# THE MESSENGER

The monthly newsletter for members of Immanuel Lutheran Church of Forest City, Iowa February 2024

## **POSITIONS OPENING**

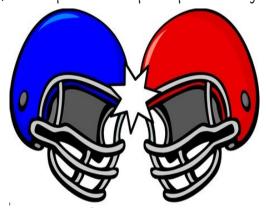
Positions available for Custodian and Property Manager.

If you or someone you know might be interested in this position, we'd love to see a resume or letter of interest.



## SOUPER BOWL CONTEST

Let's fill the boxes with soup cans with your pick for the Super Bowl championship on February 11



Boxes will be located in the narthex January 31-February 11 for your favorite team playing.

No matter which team wins, we are all helping with local hunger issues through the Forest City Neighborhood Food Bank! Thank you!

## SEWING MACHINE NEEDED

The Quilting Do Day group is in need of a good sewing machine. If you would like to donate a machine, please talk to Jaci in the church office.





by Kathy & friends >>>>>>>>

## Parents Night Out

Saturday, February 10th 5:00PM-8:00PM

Hosted by the High School Youth and Adults, in the Fellowship Hall Proceeds go towards the Gathering

Food Games Crafts Fun



Please contact Jaci, Pastor Zech, or Intern Elizabeth to sign your kids up for this event by February 6th.

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## LUTHERAN DAY ON THE HILL February 19

Join LSI (Lutheran Services in Iowa) and the three Iowa Synods of the ELCA for Lutheran Day on the Hill in Des Moines on Monday, Feb. 19. This free event is open to anyone who wants to learn more about citizen advocacy. Gathering at Capitol Hill, the focus will be on the three critical issues facing Iowa children, adults, and families: 1. Investing in a Strong Human Services Workforce; 2. Support for Iowa's Mental Health System; 3. Support for Services that Empower Refugees and Immigrants. For more information or to register for the event, check out www.lsiowa.org/LDH/, online registration closed February 12.





# Thrivent Members: MAKE & DIFFERENCE by directing your Thrivent Choice Dollars!

Many of you are members of Thrivent. You get statements from Thrivent and you have an ID card with Thrivent ID number. You have access to dollars for your church! You can apply for Action Grants (2 per calendar year) and get up to \$250 for any number of projects. To name some: Wednesday night meals, Quilters Group, Promiseland, Prayer Shawl Ministry, Choir, Bell Choir, Mission Projects, Lutheran World Relief Kits, etc. You are asked to identify a "project" and a specific date and tell Thrivent how you will use the award. If approved (and most are) you get a Visa card in the mail for the amount requested and this can be up to \$250.

I have a goal to have at least one \$250 Thrivent card grant for each month of 2024 to support a Wednesday night meal. So far, I have people lined up through April. This money makes a significant difference for our Wednesday night meals! Ideally, Thrivent wants the requestor to take part in the "project" but it doesn't have to be a huge part at all. After the project date, you go back online and report on the project and then you'll be eligible to apply for another one (up to 2 per calendar year).

Jaci Thorson or myself are happy to help you if you need assistance. Please consider accessing these funds for Immanuel for something we do that is meaningful to you and you'd like to support.

Thank you, Kathy McEnelly



Would you like to attend the Western Iowa Synod Assembly as a voting member representing ILC? (2 laymen, 2 laywomen, 1 youth, 1 young adult 18-30)

Friday, April 19 – Saturday April 20 in Council Bluffs
Registration & hotel paid by the church.
Let us know by leaving your name in the office or with a pastor.
Registration opens Feb. 1-Mar. 15.

## Wandering Heart



Do you ever get a card on Valentines Day? They all are lovely and talk about all sorts of love. The classic card writes, "Roses are Red, Violets are Blue, Sugar is Sweet, and So are You!" I'm pretty sure that's a card we all learned about early on. This year is one of those rare years when on Valentines Day the Card reads, "Remember you are dust and to dust you

shall return". Not exactly the kind of card you expect, but this year Lent begins on February 14th. And we are remined again of the greatest love there ever has been, the Love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The theme for Lent this year is Wandering Heart. Do you ever just wander around? I have from time to time, and really, it's sort of a journey. It's a journey where you may or may not know the destination, but the journey could go a lot of different ways. You may wander off the road and stop at an obscure tourist sight. Or maybe you want to go down a road not suggested by the GPS. Sometimes when we wander, we find our way back, and other times, we need help to get back on the right path. Our hearts in faith sometimes do the same thing, and we need Jesus to call us back to the right path repeatedly.

