

PERLEY PARISH- DECEMBER 2023

# NEWSLETTER

*I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in him. Then you will overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit.*

*Romans 13*

## *A Letter on Behalf of the Councils*

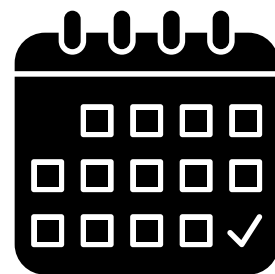
BY DAWN VOLDEN

Dear Congregation Members and Friends of Perley Parish,

I hope this message finds you doing well. Can you believe that we are already in the last month of 2023? This year has been quite eventful for our parish. In March, Pastor Michele found a new church to serve full-time. As a result, we embarked on a journey of our own. During this journey, we were fortunate to have visits from Pastor Melissa and Pastor Rebel from the MN NW Synod, who provided education on the ongoing concerns faced by rural churches. There's no easy solution, but with the help of our resources, we were able to focus on key areas that require attention.

Our immediate focus was to find a pastor to lead us, so we could continue our services uninterrupted. We are grateful to Pastor Harold Ovre for continuing to bless us with his thoughtful messages each week, but his time with us is uncertain. Former Pastor John deserves our heartfelt gratitude for introducing us to Pastor Harold.

As autumn approached, Melissa Christianson developed plans for our confirmation students and Sunday School. The Arthur/Hunter church community extended a warm welcome to our confirmation students to join them. Sunday School began on Rally Sunday in September.



### *SAVE THE DATE*

December 17th,  
Children's Program  
and Brunch Potluck  
to follow at Nora!

Christmas Eve  
(12/24) Service at  
Kirkebo at 9:30am

Nora's 150th  
Anniversary  
celebration on  
June 23, 2024

The Sunday School students gather every week at 10:30 am, right after our single worship service that now starts at 9:30 am. To pay tribute to the beautiful structures of both churches, we decided to alternate weekly services between Nora and Kirkebo. Nora hosts the service on the 1st and 3rd Sunday, while Kirkebo does so on the 2nd and 4th.

Emil Heckman and I have had multiple meetings with the rural revival team after the evaluation was concluded. Although the evaluation did not result in a definitive decision on the future of the churches, we, as members and councils, have been reflecting on finding ways to maintain and increase our membership. It's crucial to rally our community by inviting our friends and neighbors to join us. Together, we can achieve great things and make a positive impact.

During congregational meetings of the rural revival, Sonja Lindgren Meline felt called to spread God's message and teachings. This led to her passion for becoming a Synod Authorized Minister (SAM). Seeking guidance from the Synod, she obtained information, coordinated meetings, and eventually presented the information to the councils. This is a positive development in the rural community.

The Perley Parish Council supports Sonja's mission to spread the word of God. Her process includes coursework and mentorship from Pastor Ernie Simmons. Sonja will begin her work as a part-time SAM on January 1, 2024, she will begin preaching and presiding one Sunday per month and Pastor Harold will preach the other weeks while Sonja grows in her leadership. She has already begun home visits for her coursework which can take up to two years to complete. Let's support her in this new endeavor!

I am speaking on behalf of the parish council. Our goals are to promote transparency, hold weekly services, and provide education for both children and adults to cultivate a love for Christ.



*Merry Christmas*

## UPCOMING SCHEDULES

12/3/23  
9:30am Nora  
10:30am SS Nora

12/10/23  
9:30am Kirkebo  
10:30am SS Nora

12/17/23  
9:30am Children's  
Program at Nora  
Brunch Potluck  
following

12/24/23  
9:30am Christmas Eve  
Service at Kirkebo

12/31/2023  
No Service

1/7/23  
9:30am Nora  
10:30am SS Nora

1/14/23  
9:30am Kirkebo  
10:30am SS Nora  
10:45am Joint Council  
Meeting

