

From the Pastor's Desk:

February

"For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope." Jeremiah 29:11

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

It is with a heavy and prayerful heart I write this final newsletter article as the pastor of our shared ministry. My last Sunday in this shared position will be Sunday, February 15th at our normal worship times. As I look back on these past 5 ½ years together I have many wonderful memories. I thank God for my time ministering amongst you.

As I leave, I will honor all boundaries. The Presbytery of Minnesota Valleys and the NWMN Synod have had a good deal of experience in this business of "saying good-bye" involving pastoral leadership. Guidelines have been developed that provide clear boundaries. These guidelines will help each of us bring honor to all that we have been to each other as well as all we have achieved together, and will bring a healthy closure to our shared ministry. Fundamental to these guidelines is the simple reminder that when a pastor leaves a congregation, it marks the end of the pastoral relationship. It does not mark the end of love and care for each other, but of necessity, the end of our pastoral relationship.

Toward this end, after February 15th, this pastoral relationship will come to an end. The exception would be if OS-TML calls me to be their pastor moving forward. That being said, I have developed many life-long friendships in both congregations. Know that our friendships do not have to end, but the pastoral relationship has to end. I will always welcome conversations about your personal lives or about your families and I will always welcome visits from dear friends! For the sake of the success of your next pastoral leadership, it would be inappropriate for me to continue as a theological guide, as an officiant for weddings or funerals, or as your pastoral presence in times of crisis such as hospitalization.

All pastoral calls are temporary. Change is never an easy thing, but change also leads to new opportunities. God gives us a wonderful example of this in Jeremiah. The Israelites are in exile against their will and their nation, homes, and places of worship have all been destroyed. They are forced to live in foreign lands. It is a hopeless situation, but yet God gives them this ray of hope, "For surely I know the plans for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope." These words are for us today, as I don't know what the future will hold for me. You may even be wondering what the future is for your congregation?

While I can't answer these questions, I am confident of one thing, that God will lead us into a future he already has for us. God calls us not to rely on our own strength and wisdom, but God instead calls us to trust him. God walks with us through the good times when we might think we know what will happen, but more importantly God walks with us when we don't know what will happen next or even when we don't even know what to pray for. Let us trust God and follow wherever God leads. May the peace of Christ be with you, may the love of God surround you, and may the Spirit guide you to the future filled with hope God has for all of us.

In Christ,

Rev. Dr. Paul Snyder

Opening a can of worms

In William Shakespeare's comedy *As You Like It*, one of the characters succinctly describes the stages of life from being an infant to becoming an aged adult. The speech begins: "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players; They have their exits and their entrances; And one man in his time plays many parts," Shakespeare then goes on in iambic pentameter to humorously describe life from birth to death. Behind the humor is truth.

There are many who bristle at the idea that as they are going through life they are merely "Playing a part." I have heard these people say, "I'm not playing, I'm living my life." They are of course correct. We are living but we are not living in a vacuum. We live surrounded by other humans and need to be aware of them and to react with/to them. What they/we say and do has a direct influence on our life and on theirs. We're sharing the stage/life together.

I recently played a game I call worm with the confirmation students. It seems silly and fun (lots of giggles from the confirmation students) but there are lessons for life to be learned in this game. The game begins with everyone who is participating standing in a tight circle. Each person reaches their hands into the circle and grabs two other hands. They aren't allowed to grab both hands of any individual and they aren't allowed to grab the hands of the person next to them. What results is a worm twisted and wrapped around itself. The challenge is to turn this mess/mass of arms into a circle. The participants need to open this can of worms. They do this by communicating and working together. There are times when one student will need to step over the arms of some, while simultaneously climbing under the arms of others. Through it all, communicating, working together they become better. There are times when the knot cannot be untangled but most of the time the participants find themselves successfully in a circle.

William Shakespeare told us that that we are players on a stage called life. He called his script *As You Like It*. In December I became an infant when I entered into a covenant with the shared ministry. In effect, I entered into a game of worm with First Presbyterian of Ashby and Our Saviors Ten Mile Lake of Dalton. I knew nothing of the Shared Ministry. Other than funerals I had never even attended a Presbyterian Sunday service. I took a place on stage, reached my hands into the circle and grabbed on. Thankfully and significantly, each of the congregations grabbed onto my hands. The ELCA and the Presbyterian Church also reached in and grabbed our hands. Most importantly God our Father, Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit grabbed our hands. We stepped over and under, around and through guided by faith, sure and certain Hope. Together we spent two months communicating and building a circle untangling the worm. I am blessed that you welcomed me into your hearts. Thank You for making me feel at home in your congregations. May God Bless you!