In the Gospels there is someone that does embody this idea of wandering, and being called back over and over, and he keeps on trying to get it right. His name is Peter. You know exactly who I'm talking about. And in this series, we follow Peter as he wanders. He wanders on the right path, and he strays from the path. He is called to drop his nets and follow, he walks and sinks on the stormy sea, he affirms Jesus is the Messiah, he is called the rock and shortly after Satan, he says he'll never deny and shortly after does it three times, and he runs to the empty tomb. Through it all we see Jesus loves us, even when we are imperfect and make mistakes, and wander. We will watch his journey of faith and see how it connects to our own journey. And as the description of the series says, "we're not idolizing or vilifying him. Instead, we're hoping to wander alongside him, open to what we might learn about Jesus and ourselves." It's a journey with Peter as we wander here, there, and everywhere. And yet, through it all, Jesus is right there with us, as he was right there with Peter each step of the wav.

This Lent season I invite you to wander with us, wander with Peter, wander with Jesus. As the song forty days says, "forty days to wander, forty days to die to self, forty days to grow stronger." Lent has a reputation, but it's not such a bleak season. In fact, it's a season of hope, promise, and love. I look forward to wandering with you this season, and giving our hearts to Jesus, and growing stronger in him each and every day. Blessings on your Lenten Journey.

I look forward to seeing you soon, Interlinked in Christ.

Pastor Zech Anderson







# Wandering

Elizabeth Carr

In July of 2012, my older son Eric got to attend the National Youth Gathering, which was in New Orleans that year, as it is again this year. He came home with so many stories from that week away. He spoke of the amazing experience of worshiping and celebrating Communion with 30,000 people. He told us about their

day of service where they went into the community, which was still recovering from the devastation of hurricane Katrina, and they worked side-by-side with the people in the community to aid in those recovery efforts. He talked about the many inspirational speakers they heard from, one of whom was Pastor Nadia Bolz-Weber, and that is where this stage of my journey began.

I watched the recording of Pastor Nadia speaking at the Gathering and I was intrigued. I looked her up online and started reading her books and I was quite surprised. She was definitely not what I had always pictured a pastor to look like or talk like or even be like, and this was a lightbulb moment for me. I began to realize that God can, and does, call people to be pastors, who don't necessarily look, talk, or act like "traditional" pastors. I began to realize that maybe God really was calling me to be a pastor too, though it was still five years before I finally said "yes" to that calling.

I started seminary in the fall of 2017, and it has been a wandering journey since then. I travel to campus the first week of each semester, except during the pandemic, to spend time in community with my classmates and be introduced to each course and instructor. I have attended classes full time and part time, all from the comfort of my own home (or office) thanks to the wonders of Zoom. I have taken trips on J-Term including an amazing immersive trip to Germany in 2019 to walk in the footsteps of Martin and Katie Luther, Phillip Melancthon, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and many others. I spent a year as part of this family of faith, learning from, growing alongside, and serving as your pastoral intern.

And now my wanderings have brought me to this time and place. I have just finished my third and final J-Term, remotely through LSTC, where we delved into the Ministry of Administration, and I have begun my final two classes I need to graduate in May, an advanced Hebrew Bible course on the prophets through Trinity Lutheran Seminary and a final year leadership course through Wartburg Theological Seminary.

So, if I seem a little frazzled over the next few months, now you know why. As I wander towards the end of this part of the journey, and prepare to begin the next stage, I give thanks to God for each of you, as you have supported and guided me this far, and continue to do so in the coming months. Your prayers and affirmation are felt and heard and appreciated. May God bless our wandering hearts during this coming season and through all the seasons to come. Blessings, Intern Elizabeth

# Board notes

#### **Mission & Outreach**

Keith Walker

The Mission & Outreach Board met via Zoom on Wednesday, Jan. 10, at 4:45pm. Four members were present.

The Thanksgiving meal raised \$1,779.26 after expenses, split evenly between Wednesday Night Meals and Missionary Karen each receiving \$889.63.

