

From the Pastor's Desk

“And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the new wine will burst the skins and will be spilled, and the skins will be destroyed. But new wine must be put into fresh wineskins.”

Luke 5:37-38

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The last two weeks of January we had our annual meetings in both of our congregations. Annual meetings, in their nature, look back at the old year and look towards the new year. We give thanks for this past year, and look forward to the future that God has for us in the new year. This parable from Luke contrasts the old and the new claiming that you can't put new wine in old wineskins, but you must put new wine in new wineskins.

One of the topics that came up during our annual meetings is a concern about our declining membership and our declining financial resources. Many churches in our area are facing these same challenges. Many congregations, councils, sessions, and pastors are asking the same question. This decline is not unique to our specific congregations but much broader than our localized area. It is affecting congregations in rural and urban areas and in all geographic areas of our country. It is just as much of a cultural shift as anything.

One of the questions that was asked was, “What do we need to do to change in order to develop new members in our congregation?” Change is something that is not typically easily embraced in the church, but in a fast changing culture, the church needs to find ways to change or the church will continue to decline. It is good that we are recognizing this change and having conversations.

As a pastor, I often look to Scripture to guide us through our challenges. Jesus' parables are relevant to today's church just like they were 2,000 years ago. What worked in the past should be celebrated, but in a rapidly changing world the church either needs to find ways to change or it may not survive. Just as companies such as Kodak, who refused to embrace the new digital technologies did not survive because they were stuck in the success of the past.

We know that we need to try something new, but what? I don't have all the answers either. We have a few people that are starting to wrestle with how to move forward in this changing environment. Some changes will work, while others will not. We need to be willing to experiment with change and be alright with some changes failing. We learn from failure as much as from success.

Our Sunday School programs in both congregations were declining at a rapid pace. We made a change and we did not know if it would work. We moved our Sunday School to Wednesdays and called it W.O.W. Our attendance is no longer declining, but is now much more stable. It is a shift because of the changing culture and the schedule of young families. We can't put new wine in old wineskins and expect to have success. We need to find new patterns of worship and fellowship to adapt to a rapidly changing world. This is not easy, but hard. I pray that our congregations will find new ways to reach out to our community in the coming year.

In Christ,
Rev. Dr. Paul Snyder

February 2025 Newsletter Articles

Pastor Paul's Office Hours Pastor Paul tentatively plans to be in the office from 9:00 – 11:30 a.m. at OS-TML on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays and at First on Thursdays. There may be days the pastor won't be in the office because of visitation, so please make an appointment if you need to see him or stop by if his car is at church. Pastor Paul's email is psnyder100@gmail.com and his cell number 218-230-4081. Pastor Paul would love to hear from you, so don't hesitate to be in touch!!

Joint Service Sunday, February 23rd we will worship together at 10:30 a.m. at OS-TML as W.O.W. will sing. There will be no service at First this Sunday. Both the council and session have decided to have joint worship on all Sundays when W.O.W sings seeing it is a ministry of both our congregations.

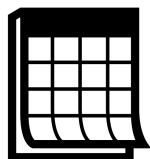
Communion will be celebrated in both congregations on Sunday, February 2nd and at our joint service at OS-TML on Sunday, February 23rd. Communion will be by continuous Communion in person and those watching online are encouraged to prepare elements in your homes. All are welcome to the table!

Coffeehouse Worship in both congregations will be on Sunday, February 16th. Please join us for a more casual and relaxed worship atmosphere!

W.O.W. will meet each Wednesday in February at 6:00 for all students in grades K-6th. All are welcome!

Confirmation will meet each Wednesday in February with supper at 5:30 and class at 6:00 p.m.

Little Lights at First will meet Sunday, February 2nd and 9th following the children's sermon. Little Lights will not meet on February 16th because of President's Day weekend or February 23rd because W.O.W. will be singing. There is a sign up in the narthex to teach.



- **Council** will meet Monday, February 10th at 6:30 p.m.
- **Shared Ministry** will meet on Tuesday, February 11th at 6:30 p.m.
- **Session** will meet Monday, February 24th at 7:00 p.m.

Ashby Living Center Bible Study Pastor Paul will be leading Wednesday, February 12th at 2:00 p.m.

WELCA Quilters meet Wednesdays at 9:00am in Dalton with coffee & treats.

Joint Lenten Services with Peace/Grue Parish will begin with Ash Wednesday, March 5th and this year our Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services will also be with all four churches rotating between churches. Pastor Dan and Pastor Paul are going to do another dialogue sermon series this year. Our schedule has not been finalized yet, and will be printed in next month's newsletter.

Fergus Falls Conference Assembly will have our annual meeting on Thursday, February 20th at 6:30 p.m. at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Fergus Falls. Pastor Paul will be attending and any congregation member is welcome to join us as we prepare for Synod Assembly.

