip to Tanzania through the Women of the ELCA Global Education program. Granddaughters, daughters, nieces, etc. are encouraged to join! Download a special coloring sheet below to color during the event. Participants are all encouraged to bring a favorite stuffy or doll.

<https://www.boldcafe.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/lamworthyColoring.pdf>

Join us for the next **Boldcafé Monthly Dinner**, Thursday, Nov. 20 at 7 pm.

Register at: <https://www.boldcafe.org/dinner/>



PATCHWORK
PARISHIONERS

FISHER LUTHERAN QUILTING

November 3 & 4 / 24 & 25

December 8 & 9

9:00 am – 12:00 pm

ALL ARE WELCOME!

Gatherers Give with Glad Hearts *Fisher Lutheran Church*

**October – December Donations
will be gathered for...**

Northlands Rescue Mission

Simply purchase any items from the list to donate, return them to Fisher Lutheran in the gathering bag and they will be delivered to Lutheran World Relief.

Priority Items

- ❖ Toilet Paper
- ❖ Deodorant
- ❖ Men's Shoes/Work Boots (Sizes 10-13 Preferred)
- ❖ Men's Underwear (New, Sizes S - 2XL)
- ❖ Women's Underwear (New, All Sizes)
- ❖ Twin-size Fitted Sheets
- ❖ Plastic/Rubber Flip-Flops

Clothing

- Men's jeans (waist size 30-36)
- Women's winter gloves
- White undershirts and tank tops

Consumables

- Cream of (anything) Soup
- Rice
- Noodles
- Butter
- Canned Vegetables
- Salad Dressing

Backpack Program

- Appliances/fruit cups
- Instant oatmeal packets
- Cereal cups
- Juice boxes/pouches
- Soup/noodle cups, ramen noodles
- Snack items (individually packaged, not containing nuts)

Other

- Toilet paper
- Paper towels
- Paper cups
- Pops & pops, Tupperware
- Shaving cream
- Adult diapers (size L or XL)
- Ear plugs
- Shampoo, body wash
- Toothpaste, toothbrushes
- Air mattresses (new)

- Shower curtains & liners
- Small appliances (e.g. microwave, toaster)
- Baby diapers size 4+





Fisher Lutheran's Patchwork Parishioners have been very busy over the past months! On Oct. 19th, the Fisher Lutheran congregation was able to enjoy the comfort and warmth of just a fraction of the quilts that the group has sewn throughout the year for Lutheran World Relief.

Lutheran World Relief distributes the quilts made by our Patchwork Parishioners, along with the school and personal care kits that are assembled on "God's work. Our hands." Sunday each year. These items are disbursed to people facing conflict, disaster, and poverty around the world.

Lutheran World Relief distributed it's first quilts in 1945 to families in war-torn Europe following the Second World War. Within a decade, the ministry was reaching around the globe to villages far removed from the world's attention. Today, an average of 300,000 quilts are lovingly given worldwide each year.

Watch **"Going Farther, Staying Longer: Celebrating 80 Years of LWR"** at <https://lwr.org/80> This short video highlights LWR's efforts to send compassionate care to our neighbors around the world.

When Fisher Lutheran's Patchwork Parishioners make quilts, and our WELCA gathers items for school or personal care kits, God's love for our neighbors is revealed. Stitch by stitch, bundle by bundle, we create tangible gifts of love. In times of greatest need, our efforts, along with Lutheran World Relief's assistance, wrap that love around our neighbors' shoulders and provide comfort, dignity and hope for a future without suffering.

If you would like to join us in our quilting project, please do so. Just check out Fisher Lutheran's monthly calendar for dates & times.

Many hands make light work!





TRUNK-OR-TREAT

It was a Boo-tiful afternoon for the annual HallowHim Trunk-or-Treat event held Sun., Oct. 19th at Fisher Lutheran. This free family-fun community event was hosted by area churches, community organizations, as well as Terror-ific special friends! All of the children who attended looked Erie-sistible in their costumes. It was a Fang-tastic afternoon of fun for all!

FISHER AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY
UNIT 242

VETERANS DAY LUNCHEON & BAKE SALE

TUESDAY
NOV.