We have a carryover of \$722.75 towards our 2024 covenant commitment of \$5,000 to Mission Karen Anderson.

\$1,930.01 was received for the December mission emphasis for the Forest City school lunch account assistance.

We will have boxes set up for The Souper Bowl canned food/soup donations beginning Wednesday, Jan. 31 through Sunday, Feb. 11—the day of the Super Bowl.

Missionary Karen Anderson will be the recipient of the Lenten offerings.

A recommendation will be taken to the Council for the April Mission Emphasis to be the Western Iowa Synod challenge to raise \$350 to help pay for registration and other fees for the ELCA National Youth Gathering this July.

#### Trustees

Bink Keller

The Board of Trustees met on January 8, 2024 at the church and zoom. December income was \$93,904.49 and expenses were \$62,766.53 including paying back \$10,000 to contingency with a positive \$31,137.96 for the month of December. YTD is a positive \$15,244.88 compared to a negative (\$11,732.56) for 2022). Other income included Four Oaks rent for \$1,344.75 and Salary Reimbursement of \$3,149.00 including Bethany. December mission to Western Iowa Synod \$2,833.33 was paid out of endowment for mission support.

Endowment: \$54,000 estimated for distribution in 2024.
Property Committee: Mike Oleson has submitted his retirement notice as of March 31, 2024. Board of Trustees congratulated and thanked Mike for his 15 years as property manager at Immanuel. Looking at grants to replace and purchase the kitchen ovens.

Personnel Committee: Steve Westerberg V. P. of council will chair

New Business:a) January 14 Board of Trustees is hosting Brunch after church.

b.) Angie, Kim, and Kathy to look at bylaws in Stove purchase. Old Business:

a.) 4 Oaks update: There are currently 6 to 9 students.

#### **Parish Coucil**

Ben Arentson, Secretary

Council met on January 8, 2024 in person/Zoom hybrid meeting Members Present

Ben Arentson, Lisa Chisholm, Linda Ferjak, Kathy McEnelly,
Danielle Niess, Matt Welp, Jen Jenkins, Pastor Zech Anderson,
Intern Elizabeth Carr, Carter Benson, Matt Welp, Steve
Westerberg.

Absent: Pastor Rod Hopp, Keith Walker, Laura Winter Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by President Kathy McEnelly at 6:30 PM. Devotions were shared by Linda Ferjak.

#### Old Business

December minutes were approved following a motion by Steve Westerberg and seconded by Jen Jenkins. Motion unanimously carried

Two motions were made by M&O Board and seconded by Linda and Jen, respectively, to approve the M&O board's recommendation for quarter 1's mission emphasis of Forest City Food Bank and the Lenten offerings to Missionary Karen. Kathy let the group know Mike Oleson turned in his resignation of Church Maintenance, effective March 31, 2024. Steve Westerberg made a motion to accept the consent agenda board reports, which was seconded by Matt Welp. Motion carried.

#### New Business

National Youth Gathering: The Synod also asked for consideration of sending \$350 dollars to the Western Iowa Synod to help cover the National Youth Gathering in New Orleans for underprivileged Western Iowa Youth.

Food Grant Update: The food grant support positions are slowly being populated. Two lead positions are left to fill are Volunteer Coordinator and Hospitality and Resource Team. Angie Thompson is working on several local and national grants to help with Wednesday night meals/kitchen needs.

Review and update council Activity Log: Council reviewed the 2023-2024 activity log and updated new members on the goals/priorities of the council.

#### **Business Financials**

December month to date income was \$93,904.49, month to date expenses totaled \$52,766.53. We were able to repay the \$10,000 borrowed from the contingency fund so total expenses were \$62,766.53. Income minus expenses and repayment was \$31,137.96. Year to date income was at 105.01% and expenses were 102.52% of budget.

#### **Upcoming Events**

Next Council Meeting is February 12, 2024. The Monthly brunch is January 14th sponsored by the Board of Trustees. Closing Prayer offered by Linda. Meeting Adjourned by Kathy at 7:55 PM.

