



First Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

February Handclasp Newsletter

From Pastor Sami

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the Lord. “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Isaiah 55:8-9

A new year makes me want to look back at the past year. This past year has been quite a ride for all of us. I came to First Lutheran on Jan. 1, 2022. We were both excited about the possibilities of the future and leery whether our relationship would be a good fit. Well, I’m here to say I am so happy to be the pastor at First Lutheran. This is an amazing church with a passion to serve God and others. I am still in awe at how people are willing to give their time, talents, and money. When I first arrived, we had just updated the sound system because it was interfering with emergency and police radios. We also updated all the computers in the office. Much of the installation was done by congregation members. Then, we began to update our streaming system and wow, was that an adventure. However, we created the

Technology Team which is a bunch of “old ladies” (their words not mine) who were brave enough to learn how to run the stream and sound on Sunday mornings. Due to a generous donor and Sam Knapp, we now have everything we need to have an excellent online experience which will help spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ and will help First Lutheran grow. One of the most amazing things that happened this year was, after Sharon resigned her position, the Praise Team didn’t skip a beat (pun intended) and led worship throughout Advent and Christmas. WOW! Like I said, I am in awe of the generosity and passion of First Lutheran! We reinvigorated our youth ministry and now have some wild and crazy youth who are active in church and excited about their faith. When asking people to host part of the Amazing Race, everyone I asked was excited to help. There is never a lack of people who want and are excited to help. Tables get set up and put away for the monthly Potluck lunch after worship and there is never a lack of food. The Altar Guild, building guys, worship volunteers,

Worship Team, Church Council and so many more people are why it is such an honor to serve as pastor of First Lutheran. A new year also makes me want to look to the future. On February 11, Church Council will be meeting to work on a strategic plan. We will discuss our current vision and mission statements. Then, we will set realistic short and long-term goals and objectives. We will share all this with the larger congregation because we are all going to need to be a part of the future of First Lutheran and achieving the goals and objectives God puts before us. *Holy God, help us follow your path that leads to success and prosperity. When sin and ego take us from your path, redirect our steps. When we face a crossroads, teach us how to hear your voice and your will. Give us wisdom and understanding in all that we do. Help us move together as your holy church. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.*

Worship and Music Ministry **Open Positions**

Technology Coordinator

Please spread the word! We are looking for a Part-Time Technology Coordinator to lead the stream and sound with the Technology Team on Sunday mornings.

Part-Time Accompanist/Music Coordinator

Though this position is still open, we do have an interim Accompanist/Music Coordinator. Beth McLenaghan begins her ministry with First Lutheran on January 1. She has been leading music ministries since the age of 17 and has a rich background in a variety of musical styles. Beth will lead our Praise Team and accompany worship on the piano, keyboard, and organ. We are so blessed by God to have Beth help us through this time of transition. Welcome!

Opportunities to Serve

Haven House: Fourth Tuesday

Sign up by contacting the church office flcsj302@gmail.com or 816-232-8378.

3:00 p.m. Cooking

5:00 p.m. Serving

Altar Guild

Cookie Sale and Silent Auction

The Altar Guild is happy to report that the annual Cookie Sale and Silent Auction was very successful and raised a total of \$2,112.00. The Guild will contribute an additional \$2,000.00 to make the total donation to the church's maintenance fund \$4112.00! It was awesome to get this kind of support from so many members and friends of First Lutheran! The Guild thanks each and every donation of cookies and items for the silent auction and to everyone who purchased items.

Altar Flowers

Darla of Darla's Flowers (who has supplied our sanctuary with her beautiful arrangements for the last three years) due to rising costs in flowers and supplies, she is raising her rate for the two weekly bouquets to \$50.00 beginning January 1. We have enjoyed the \$40.00/two bouquets/week for three years, so this increase is in line with everything else that has been raised during these inflationary times. There are still open spots for January and February altar flowers. If one of these dates works for you, please sign up on the chart on the bulletin board just outside the sanctuary or see/contact Nancy Lewis (573-691-2970) for more information. Nancy will contact you for your dedication so it can be in the bulletin and on the screen. Payment for your flowers should be paid before your flowers are on the altar.

2023 Officers

Janice Harmsen, President; Pam Farrell, Vice President; Janell O'Mara, Secretary; and Nancy Lewis, Treasurer. All of our members wish to extend our thanks and appreciation to Ann Newman for her leadership for the past several years.

Christian Education Opportunities

Weekly:

Scripture Study with Pastor Sami meets Mondays from 1:00-2:00 p.m. in the upstairs classroom. We discuss the scriptures to be preached the upcoming Sunday.

Scripture Study with Pastor Sami also meets Wednesdays from 6:00-7:00 p.m. online only. **Zoom ID 845 6213 2526**

Thursday Morning Bible Study meets from 10:00-11:00 a.m. in the upstairs classroom.