EI. J. Arntson

February

2026 Newsletter Articles

Worship Times for January through April are, unless communicated differently:



- 9:00 a.m. at OS-TML
- 10:30 a.m. at First Presbyterian
- Facebook Live service continues to be at 9:00 a.m.

Pulpit Supply

- **February 1** – Dennis Preston
- **February 8** – Jerry Petersen
- **February 15** – Pastor Paul Snyder (*final Sunday with Shared Ministry*)
- **February 22** – Kathy Terpstra

Communion will be celebrated in both congregations on Sundays, February 1st and 22nd. We will receive Communion 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 the third Sunday, February 15th. This will also be Pastor Paul's final Sunday with his call to the Shared Ministry. Please join us for a more casual and relaxed worship atmosphere and to celebrate Pastor Paul's ministry with us!

Confirmation class will meet Wednesday, February 4th and 11th in Ashby. Supper will be served at 5:30 p.m. and class will begin at 6:00 p.m. Students are encouraged to attend our Wednesday Lenten services in February and March.

W.O.W. will meet at 6:00 p.m. in Ashby on Wednesday, February 4th and 11th. All children in grades K-6th are welcome to join us. Come join the fun! Students are then encouraged to attend our Wednesday Lenten services for the rest of February and March.



- **Council** will meet on Monday, February 2nd at 6:00 p.m.
- **Session** will meet on Monday, February 9th at 6:30 p.m.
- **Shared Ministry, Council, Session** will meet Mon., Feb. 23rd 6:30p.m. at FIRST.

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

Joint Lenten Services with Peace/Grue Parish will begin with Ash Wednesday, February 18th in Dalton at OS-TML with service at 7:00pm led by Pastor Julie Carlson. No supper on Ash Wednesday but then we will have 5:30pm supper before 7:00pm worship.

- Feb. 25 - Grue
- March 4 - First Presbyterian
- March 11 - Peace
- March 18 - OSTML
- March 25 Grue
- Maundy Thursday, April 2 - First Presbyterian
- Good Friday, April 3 - Peace

Food Shelf Donations There is now a donation box at Rylander Insurance Agency in Ashby to accept donations for Grant County Food Shelf.

Prayer Concerns: Kris Williams, Cookie Williams, Cari Ripley, family and friends of Rosie Nissen, Ashtyn Lill, Corlin (Debbie Wilke's brother), Trevor Schlosser, Karen Hansel, Eileen Rubish, Ron Breuer, Kristi Krause, Darcy Rylander, Lyle Skinnemoen, and Pastor Paul Snyder. Please let Jaime know if individuals need to be added or removed.

What's Cooking February 2026

Chocolate Lover's Cheese Pie

- 3 (8 oz) packages of Cream cheese – softened
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar 3 eggs
- 1 tsp vanilla extract 2 cups mini semi-sweet chocolate chips – divided
- 2 Tbls whipping cream 1 extra serving size graham cracker crust

Heat oven to 450 degrees. Beat cream cheese and sugar in a large bowl until well blended. Add eggs and vanilla. Beat well. Stir in 1&2/3 cups of mini chocolate chips. Pour into crust. Bake for 10 minutes. Without opening the door, reduce the oven temperature to 250 degrees. Continue baking for 30 minutes or until just set. Cool completely. Cover and refrigerate until thoroughly chilled. Place remaining 1/3 cup of chips and whipping cream in the microwave and heat on high for 20 to 30 seconds or until chips are melted and the mixture is smooth when stirred. Cool slightly, spread over the top of the cheese pie. Refrigerate 15 minutes or until the topping is set.

Notes:

- This is a perfect recipe for Valentine's Day
- This is from the Richland Lutheran Church rural Walcott ND cookbook. They host a yearly lutefisk dinner on the last Friday of October.
- Because my wife is a chocaholic, I have made this for her birthday – and several other times when it looks like she needs chocolate.
- I have made this with a regular size chocolate cookie crust but I prefer a large size regular graham cracker crust.
- You may make your own crust or purchase a ready-made one.
- Everything except the crust is gluten free.
- It is rich so one only needs a small slice even though you want a large one.



**** Annual Meeting Minutes will be included in March Newsletter. ****

**Our Saviors Ten Mile Lake Church
Council Meeting—January 12, 2026**

Present: Debbie, Kyle, Jerry, Julie

Absent: Danielle, Ted

Devotions were led by Debbie.