#### **Parish Life**

Mary Kingland

Board of Parish Life met on January 2, 2024 at 4:30. Present for the meeting: Pastor Zech, Tina Berg, Lisa Chisholm, Kathy Leuwerke, and Mary Kingland

A new method for scheduling ushers was discussed and will be implemented in February. A letter to those who volunteer as ushers will be sent out explaining the schedule. Appreciation for the important role of the ushers was expressed by Pastor Zech and board members.

Board of Parish Life is planning a May Day activity for the congregation to be held on Sunday, April 28th; the closest Sunday to May 1. Plans for the event will be finalized at the February meeting.



## Library News Feb 2024

## Starting the New Year

Snow is falling and books are calling. Step into your church library and find a book to warm your heart and spirit. Whether it is an inspirational story or spiritual motivation you are looking for, you can find it on the shelves of your library. Let 2024 be the year where you discover the wonderful treasures on the library's shelves.

## Our Library is Used

We keep track of how the Library is used each year. Below is the Report for 2022 & 2023. This report shows what was checked out.

Immanuel Library Usage Report		
	2022	2023
Children Books	328	402
Adult Books	159	176
DVDs	100	73
TOTAL	587	651

So come to the library and join all these people in accessing the blessings waiting on the shelves for everyone; men, women, and children.

## Promiseland News

The Promiseland Reading Contest continues until April 24<sup>th</sup> and we are gearing up to start the second round of Jeopardy games with the students while they visit the library. These games assist in students learning about Jesus along with the older students practicing how to find their way in their Bibles.

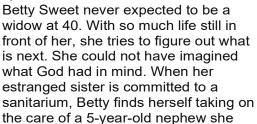
\$31,137,96

Income Less Expense

### New Adult Fiction

#### **Stories That Bind Us**

By Susie Finkbeiner



never knew she had. In 1960s LaFontaine, Michigan, they make an odd pair. Betty with her pink button nose and bouffant hair. Hugo with his light brown skin and large brown eyes. But more powerful than what makes them different is what they share: the heartache of an empty space in their lives. Slowly, they will learn to trust one another as they discover common ground and healing through the magic of storytelling.

#### **What Momma Left Behind**

By Cindy K. Sproles



Worie Dressar is 17 years old when influenza and typhoid ravage her Appalachian Mountain community in 1877, leaving behind a growing number of orphaned children with no way to care for themselves. Worie's mother has been secretly feeding a number of these little ones on Sourwood

Mountain. But when she dies suddenly, Worie is left to figure out why and how she was caring for them. Plagued with two good-for-nothing brothers--one greedy and the other a drunkard--Worie fights to save her home and the orphaned children now in her begrudging care. Along the way, she will discover the beauty of unconditional love and the power of forgiveness as she cares for all of Momma's children. Storyteller and popular speaker Cindy K. Sproles pens a tender novel full of sacrifice, heartache, and courage in the face of overwhelming obstacles.

(Descriptions are taken from Amazon.com)

\$31,548.18

(\$11,732.56)

Many more new books have been added to the Library shelves for your reading pleasure.

#### Treasury's Report | Immanuel Lutheran Church FY December 2023 Year-to-date Annual YTD December Monthly Percent of December Actual 2023 **Budget** Actual **Budget** YTD Budget Actual 2022 Actual 2022 100.00% Income Regular Offerings & Envelopes 75,016.41 41,249.75 480,793.78 494,997.00 97.13% 80,078.50 478,689.73 Other Income 138.37% 18 888 08 9 746 92 161 841 17 116 963 00 26 790 51 122 788 22 **Total Income** 93.904.49 50.996.67 642,634.95 611,960.00 105.01% 106,869.01 601.477.95 **Expense** Staff Support 31,365.67 31,629.67 379,460.48 379,556.00 99.97% 31,926.99 386,652.38 176,290.90 140,807.00 25,852.59 140,164.79 Administration 12,145.04 11,733.92 125.20% 9,255.82 7,633.08 71,638.69 91,597.00 78.21% 7,541.25 86,393.34 Ministry Areas Loan re-payment/contingency 10,000.00 0.00 0.00 0.00 0.00% 10,000.00 0.00 Total Expenses 62,766.53 50,996.67 627,390.07 611,960.00 102.52% 75,320.83 613,210.51

\$15,244.88

0.00

(\$0.00)

# Volunteer February 2024

#### **Assisting Ministers**

Feb. 4	Cindi Lehmann
Feb. 11	Ken Korth
Feb. 18	Patti Strukel
Feb. 25	Dave Readinger