Sunday Morning Bible Study meets from 10:30-11:30 a.m. in the Choir Room. We discuss the scriptures and sermon from worship.

Monthly:

Phoebe's Circle is a women's Bible study group that meets the third Thursday of the month from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. in the chapel.

YOUTH MINISTRY

Christmas Progressive Dinner

The youth traveled from house to house this month to have a Christmas supper. We first went to the Sedlacek house for amazing spaghetti and cheese bread. Then we went to Pastor Sami's house for dessert. Thank you Sedlacek family for providing the main course and Charlotte Pfalzgraf for helping Pastor with dessert.

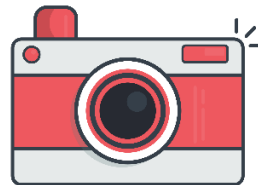


January Youth Group Activity

January 15, 7:30 p.m.

Photo Scavenger Hunt

Youth will have one hour to complete as many photo challenges as possible before returning to the church. There will be a prize for the team with the most points! Friends are strongly encouraged. The more people the more fun!



Confirmation

We have talked about the Lord's Prayer, Apostles' Creed, Ten Commandments and now are beginning a unit on worship. Everything we do in worship has a purpose and should point to God and scripture. However, much of what we say in worship is difficult to understand, so we are going to write a new liturgy. Liturgy means "words of the people" so the youth are going to learn what each piece of the liturgy means and then we will write their own in their words to share with the congregation.



Council Updates

Council retreat Feb. 11



Monthly Activities

LINE DANCING CLASS

\$5 PER CLASS



MONDAYS 6:00-8:00 P.M.
IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALL

MEN'S BREAKFAST GROUP

7:00 AM
THIRD
TUESDAY
AT LE PEEP

919 N
WOODBINE
RD



MONTHLY

POTLUCK

JANUARY 29 • 10:30 AM

in the Fellowship Hall
Bring a dish to share



Crafting Group

FIRST TUESDAY
6:30-7:30 P.M.

Learn to knit (materials provided) or bring your own projects. Sit, chat and have fun!





Anniversaries and Birthdays



Anniversaries

Kay and Nick Howard, 01/10, 42 years
Felicia Rush and Eric Blac, 01/17, 3 years
Ken and Donna Korell, 01/25, 54 years
Mel and JoAnne Eyberg, 01/26, 54 years
Allen and Lori Amos, 01/27, 17 years

**Happy
Anniversary**



Birthdays

Philip Deng, 01/01
Michael Sollars, 01/02
Noah Coyle, 01/02
Marilyn Hunt, 01/04
Shelby Coyle, 01/06
Tracy Starks, 01/06
Philip Deng, 01/01

Birthdays Continued.

Noah Coyle, 01/03
Marilyn Hunt, 01/04
Shelby Coyle, 01/06
Tracy Starks, 01/06
Jim Bungle, 01/07
Marissa Burns, 01/07
Joyce Stroud, 01/09
Akon Deng, 01/13
Ashley Luthans, 01/13
Linda Heeler, 01/14
Joy Ferrell, 01/15
William Archer, 01/17
Brenda Bass, 01/17
Jackson Knorr, 01/18
Diana Schmidt, 01/18
Laura Rivest, 01/19
Ann Newman, 01/21
Terry Cotton, 01/22
Pamma Williams, 01/24
Shane Harrison, 01/25
Harrison Archer, 01/27
Carolynn Sollars, 01/27
Phil Lewis, 01/28



Prayers

Members:

Floreen Johnson Prayers for continued health and happiness.

Pamela Kirkpatrick-Norton and family, prayers for healing and continued strength to lean on God in difficult times.

Della Schiermeyer, prayers for healing and good health.

Myrene Bunge, prayers for good health.

Dorothy Masteller, prayers of strength as she deals with her cancer.

Richard Palmer (husband of Debbie Ziph-Palmer and friend of Carol Wilson)

Verna Kirschner, prayers for comfort and peace.

Friends

Darin Hinnergardt (friend of Jeff Langdon),

John and Kay Mallon (friends of Jim Pierce),

Brenda Fanning (step-daughter of Dorothy Masteller), **Carol Powers** (Marilyn Hunt's sister), **Larry Kramer** (Joy Winters' brother-in-

Robbi O'Connell & Randi DeRoin (Charlotte Chirila's granddaughters),

Rosa and Vivine Langdon (granddaughters of Kris and Jeff Langdon),

Keira Wall (great-niece of Irene Wall).