Secretary's report from the December 15th meeting was reviewed. Motion by Debbie to approve the minutes. Seconded by Julie. Motion carried.

Treasure's report was presented by Debbie. The beginning balance in the general checking account as of December 15th was \$7,766.00, with a total income of \$13,789.00 and expenses of \$11,497.00 leaving a balance of \$10,057.00. Renew CD and add \$20,000.00 for a total of \$40,000.00. Motion made by Jerry to approve the treasure's report and seconded by Julie. Motion carried.

Pastor's Report: None

Trustee's Report: Had rewiring done on the heating system for the office.

Deacon's Report: January 25th communion assistant will be Jerry. February 1st communion assistant will be Julie.

Old Business: The parsonage rent will be increased due to no longer being exempt from property tax. Both parties agree.

Christy is going to continue to help with confirmation.

Disability claim still pending for Pastor Paul.

Budget reviewed, will be having annual meeting January 35th.

New Business: Update regarding Pastor Paul, appointments are going well.

Kyle to get in contact with Jaime regarding pulpit supply February 1st and 8th.

Kyle to contact Pastor Mark to find a pianist for 3rd Sunday.

The next council meeting will be Monday, February 2, 2026 at 6:00.

We closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Julie Walvatne, acting secretary

Our Savior's-Ten Mile Lake Financial Review

Year to Date as of January 27, 2026

Income

Offerings	\$ 4,605.00
Donations	92.00
Total Income	\$ 4,697.00

Expenses

Staff Ministry	\$ 5,753.30
Missions	963.94
Worship and Service	-
Church Home	1,039.90
Maintenance	6.00
Miscellaneous	48.90
Total Expenses	\$ 7,812.04

Account Balances:	Jan. 27, 2026
Checking	\$ 5,395.60
General Savings	153,868.61
Memorial Savings	1,746.59
Ellen & Pat Welch Scholarship Fund	538.94
Our Savior's Cemetery	68,058.68

Regular Session Meeting January 12, 2026

The regular meeting of the 1st Presbyterian Church of Ashby was held January 12, 2026 at 6:30 PM at the church. Those present: Moderator El J Arntson, SAM, Ruling Elders: Jim Risbrudt, Janet Larson, Troy Johnson, Kim Bailey and Barb Dewey, Clerk on speaker phone. Donna Fay Grover absent with excuse. The meeting was opened in prayer by Moderator El J. Arntson, SAM The Shared Ministry statement read. A quorum was present and docket voted approved.

Treasurer's Report was the 2025 annual treasurer report showing balance December 31, 2025 of \$3,217.98 in checking, \$15,501.93 in savings. Total receipts in 2025: \$90,459.82 and total Disbursements of \$89,901.79. Memorial fund: \$3,914.34, Music Dept: \$8,533.47, Dishwasher: \$2,039.99, L&L Camp: \$1,484.78, Grover Bible: \$478.86, Building Maint: \$7,675.14, Starner \$1,185.06 and Insurance for water damage \$17,052.48. Treasurer reported the total insurance and Shared Ministry costs are up but electricity cost decreased. He has requested Presbytery return an accidental per capita overpayment of \$500. The treasurer's report voted approved. The December meeting minutes were read and voted approved.

Report of the Pastor: Communion celebrated at 1st Presbyterian December 25, 2025 worship service with El J Arntson, SAM and 17 communicants and January 4, 2026 worship service with El J Arntson, SAM and 20 communicants and those on Facebook live. El J told of the confirmation class researching Bible Stories to do a video presentation to their class. He has only 2 Sundays left on his contract and will be at the Shared Ministry meeting Jan 26.

Communications: Thank you from Candy Catoe for donation to the Ashby school backpack program.

Committee Reports:

- **Shared Ministry:** Worship times have changed to 1st at 10:30 AM and OSTML at 9 AM, except for OSTML annual meeting on January 25 so we will worship at 9 AM. Shared Ministry, Session and OSTML Council will meet January 26, 2026 at 6:30 PM in Dalton.
- **Buildings and Grounds:** New handle/lock on back door. See Barb if you want a key.
- **Christian Education:** BJ will lead Bible Study 9:30 AM Jan 14, otherwise is 1 PM on 2nd & 4th Wednesdays.
- **Worship:** Ash Wednesday February 18. No schedule yet. El J has talked to Peace/Grue about the Lenten serves, may need readers.

Old Business: Janet working on outside sign replacement.