Prayer Concerns: Eileen Rubish, Kim Bailey, Cari Ripley, Ron Breuer, Kristi Krause, Cookie Williams, Wes Kilker, Darcy Rylander, Pastor Paul Snyder, Marilyn Stevens, Darlene Akerman, and Lyle Skinnemoen.

19th Annual Souper Sundae at First Sunday, February 9th from 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. First will be serving homemade soup, sandwiches and ice cream sundaes. Free will offering. All are welcome to join us for a delicious meal!

Jim & Gwyn Risbrudt family will have the soups and buns all figured out, but are looking for cash donations to purchase all the additional groceries. The donations would be to help with purchasing ice cream and toppings, sandwich meat, crackers, milk, paper products and other condiments.

Any questions call Gwyn at 218-731-1739. Donations can be given to Jim or Gwyn

IT'S COMING
19TH ANNUAL
SOUPER SUNDAE
HOMEMADE SOUP AND SANDWICHES
ICE CREAM SUNDAES



SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 9th
10:30 A.M TO 12:30 P.M.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
ASHBY
FREE WILL OFFERING

Contact Information up-to-date?

Please complete the Google form [HERE](#) if you've recently had an address or phone number change. There are also paper forms at each church that can be completed and left on the office desks for Jaime to gather.



2025 Contacts Book for members and friends of the Shared Ministry can be found [HERE](#). Printed copies are available at both churches.

Annual Meeting Minutes for both congregations will be in the March newsletter.

**Our Saviors Ten Mile Lake Church
Council Meeting—January 13, 2025 at 6:30pm**

Present: Pastor Paul, Jerry, Debbie, Dave and Stacy

Absent: Kyle, Danielle, Julie & Teddy

Devotions and prayer given by Pastor Paul.

The Secretary's report was reviewed, Debbie made a motion to approve the minutes, Jerry second, motion carried.

Debbie presented the Treasurer's Report. The beginning balance at our last meeting on December 9 was \$3,683.61 total income was \$9,506.20 total expenses were \$5,456.08 leaving a balance of \$7,733.73. Jerry made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report, Stacy second, motion carried.

Trustee's Report – The Bell Tower will get fixed this spring.

Shared Ministry Report – nothing to discuss

Old Business:

The Annual Meeting & Potluck will be January 26th.

New Business:

February 23rd – there will be a joint service with W.O.W. singing at OS-TML.

Calendar Items:

Sunday, January 19th Worship at 9:00 because First will have their Annual Meeting

Sunday, January 26th OS-TML Annual Meeting & Potluck

Sunday, February 23rd Joint Service at OS-TML and W.O.W. sings

The next Council meeting will be February 10th at 6:30 p.m.

We closed with The Lord's Prayer.

Our Savior's-Ten Mile Lake Financial Review

Year to Date as of January 19, 2025

Income

Offerings	\$ 3,375.00	
Coffee Money	39.00	
Donations	115.00	
Total Income	<hr/>	\$ 3,529.00

Expenses

Staff Ministry	\$ 599.93	
Missions	475.96	
Worship and Service	-	
Church Home	957.61	
Maintenance	21.16	
Miscellaneous	1.34	
Total Expenses	<hr/>	\$ 2,056.00

Account Balances:

January 19, 2025

Checking	\$ 9,172.73
General Savings	155,277.64
Memorial Savings	4,032.74
Ellen & Pat Welch Scholarship Fund	530.00
Our Savior's Cemetery	75,885.03

Donations in memory of Pat Welch were received in January to the General Fund and Our Savior's Cemetery. Blessed be the memory of Pat Welch

Regular Session Meeting January 2, 2025

The regular Session meeting of the 1st Presbyterian Church of Ashby was held at the church on January 2, 2025 at 7 PM. Those present: Moderator Rev. Dr. Paul Snyder, Ruling Elders: Jim Risbrudt, Troy Johnson, Donna Fay Grover, Gwyn Risbrudt, Treasurer Jim Risbrudt and Clerk Barb Dewey. Absent with excuse: Kim Bailey and Ron Bowman. The meeting was opened in prayer and discussion from SailboatChurch by Pastor Snyder. The Shared Ministry Mission statement read. A quorum present and docket was voted approved. Minutes of the December meeting voted approved.

Treasurer's Report: Checking: \$2,659.95, Savings: \$17,468.94; Memorial: \$3,333.61, Music: \$8,516.94, Dishwasher: \$2,036.04, L&L Camp: \$1,481.90, Grover Bible: \$413.01, Building/Maint: \$7,660.28; Starner: \$1,185.45. Treasurer shared concern with decreased income, savings needed to be withdrawn to pay bills. The 2025 Church Budget was presented of \$88,922.50 and was voted approved.