#### **Scripture Readers**

Feb. 4	Tasha Banta
Feb. 11	Joy Newcom
Feb. 18	Steve Olmstead
Feb. 25	Mary Kingland

#### **Altar Care**

Feb. 4	Jeanette Neuman
Feb. 11	Joan Beebe
Feb. 18	Julie Damm
Feb. 25	

#### **Ushers**

Gary McCarthy, Jim Lund, Tina Berg

#### **Communion Servers**

Feb. 4	Emily Walker, Michael Bohl
Feb. 11	Renae Hopp, Elizabeth Bohl
Feb. 18	Steve & Nancy Westerberg
Feb. 25	Keith Walker, Mary Kingland

#### Offering Counters

Ellen Olson/Jan Buffington, Darlene Carson, Mavis Hess, Linda Holland

#### Laundry

Mary Paulson

## February – the best month to sign up for Summer Bible Camp!

Take advantage of 'early bird' discounts and availability for the camp schedules that work for you and your family. There are multiple options from a Camp-in-aday for as young as Kindergarteners up



Summer Bible Camp

to the 'seniors' events, family camp, weekend retreats, space rental, worship, too much to highlight here. Best way is to check out the websites of the three Camps Immanuel helps support:

Riverside Lutheran Bible Camp, Story City www.RiversideLBC.org

Ingham/Okoboji Lutheran Bible Camp, Milford www.okoboji.org

Lutheran Lakeside Bible Camp, Spirit Lake www.lutheranlakeside.com

Immanuel provides some assistance financially, helping pay half for Confirmation age students (just one time), \$100 for a camper attending a week of camp, \$50 for a shortened week. These funds come from the church's Endowment Fund. Just let the church office know your child is registered.

Immanuel's Confirmation students are planning to go to Lutheran Lakeside the week of June 23.

A few other events at Camps this winter:

Marriage Retreat @ Okoboji, Feb. 9-11

Marriage Retreat @ Riverside, Feb. 23-25

Daddy-Daughter Dine & Dance @ Riverside, Feb. 10

Centennial Celebration @ Okoboji, June 28-30

## Worship on the Radio

Sunday morning worship over KIOW 107.3 FM airs at 11am. We have many open dates in the next four months. Consider sponsoring a broadcast for \$100 of this important radio ministry.

#### Available dates:

Feb. 11 March 10, 17 April 14, 28 May 5, 12, 26

Call or email the office to reserve a date (585-3152, jaci@immanuelfamily.com).

FEBRUARY 2024						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28	29	30	31	9am -Women's Bible Study, Lounge	2	3 1-4pm -Private Party, Shalom
4 9:15am- Worship, communion 10:15am- Coffee, FH 10:30am- Promiseland	5	<b>6</b> 3:30pm - Intercessor Prayer Group, zoom 4:30pm- Parish Life, Lounge	7 4:15-6:15pm- Meal, FH 5:25pm - Promiseland/MS Ministry, Adult class, Lounge 6:30pm- Worship, communion 7:15pm- Choir 7:30pm- HS Youth Group	8 9am -Women's Bible Study, Lounge 6:30pm- Good Grief Group, Shalom	9	10 5-8pm -Parents Night Out, child care
9:15am- Worship, communion 10:15am- Potluck brunch, FH 10:30am- Promiseland	Pastor Rod back from Sabbatical 5pm- Trustees, Shalom 6:30pm- Council, Shalom	3:30pm- Intercessor Prayer Group, zoom 4:30pm- Ed Board, Kitchenette	14 10am-Forest Plaza Ash Wed 4:45pm- M&O, Zoom 4:15-6:15pm- Meal, FH 5:25pm - Promiseland/MS Ministry, Adult class 6:30pm- Ash Wed Worship 7:15pm- Choir 7:30pm- HS Youth Group	9am - Women's Bible Study, lounge 10am - Martha Circle, Shalom 10:30am - Good Sam Comm service 1:30pm - Rachel/Sarah, Lounge	16	17
18 9:15am- Worship, communion 10:15am- Coffee, FH 10:30am- Promiseland	19 2-4pm- Prayer Shawl Ministry, Shalom	20 3:30pm- Intercessor Prayer Group, zoom MARCH MESSENGER DEADLINE	21 4:15-6:15pm- Meal, FH 5:25pm - Promiseland/MS Ministry/Adult class 6:30pm- Lenten Worship 7:15pm- Choir 7:30pm- HS Youth Group	<b>22</b> 9am -Women's Bible Study, Lounge 6:30pm- Good Grief Group, Shalom	23	24
25 9:15am- Worship, communion 10:15am- Coffee, FH 10:30am- Promiseland	26	27 1pm- LWR Quilting Do Day, FH 3:30pm - Intercessor Prayer Group, zoom	28 4:15-6:15pm- Meal, FH 5:25pm - Promiseland/MS Ministry/Adult class 6:30pm- Lenten Worship, communion 7:15pm- Choir 7:30pm- HS Youth Group	9am -Women's Bible Study, Lounge	1	2