New Business: Statistical report for Presbytery presented and voted approved by the Session. Annual meeting January 18, 2026 after worship service: Kim has been unable to find another candidate for Ruling Elder, Gwyn has agreed to run for a second term.

Item for discussion: Status of Pastor Snyder. Session has received communication from Executive Presbyter Rev. Beth Buckwalter-Miller on January 2 that we should plan that Rev. Dr Snyder would not be returning to our church after his medical leave. The Session will talk to the congregation at the annual meeting and then Shared Ministry/council meeting after the churches' annual meetings which is set for January 26. El J counseled the Session to be in prayer for the process and for patience, what is best for the congregation and for Pastor Paul. Barb to notify EP Rev Beth our next Session meeting set for February 9, 2026 at 6:30 PM.

Session voted to proceed with Souper Sundae church dinner after February 8, 2026 service. Janet Larson and Marsha Bowman will be in charge.

The meeting was voted adjourned and closed by prayer by the Moderator.

OS-TML Worship Leaders

February

Karen Nelson

First Disciple Team

February

Al & Janet Larson

Altar Guild

Debbie Thormodson

Confirmands will assist with reading scriptures during the school year.

OS-TML

February 1 – Aubrey Walvatne

February 8 – Open

February 15 – Open

February 22 – Aubrey Walvatne

FIRST

February 1 – Abe Olson

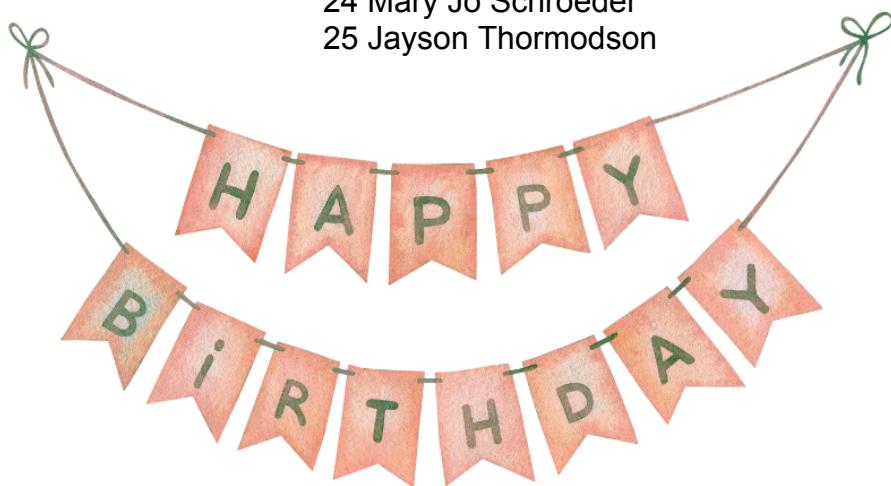
February 8 – Kosa Lewis

February 15 – Nora Weinandt

February 22 – Brynn Jensen

February Birthdays

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





First Presbyterian Session Members

Barb Dewey – *Clerk of Session*
Jim Risbrudt – *Treasurer*
Donna Fay Grover
Kim Bailey
Troy Johnson
Gwyn Risbrudt
Janet Larson

Shared Ministry Council

Troy Johnson- *President*
Kyle Frigaard- *Vice President*
Jim Risbrudt- *Treasurer*
Kim Bailey- *Secretary*
Joan Helgelson
Debbie Wilke

OS-TML Church Council Members

Kyle Frigaard - *President*
Jerry Thormodson- *Vice President*
Debbie Wilke - *Treasurer*
Danielle Schroeder
Julie Walvatne
Ted Frigaard

Women of the ELCA President

Peggy Lien

Board of Education

Ashley Lee

Endowment Fund Board

Deb Thormodson
Julie Olson

Our Savior's Cemetery Board

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

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

The logo of the Presbyterian Church (USA) features a stylized cross with a flame at the base, enclosed within a circular border. The text "PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH" is curved along the top inner edge, and "(USA)" is at the bottom.



February

SHARED MINISTRY STAFF

Reverend Doctor Paul Snyder

OS-TML Office & Pastor's Study: 589-8454

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 2026**

9:00am – Our Savior's-Ten Mile Lake Worship- Dalton, MN

Holy Communion the 1st & 4th Sunday

3rd Sunday Coffeehouse Worship

10:30am – First Presbyterian Worship- Ashby, MN

Holy Communion the 1st & 4th Sunday

3rd Sunday Coffeehouse Worship

ONLINE SERVICES live at 9:00am on Facebook