Report of Pastor: Communion was celebrated at 1st Presbyterian with Pastor Snyder at Christmas Day services, December 25, 2024 with 27 communicants and those on Facebook live. He did 1 hospital visitation, 4 health care visitations and 1 home visit for the Shared Ministry. Led Bible Study at Ashby Living Center, Zoom Presbytery meeting and attended Pastor's meeting in Battle Lake.

Communications: Thank yous were received from the Ashby School Backpack Program donation, West Central Community Action-Group cares donation, and the Union Cemetery donation. Thank you from Kris Williams for recital use of facilities.

Committee Reports:

- **Buildings and Grounds:** concern about outdoor sign deterioration.
- **Worship:** Annual Meeting January 19, 2025 with change of worship times to 10:30 AM. Session voted not to have services at 1st Presbyterian in Ashby on February 23 as the WOW kids will be singing in Our Savior's Ten Mile Lake Lutheran service.

New Business: Session voted approval of Statistical Report to General Assembly. Nominating committee reported Janet Larson agreed to run for Ruling Elder but still looking for another candidate.

Next meeting is set for February 24th at 7 PM. The meeting was voted adjourned and closed with all praying the Lord's Prayer.

Moderator Rev. Dr. Paul Snyder

Clerk of Session: Barbara Dewey

February
OS-TML Worship Leaders

Karen Nelson

February
First Disciple Team

Ron & Marsha Bowman
Jim & Joyce Rylander

Altar Guild

Debbie Thormodson

*****Confirmands will assist with reading scriptures during the school year.*****

OS-TML

February 2 – Aubrey Walvatne

February 9 – *Open*

February 16 – Alison Heeter

February 23 – *Open*

FIRST

February 2 – Andie Mickelson

February 9 – Nora Weinandt

February 16 – Saoirse Stevens

February 23 – Brooks Rylander

February Birthdays

2 Nancy Moss
2 Vicki Syvertson
5 Brock Dewey
5 Danielle Schroeder
11 Dawn Schroeder
15 Jerry Thormodson
17 Elynn Lee
20 David Dewey
21 Ashley Lee
24 Mary Jo Schroeder
25 Jayson Thormodson





First Presbyterian Session Members

Barb Dewey – Clerk of Session
Troy Johnson
Donna Fay Grover
Kim Bailey
Ron Bowman
Gwyn Risbrudt
Jim Rylander
Jim Risbrudt – Treasurer

Shared Ministry Council

Troy Johnson- Vice President
Kim Bailey
Jim Rylander
Jim Risbrudt- Treasurer
Jerry Thormodson- President
David Olson
Joan Helgeson- Secretary
Julie Olson



OS-TML Church Council Members

Julie Walvatne
Danielle Schroeder
Stacy Hansel- Secretary
Debbie Wilke - Treasurer
Dave Olson- Vice President
Ted Frigaard
Kyle Frigaard - President
Jerry Thormodson

Women of the ELCA President

Peggy Lien

Board of Education

Ashley Lee

Endowment Fund Board

Deb Thormodson

Our Savior's Cemetery Board

David Schroeder, Sexton
Kyle Frigaard
Dean Thorsen
Gaylan Thormodson
Larry Sonmor


February 2025

9:00AM
FIRST
10:30AM
OSTML

FACEBOOK LIVE AT 9:00AM

SUNDAY MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY



2	4th Sunday after Epiphany (Green) Communion	3	4	5	6	7	8	1
9	5th Sunday after Epiphany (Green) Souper Sundae @ FIRST 10:30am-12:30pm	10	11	12	13	14	15	
16	6th Sunday after Epiphany (Green) COFFEE HOUSE WORSHIP 	17	18	19	20	21	22	
23	7th Sunday after Epiphany (Green) Joint Service @ OSTML Communion W.O.W. Sings	24	25	26	27	28		

 WELCA Quilters meet
Wednesdays
with coffee & treats


Our Savior's Lutheran Church
105 South Central
PO Box 158
Dalton, MN 56324
RETURN ADDRESS REQUESTED



February

SHARED MINISTRY STAFF

Reverend Doctor Paul Snyder

OS-TML Office & Pastor's Study: 589-8454 Cell: 218-230-4081

105 S. Central Ave, PO Box 158, Dalton, MN 56324

First Presbyterian Church: 747-2744 - 202 Nelson St, PO Box 14, Ashby, MN 56309

Office Administrator: Jaime Sorenson Cell: 507-276-8237

Office Email – sharedministryashbydalton@gmail.com

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP SCHEDULE January-April 2025

9:00am – First Presbyterian Worship

Holy Communion the 1st & 4th Sunday

3rd Sunday Coffeehouse Worship

10:30am – Our Savior's-Ten Mile Lake Worship

Holy Communion the 1st & 4th Sunday

3rd Sunday Coffeehouse Worship

ONLINE SERVICES live at 9:00am on Facebook