All are welcome to our free community meals served each Wednesday from 4:15-6:15pm in the fellowship hall. Join us for a good hot meal, a time for fellowship with others, or a convenience to get you out of the kitchen. Take-outs are always available as well.

Cook on staff, Kathy McEnelly, welcomes volunteers to help serve any time. Just let her know or call the church office.

## **February Menu:**

Feb. 7	Hot dog bar, baked beans, chips,
	chocolate chip bars
Feb. 14	**Thrivent meal sponsored by Jan
	Buffington**
	Tacos, Jello, frosted cookies
Feb. 21	Chicken & noodles, carrots,
	peaches, chocolate cake
Feb. 28	Goulash, French bread, corn, apple
	crisp

## Blessings & Prayers

#### **Bapatisms**

Dec. 31 Aria Sophia, daughter of David & Delaram Keller, from Newton, MA

#### **Prayers**

Linda & Ken Ferjak and family in the loss of Linda's sister, Marilyn Brady of Perry

Wayne & Marcia Eastvold, Andy & Jennifer, Olivia, Elaina Eastvold, Ryan & Tori, Rylee, Neveah Eastvold, family and friends in the loss of mom/grandma/great-grandma, Marion Eastvold of Forest City

Pam Coxson, family and friends in the loss of Betty Coxson of Forest City

Harvey Nyhus, family and friends in the loss in the loss of wife, Connie Nyhus of Forest City

Tina Berg, family and friends in the loss of mother-in-law, Hazel Barloon of Mason City, formerly of Forest City

Chad & Marcy Hanson, Keaton, Tanya Droessler, Dakota, Colby, Haley, family and friends in the loss of grandma/great-grandma, Dorothy Bang of Forest City

Family and friends in the loss of Larry Nerem of Garner, formerly of Forest City

Family and friends in the loss of Wilma Sauer of Algona, formerly of Thompson



## 246 South Clark Street, Forest City, IA 50436 ADDRESS SERVICE REQUEST



#### **MISSION STATEMENT**

Building community in the Name and likeness of Jesus Christ.

#### **WORSHIP SCHEDULE**

Sundays – 9:15am Wednesdays – 6:30pm In Person & Livestream

Office Hours

M-F: 8am – 5pm

## IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America 246 South Clark Street, Forest City, IA 50436

#### **TELEPHONE**

641-585-3152

#### Website:

www.immanuelfamily.com
Facebook pages:
Immanuel Lutheran Church
Immanuel Lutheran Church Library

#### Staff:

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**Rev. Zech Anderson-**Associate Pastor zanderson001@immanuelfamily.com parsonage home: 641-585-3501

**Mike Oleson-**Property Manager mike@immanuelfamily.com

**Kim Severson**-Finance kim@immanuelfamily.com

**Jaci Thorson-**Administrative Assistant jaci@immanuelfamily.com

Elizabeth Bohl-Children's Ed

**Gene Lopes-** Worship Personnel

ChildrensEd@immanuelfamily.com

lopes.gene@gmail.com

Pastoral Intern Elizabeth Carr

elizabethcarr630@gmail.com

President: Kathy McEnelly

Vice-President: Steve Westerberg

Treasurer: **Jen Jenkins**Secretary: **Ben Arentson** 

Representatives: Carter Benson, Lisa Chisholm, Linda Ferjak, Danielle Niess, Keith Walker, Matt Welp, Laura Winter