11

11:00 - 1:00

Cost Per Meal \$8
Veterans FREE
Dine-In or Take-Out

FISHER AMERICAN LEGION
318 THOMPSON AVE,
FISHER, MN 56723

Bygland Faith Statements:

Hello everybody my name is Mason Arnold,, Thank you all for being here today. This is my faith statement. I was born into faith. While my mom was pregnant she went to one of her dr. appointments. I wasn't supposed to be born for 5 more weeks, but then at the appointment panic struck, the Doctor couldn't find my heartbeat, and I had to be immediately out. The doctor told my dad, if he believed in God, and he said yes. The doctor told my dad that God was with us, for 5 more minutes longer, he wouldn't be having a very good fathers day. The doctor also said that I would be underdeveloped and that I would have problems growing...safe to say, that didn't happen. I think If it wasn't for my mom praying I wouldn't be here and as healthy as I am now. This continues into my favorite bible verse, Philippians 4:13 "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me". And I would have never learned that verse if it wasn't for my friend Eli. When I think of faith I think of Eli, whether it's him sending me a daily bible quote everyday in the morning, praying before he eats every meal or if it's him inviting me to his bible camp. When I think of my relationship with God I think of Eli. He is always there for you when you need, he will always listen to you and he also tries to make you a better person all around. That's all of the stuff that god does for me and you. This is why it's important to have a relationship with God, without it I can't even imagine what it's like. This brings me to my next chapter in my faith journey, Sunday school. I loved going to Sunday school, learning more about

God, I enjoyed stories in the bible, or just talking to layne the entire time. Then after roughly 6 years of Sunday school I finally got to get communion. This was the best thing ever at the time because I wanted to be like everyone else and eat the wafer and drink the wine. After first communion that's when I really figured out what faith was to me. This is also when I join confirmation, and I should probably answer the question why I want to get confirmed. I want to get confirmed because it's the next step in my journey. It's also a way that I can deepen my relationship with God. One of my favorite memories of confirmation is on the first day of confirmation. We were at Fisher in one of the side rooms at a giant table. There was every single confirmand at that table and everyone had the same goal, to learn more about the bible. This was so important to me because it made it seem like I wasn't alone in my journey. And this leads me to where I am right now, reading you all my faith statement. I just want to end it by thanking everyone that helped me get this far. Holly, becky and jeff because you guys made Sunday school a lot of fun and taught things in so many fun ways. To my PIC's my Parents in Christ, Becky and Eric Egeland and Brad and Angie Nordstrom thank you for showing me how to live a faith focused life and I see it everytime I see you. I also want to thank everyone that helps set up church for lutefisk, rummage sale and everything else. I want to thank Jane for playing the organ and lastly I want to thank Pastor Gretchen for teaching confirmation each and every week that we had it and also for her leading the sermons on Sunday. Thank you all again for being a part of and listening to my faith journey.

Mason Arnold

Being a member of the Lutheran church has shown me how God leads all of us through our life. I have a new perspective through the church. Being a part of God's plan was the most I could have ever asked for. My faith has grown over these 3 years, and I realize all the time I have put into going to church and confirmation has really made me a better christian. I noticed that before I received my first communion, I rarely picked up my bible, but throughout the years, I have noticed myself grabbing bible whenever I have some down time during the day, and highlighting bible verses. I have grown a love for the bible and all of its readings, but specifically the book of Psalms. Some verses I have highlighted are Psalm 46:1-3: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the Earth should change, though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea; though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with tumult." I have this verse highlighted because of the way I feel for it. Even though this world is changing by the day, whether it's through the fact that we as people are changing, or that the Earth and its land forms, God is there, through it all.

Psalm 56:8: "You have kept my tossings, put my tears in your bottle. Are they not in your record?" I have shed many tears, and wondered why God lets me feel like this, but I didn't know that God fully had my back, even when I thought he didn't. Looking back, I feel so much better because God was there, through every tear, every night before bed, every morning, every day. Living out my faith is the biggest blessing I could ever have asked for. I love to spread the gospel through sharing my faith journey. My baptism marked my beginning with God, sunday school marked my early understandings of Jesus and the Bible, and confirmation is learning more in depth about my relationship with God. Now that I am at this stage of my faithful life, I am sharing my faith with every one of you here. Many people in my life have exampled what being a christian is like. My mom and dad, and my grandparents. I would always read a bedtime book while sleeping over at nana's house, and it would always be something with God. I remember always asking, "Nana, what's God's birthday?" and she always said she will try to find out for me (I never got an answer). Cont.....

I also remember going to church with my grandma, since our church is a smaller church, I had never been to a church that had every pew filled, including the ones above the sanctuary. It was so cool to me to see such a full church service, and to be where my dad grew up in church. I also remember going up the elevator to go and give the offering to someone. Church holds many memories, and I am truly honored and thankful for everyone who has been with me through my faith journey. I would like to give a big thanks to Pastor Gretchen for helping me through this new adventure in my christian life. Along with Holly, and my parents, and grandparents, for always being with me through it all, and I truly love this church and the community I am a part of. **Ava Hansen**

Fisher Faith Statements:

(pray before I start) Hi, my name is Lexie, I will begin by expressing gratitude to my mom and dad for helping me achieve my goal of being conformed at fisher Lutheran church today. As part of my faith statement, we were asked to identify our favorite Bible verse. There are a couple of traits I believe are essential in life: being strong and courageous. After reviewing several verses that speak to these qualities, I chose Joshua chapter 1 verse 9, which says, *“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”*

This verse resonates with me deeply, especially in areas like sports. Confidence, and giving my all, are two core values that I strive to live by. When I feel uncertain or weak, I remember that God is with me every day, offering strength and courage. One of the life lessons that I’ve learned is to never give up and finally God will help guide me to stay on the right path as I move through life. My biggest role model in faith is my grandma, Vicky. I see God in my grandma. She is very active in the church and barely ever misses Sunday worship, and I truly admire her for that. She took me to church when I was young, she believed in me and continues to believe in me today, and—most importantly—she’s always there for me when I need her. One of the things I love most about church is the way we support each other through both the highs and the lows. Naming highs and Lows within my day was one of my learnings in confirmation class. Whether someone is celebrating a joyful moment like a baptism or wedding or going through a difficult time such as illness or loss, the church community is always there—offering prayers, encouragement, and a helping hand. It truly feels like one big family, bound together not just by faith, but by love and compassion, with God at the center. Church isn’t just a place we go—it’s a place where we grow, connect, and find strength in God and in each other. Church is one of those places I call home. My favorite memory from confirmation was the Montana



youth trip—a truly unforgettable experience that brought me closer to God, nature, and the people around me. We embraced God’s creations in every moment, surrounded by breathtaking mountains, endless skies, and the peaceful sounds of nature. I spent time with amazing people who shared my faith and values, and together we built strong friendships that I’ll always cherish. One part of the trip that I valued, and I found rewarding, was the day of service, when we stained benches for the camp. This was a time that we worked well together as a youth group. It’s my intention to continue attending church, support the youth group, and someday raise my own family with the same values and faith that have shaped me. I want to thank fisher Lutheran church for believing in me until I have learned to believe in myself. I’m proud to be an adult in the Fisher Lutheran church. **Lexie Korynta**

Hi my name is Sawyer and I am a freshman here at Fisher. I love to play football and basketball during the school year. Balancing sports and confirmation and family time was a challenge but I am glad I made the time to complete it all. I’d like to stay involved in the church once I’m confirmed by helping my brothers in confirmation and helping be an usher once in a while. That was my favorite thing to help with in church. My favorite bible verse is from the gospel of John chapter 16 verse 33. It states In the world you will have tribulations, but take heart, I have overcome the world. This verse speaks to me because it reminds me that no matter what, Jesus has my back. It taught me that I do not have to be perfect, Jesus loves me just as I am. Throughout confirmation Jesus has taught me by his examples that love and forgiveness are the pillars to a Christian life. Jesus also taught me to love others and love myself. I’d like to thank the church for setting a great example of community and fellowship and allowing me to be a part of it. I want to thank Pastor Gretchen for her endless patience and love for us confirmation students and making the written word easy for us to understand. I’d like to thank my grandparents for standing beside me and supporting me through my faith journey. And lastly I’d like to thank my parents for baptizing me and making sure I made it to this very important day in my faith. Thank you again. **Sawyer Speldrich**



Updates

from the Synod

November 2025

This monthly insert is just one way to stay connected with what's going on in the Northwestern Minnesota Synod. You'll find highlights of recent news, upcoming events, and ways our synod is walking together in ministry. We hope it helps you see the bigger picture of how God is at work through the Northwestern Minnesota Synod.



Upcoming Events

November

November 11

A Ripple of Thanks:

A Stewardship Conversation | Zoom

November 13

First Third Lunch & Learn | 10:30am-1:30pm

Trinity Lutheran, Detroit Lakes

November 20

Give to the Max Day

November 22

Middle School Connect | Camp Emmaus

2026

February 9

Treasurer 101: Stewardship Class | Zoom\

February 13

Giving Hearts' Day

March 21

Great Synod Get Together | Calvary, Bemidji

April 16

Joint Theological Day | Trinity, Moorhead

May 30

Synod Assembly | Virtual



ROAD TRIP Resources

We had such a great time seeing so many of you at our Road Trip stops across the synod! If you missed a gathering—or if you'd like another look at the booklet, tools, or conversation prompts—you can find all Road Trip resources on our website at nwmnsynod.org/resources



Give to the Max Day

Nov. 20, 2025

Minnesota's biggest day of generosity is almost here! Every gift to the Northwestern Minnesota Synod helps equip leaders, strengthen congregations, and share God's love across our synod.