Friends continued:

Dave McWhirter (Brother-in-law to Juel Pierce),

Loren Larkin (friend of Sharmyn Thompson),

Jean Earl (Irene Wall's cousin),

Judy Black (friend of Laurel Goforth),

Emily McWhirter (Jeff Langdon's mother),

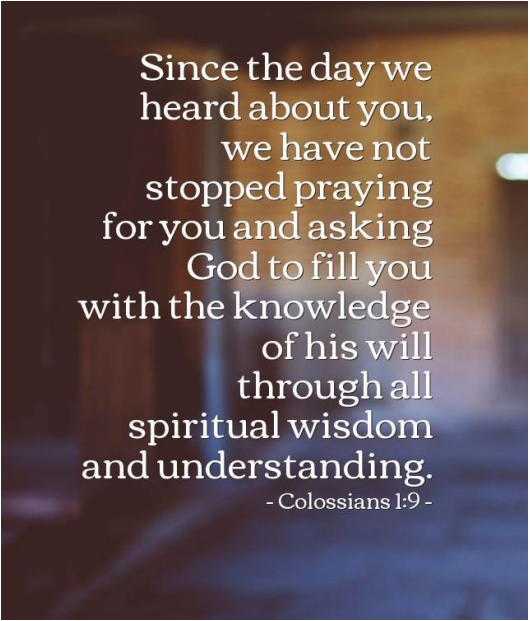
Janis Roorda (Jeff Langdon's friend),

Victor Johnson (uncle of Kenny Ruff),

Kim Durbin (cousin of Kenny Ruff),

Nick Howard (Kay Howard's husband),

John Rushin and Barbra Wife (friends of Dan Chladek),



Since the day we
heard about you,
we have not
stopped praying
for you and asking
God to fill you
with the knowledge
of his will
through all
spiritual wisdom
and understanding.

- Colossians 1:9 -

| Date | Lector | Communion Assistant | Acolyte |
|-------------|-----------------|----------------------------|----------------|
| January 1 | Janice Harmsen | Jim Pierce | TBD |
| January 8 | Jennifer Bufkin | Brenda Bass | TBD |
| January 15 | Ann Newman | Steve Archer | TBD |
| January 22 | Marilyn Hunt | Donna Korell | Brooke Coyle |
| January 29 | Kathy Wessler | Ann Newman | TBD |

Ushers: Jim Farrell, Daniel Wall, Sarah Sedlacek

| | |
|------------------------------|--------------|
| Average Attendance | |
| In Person | 73 |
| Online | 68 |
| Offering Year-to-Date | |
| Income | \$189,487.50 |
| Expense | \$190,168.77 |
| Difference | -\$681.27 |



| Date | Flower Schedule |
|-------------|---------------------------|
| January 1 | Dave and Ann Newman |
| January 8 | Howard and Janice Harmsen |
| January 15 | |
| January 22 | Nancy Lewis |
| January 29 | |

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|---|--|--|---|--------------------------------|-----|
| 1 New Year's Day Worship is Live Streamed 9:30am - In Person 10:45am - Bible Study 1pm - Sudanese Worship | 2 New Year's Day Office Closed | 3 6:30pm - Knitting Group | 4 9:30am - Archive Team 6pm - Scripture Study | 5 10am - Thursday Morning 3pm - Praise Team 6pm - Girl Scouts in | 6 12pm - First Friday Lunch | 7 |
| 8 Worship is Live Streamed 9:30am - In Person 10:30am - Confirmation 10:45am - Bible Study 11:30am - FLY (grade) 1pm - Sudanese Worship | 9 1pm - Scripture Study 6pm - Line Dancing Group | 10 | 11 9:30am - Archive Team 6pm - Scripture Study | 12 10am - Altar Guild 10am - Thursday Morning 3pm - Praise Team 6pm - Girl Scouts in 6:30pm - Church Council | 13 | 14 |
| 15 Last day to submit Worship is Live Streamed 9:30am - In Person 10:30am - Confirmation 10:45am - Bible Study 11:30am - FLY (grade) | 16 Martin Luther King Jr. 1pm - Scripture Study 6pm - Line Dancing Group | 17 7am - Men's Breakfast at | 18 9:30am - Archive Team 6pm - Scripture Study | 19 10am - Thursday Morning 1pm - Phoebe Circle 3pm - Praise Team 6pm - Girl Scouts in | 20 | 21 |
| 22 Noisy Offering Worship is Live Streamed 9:30am - In Person 10:30am - Confirmation 10:45am - Annual 10:45am - Bible Study | 23 1pm - Scripture Study 6pm - Line Dancing Group | 24 3pm - Haven House 5pm - Haven House | 25 9:30am - Archive Team 6pm - Scripture Study | 26 10am - Thursday Morning 3pm - Praise Team 6pm - Girl Scouts in | 27 | 28 |
| 29 Worship is Live Streamed 9:30am - In Person 10:30am - Confirmation 10:30am - Fellowship 10:45am - Annual 10:45am - Bible Study 11:30am - FLY (grade) | 30 1pm - Scripture Study 6pm - Line Dancing Group | 31 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |