

**First Lutheran Church**

**3601 Dakota Ave**

**South Sioux City, NE 68776**

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# First Lutheran Church

**December 2019**



## **INSIDE**

- December 2019 calendar
- Words from the Pastor
- Women of the ELCA schedule
- Birthdays
- Anniversaries
- Financial Reports
- Church Council Minutes

***Loving others in Christ for outreach to all,  
while providing for God's diversity.***

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Download the EasyTithe app  
from the app stores.

Text give at:

402-557-0882



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from First Lutheran

Text flcssc to 797979

or use

<http://text.flcssc.org>



**Arise, shine, for  
your light has come...**

**Isaiah 60:1**

**The deadline for the January Newsletter is December 19.**

# Worship at First Lutheran

## December 1

### First Sunday of Advent

First Lesson: Isaiah 2:1-5

Second Lesson: Romans 13:11-14

Gospel: Matthew 24:36-44

## December 8

### Second Sunday of Advent

First Lesson: Genesis 1:26-31

Second Lesson: James 1:16-20

Psalm: 145:5-16

Gospel: Matthew 1:20b-23

## December 15

### Third Sunday of Advent

First Lesson: Isaiah 59:1-4

Second Lesson: Romans 7:10-25

Gospel: Matthew 11:2-11

## December 22

### Fourth Sunday of Advent

First Lesson: Isaiah 53:1-6

Second Lesson: 2 Corinthians 5:16-19

Gospel: Matthew 1:18-25

## December 29

### First Sunday of Christmas

First Lesson: Isaiah 63:7-9

Second Lesson: Hebrews 2:10-18

Psalm: 148

Gospel: Matthew 2:13-23



Church Office 494-5461

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LeAnn Kilstrom, Custodian

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### Church Council (\* Executive Council)

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\*Deb Kenny, Vice President 712/490-2097

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Brandon Trautwein ([btrautwein@flcsc.org](mailto:btrautwein@flcsc.org)) 412-2135

### Church Coordinators For:

Altar Care: Kathy Anders 274-4383

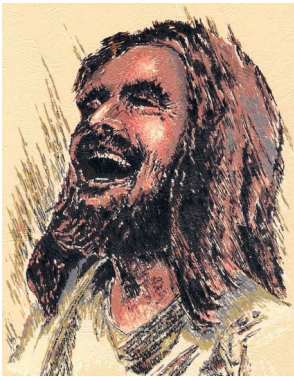
Sandy Larson 494-2135

Lectors:

Ushers:

Women of the ELCA Chair:

Bonnie Prosser 494-3384



## Support, “Here Am I; Send Me!” Pastor Doug

### Exodus 17:8-13

<sup>8</sup>While the Israelites were camped at Rephidim, soldiers of Amalek came and attacked them. <sup>9</sup>Moses called for a young leader named Joshua.

**Moses** (to Joshua): Select some of our best men, and go fight against the soldiers of Amalek. Tomorrow I will stand at the crest of that hill overlooking the battlefield with God’s staff in my hand.

<sup>10</sup>Joshua did exactly as Moses had instructed him to do. He gathered the strongest men he could find and fought against the soldiers of Amalek. Meanwhile, Moses, Aaron, and Hur climbed to the top of the hill.

<sup>11</sup>It happened that whenever Moses raised his hand, the battle went well for Israel; but whenever he lowered his hand to rest, Amalek began to win. <sup>12</sup>When Moses became too tired to hold his hands up any longer, Aaron and Hur took a stone and sat him down on it.



Then both men stood beside Moses, one on each side, holding his hands up and keeping them steady until sunset. <sup>13</sup>In the end, Joshua and the men of Israel defeated Amalek and his soldiers with the sword.

(Continued on page 14)

## Congratulations

**Kathryn Joy Kershaw and Beckett Roger Heitman, son of Justin and Katie Heitman**, were baptized November 10. Katie’s sponsor was Justin Heitman. Beckett’s sponsors were Josh and Rachel York. The congregational sponsors were Tyler and Michaela Heitman.

**Holland Ruby DeForrest**, daughter of Jarred and Holly DeForrest, was baptized November 17. Holland’s sponsors were Erin Young and Sara DeForrest. The congregational sponsor was Rita Todd.

**Clinton D. Barrs** was baptized November 24. The congregational sponsors were Ray and Colleen Schleusener.

## Anniversaries

Jeremiah & Brandi Johnson—December 19  
Rick & Jennifer Lieber—December 3

## Happy Birthday

Susie Adam—December 28  
Shane Benson—December 25  
Stefani Blessing—December 15  
Ned Buser—December 16  
Cheryl Cale—December 10  
Jerry Davis—December 17  
Quinn Feenstra—December 8  
Suzie Fischer—December 16  
Todd Gehner—December 14  
Bart Gotch—December 9  
Shirley Hansen—December 28  
Gary Hayes—December 24  
Jean Hedquist—December 27  
Kris Hunter—December 15  
Vicky Johnson—December 28

Bryan Jones—December 20  
 Janice Knight—December 23  
 Jarrod Knudsen—December 2  
 Danielle Krantz—December 10  
 Sandy Larson—December 28  
 Lee Mathiason—December 16  
 Trey Meier—December 16  
 Jeff Prescott—December 24  
 Caitlyn Todd—December 27  
 Mary Wolf—December 14  
 Carol Zastrow—December 6



## Youth Birthdays

Adelaide Bass—December 30  
 Addy Chytka—December 21  
 Blaine Fischer—December 21  
 Liam Fischer—December 22  
 Hailey Lieber—December 15  
 Syllas Trautwein—December 4

## With Deepest Sympathy

*We extend our heartfelt sympathy to the following families. Please keep them in your prayers.*

Tom and Karen DeRoos, on the death of their son -in-law, Thomas Hendrikson, who passed away Monday, November 18. Services were held Tuesday, November 19 at Mohr & Becker-Hunt Funeral Home.

## Social Ministry

Social Ministry collects "Pantry" items each month to be donated to the needs of our community. The Pantry items collected for December will be food items for families in need. Donations may be left in the shopping cart in the entryway.

## Advent Devotions

Advent devotions are available in the entryway. The devotions will take us through the season of Advent.

### LYDIA GROUP December 12, 2019 7:00 p.m.

LEADER: Group  
 HOSTESS: Group

### CIRCLE I December 16, 2019 11:30 a.m.

LEADER: Fellowship  
 HOSTESS: Out to eat

### CIRCLE II December 10, 2019 9:15 a.m.

LEADER: Group  
 HOSTESS: Dakota Perk



### Bible Study

"Advent/Christmas Devotional"  
 Lydia: "Living Above Worry and Stress"

## Church Council Minutes

### FLC Council Meeting

#### October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019 – Meeting Minutes

**Attendance/Roll Call – Deb Kenny called the meeting to order at 1:38 pm. Trevor Brass took attendance.**

**Present:** Pastor Doug, Chad Cain (late), Sue Hunter, Deb Kenny, Trevor Brass, Kathy Anders, Judy Blessing, Linda Johansen, Brandon Trautwein, and Terry Sorem.

**Not present:**

**Acceptance of Agenda – Motion by Judy to**

accept the agenda as written, second by Kathy. They ayes carry the motion unanimously.

### **Opening Prayer**

Lord God, heavenly Father,  
you know that we are set  
in the midst of so many and great dangers,  
that by reason of the frailty of our nature  
we cannot always stand upright:  
Grant us such strength and protection,  
to support us in all danger,  
and carry us through all temptations;  
through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

- **Martin Luther**

**Devotion – Martin Luther for October 20 –**  
read by Pastor Doug.

### **Reading of Vision and Mission Statements**

**Vision Statement** – Building upon the properties that God provides. To reach out in mission to the community.

**Mission Statement** - Loving others in Christ for outreach to all; while providing for God's diversity.

### **Guests:**

· **Pastor Doug invited 2 non-members to speak to the council:**

o **Pastor Ricky and Pastor Pressly:** He is from the Island of Micronesia proposed that his church be able to rent out FLC's facilities to use as a permanent church presence. They currently are meeting at the personal home of Pastor Ricky and have been at other temporary locations. Pastor Ricky runs a nondenominational Christian church that is growing and around 60 members. They would like to hold worship after FLC's second service, approximately noon on Sundays. Possibility of a women's group meeting on Fridays.

o Sue made a motion, seconded by Brandon, to have a special council meeting to review a pro-

posed contract with the Micronesian Christian church to provide them a home using FLC's facilities. The Pastors of the Micronesian church are to draft this for the Council's review and assent. The ayes have it unanimously.

o Pastor Doug discussed the outline with the pastors as to what would be required: payment terms, time needed for the facility, etc.

o **Lucy Gagnon:** discussed the Nov. 21<sup>st</sup> Festival of Trees at the Ho-Chunk Center in downtown Sioux City, which FLC will participate in thanks to Lucy. Sunday School children may be involved in the decoration.

### **Minutes from August Council meeting & Executive Meeting**

– Sue Hunter moved to approve the executive meeting minutes; Deb seconded the motion. The ayes have it unanimously. Brandon made a motion to approve the regular meeting minutes and Chad Cain seconded. The ayes have it unanimously.

### **Reports -**

September Team Reports -

Pastor Report from September – Read aloud by Chad Cain. Deb made a motion to accept the Pastor's Report for September, Judy seconded. The ayes carried it unanimously.

### **Old Business**

**Tree removal** – Still uncertain. This is a concern of neighborliness to the neighbors adjacent to the FLC parsonage. Deb Kenny to look into this.

**Parsonage Work and Sewer Smell** - May need new wax ring on toilet, this was done last week. New wax ring didn't address the issue. Pastor Doug will call and schedule this service call.

**Sacristy Ceiling Damaged** - Terry Sorem to fix in fall. Will work on when he's available to do this. This is water damage that is old, at least since 2016.

**Food Pantry cabinets to be finished update:**

No update.

**South Garage-Update:** Terry Sorem has the materials on hand.

### **Property Repair/Update/Replace**

Repair of caulking on floor to ceiling stained glass windows – Still waiting on replacement of lights to use scaffolding in one go.

Replacement of lights in sanctuary that light up Altar – **Quote Obtained from Kevin O’Dell Electric Inc. - in “Quotes” folder.** (\$865 w/o scaffolding rental)

Replacement of incandescent to LED lights outside of choir loft –

Repair/replace tower lights – **Quote Obtained from Kevin O’Dell** (\$1,330 – *includes* bucket truck rate but not cost of repairing landscaping that may be damaged by the bucket truck)

Repair/replace trinity sign on tower –

Repair light on South side of metal FLC sign – **Quote Obtained from Kevin O’Dell** (\$560)

Repair/update lighted sign on Dakota Ave to LED –

Proposal to make double wide drive on South to Exit only with left and right turn lanes. Drive North of the double wide to be made into entrance only. Signage to indicate same for these locations.

- Chad made a motion for the outside work (the tower lights and the metal FLC sign for \$1,330 and \$560 respectively). Brandon seconded the motion. The ayes carry the motion unanimously. Sue Hunter to contact O’Dell Electric. Decision for the inside work (for the inside lights for \$865) to be tabled for next month.

- o Chad asked Mike Hunter about the painting of the parking lot lines. Mike discussed the planning of the entrance/exit flow to FLC’s parking lot.

### **Nursing Home status**

Turn area of drive – supposed to be done before winter, but no visible progress on this part of the project. Additionally, there is concern about the slope of the concrete to the drain, which currently can’t drain with the normal flow of gravity. Deb Kenny will follow up on these concerns.

### **Security Cameras –**

One camera to be installed on garage. Need electric junction box to unit for it to function.

### **Picnic/Food/Band Shelter –**

Need to see plan and estimated costs. Boy Scouts may be able to have this as an Eagle project.

### **Sound cabinet has been modified for new sound board**

Need back of cabinet to be made removable.

Pine needs to be stained to match oak wood.

Hinges to be put on back of cabinet.

### **New Business**

**Church and parsonage had furnace checks and filters:** good by Pastor Doug.

### **Correspondences received:**

- Thank you for Pastor Doug for the Baptism of Britton and Brielle.

- Campus ministry request for \$1,000 for the UNL Lutheran Center. Can be spread out over 2 years: \$500 in 2020 and \$500 in 2021.

- Chad made a motion to put this in the budget. The ayes carried the motion unanimously.

- South Sioux High School After-Prom Committee is soliciting donations in the form of door prizes.

- A message to First Lutheran Church’s Facebook page by Pat Krontz on September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2019 regarding their appreciation for Pastor Doug

## Synod conflict update:

**What's next?** The vote held today was **60 for "yes" and 73 for "no"** as to the Synod's recommendations, the result of which is that the recommendations are *rejected*, and *Pastor Doug is to stay*. A consultant will need to be brought in, Chad Cain anticipates that Bill Biggs, the Synod attorney, will contact Chad Cain or Pastor Doug regarding this. Deb Kenny mentioned about the need to move forward and for the Council to not gloat about the perceived victory. Pastor Doug said this evidenced a sharp divide in the congregation.

**Discuss attendance trends** – September trends are 557 showed up on Sundays, this is up from July and August, but down from June. 2 baptisms, 1 death, 1 transfer out. Net of 0 (lost 2, gained 2)

**Mission Support Financial Reports and Status** – Pastor Doug delivered the treasurer's report. Brandon's motion to accept the treasurer's report, Judy seconded it. They ayes carried the motion.

## Open for other new business:

- FLCSSC.org domain to be moved from Pastor Doug's name over to First Lutheran Church's name.
- Yahoo website that FLC wasn't using has been closed and now is hosted under Bluehost for \$3.95/month.
- Judy asked about the lack of a fire alarm and fire suppression system – FLC's building doesn't have this but is grandfathered in due to the age of the building (early 1960s). Also mentioned were Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) - FLC doesn't have these. FLC *does* have several fire extinguishers around the church which are inspected annually.

Deb made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Judy seconded. The ayes carry it, with only Chad Cain opposed.

Close in Prayer

The next FLC Council meeting will be on: Sunday, November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

## Thank You

**Marla Bianchini**-Thank you to Ken and Lynnelle Conley for helping me to bring up all of the Christmas decorations from the basement. It was very much appreciated!

**Kris Dill**-On behalf of the Craft/Vendor fair crew, we thank everyone who helped bake all those wonderful cakes, cookies, breads, and pies. We had such a successful bake sale at our craft fair, and it's all because of you. If you know anyone who would like to have a spot next year, just let us know. Next's year craft/vendor fair will be on Saturday, November 7, 2020. I can't wait to see what we get next year!

**First Lutheran Food Pantry**-Thank you to Circle I and Bobier Studio for their donations of food. Seventy-one food boxes were distributed in October.

**Jackie Gierman**-Thank you to the following for providing candy and postage and packing candy for our service personnel: Kathy Anders, Betty Bass, Kris Bergstrom, Jan Durant, Jo Ann Garvey, Donna Krantz, Lee Mathiason, Mary Wolf and Carol Zastrow.. We sent three packages.

## Giving Tree

The Giving Tree is in the church entryway. On the tree are names of underprivileged children and names of seniors, as well as names of less fortunate children from our own congregation. Please pick a name from the tree and give a gift to a child or senior this year! Gift suggestions are listed on each tag. Presents need to be returned to the church no later than **Sunday, December 8**. Please attach the name tag to your presents. All gifts **must** be unwrapped in gift bags.

# Financial Reports

## Treasurer's Report - October 2019

Beginning General Fund Balance: \$ - 15,908.45

### Receipts:

Contributions	\$11,041.41
Misc. Income	125.00
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$11,166.41</b>

### Expenses:

Pastor's salary	\$ 3,583.34
Pastor's allowances / exp.	3,989.18
Auxiliary staff salaries	4,312.08
Payroll Taxes	312.05
Parsonage Payment/Utilities	801.63
Parsonage exp.	267.46
Utilities	649.33
Grounds Maint.	52.00
Building Maint.	563.44
Janitorial Supplies	208.54
Office Expenses	401.49
Parish	752.08
Youth	39.00
Christian Ed.	24.97
Food Bank	400.00
Insurance	1,280.25
Benevolence	990.00
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$18,626.84</b>

Transfer to Capital Improvement: \$ 100.00

Ending General Fund Balance: \$ -23,468.88

## October Attendance & General Fund Receipts

October 6	98	\$ 2,821.90
October 13	75	\$ 1,620.00
October 20	167	\$ 3,199.73
October 27	95	\$ 1,129.78
Online/Electronic Giving		\$ 2,270.00

## Living Nativity

We are looking for volunteers for our Living Nativity on December 14 from 5:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m., with dinner following. I currently need 7 people. If anyone can provide a cow or some sheep please let me know. Thank you. 712-389-4492.



—Joey Hartshorn

## Lifetouch

In 2020, First Lutheran will be celebrating 100 years as a congregation. This is a great time to get our picture directory updated. Lifetouch will be here in February to take pictures for the directory. The dates and times are February 4 and 5 from 1:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. Put it on your calendar now.

If you cannot be here, we can have up to 10 homebound pictures submitted for free. Those that are homebound will be able to submit their own pictures for the directory. Anyone else will need to pay a \$10 fee to submit their own photos.

There is a new format available for our directory this year. It is a smaller format, but the picture size will still be the same. The new directory size is 5.5" x 8.5". This new format will also allow for updates at no cost, as long as we get 25 or more photos taken for the update. We will also get an online version that will be password protected



and can be accessed through a link on our website.

Look for more information on how to reserve your spot for your photograph to be taken. We want as many people as possible to participate and be in the directory. Pictures, along with names, are the best way to make a name and face connection, just like wearing name tags allows us to put a face to the name while we are in worship.

Additional benefits:

Bring in some food for the pantry and receive a discount.

A 20% discount for all Senior/Military/1<sup>st</sup> Responders

\$10 off for FLC booking early

All members will receive a complimentary 8x10

Shutterfly store front. For the next year, First Lutheran will earn 8% of any purchases done at Shutterfly at: <http://flcsc.shutterflystorefront.com/> (don't worry, we will keep sending out the link and it will be on our website too.)

New beginnings, new pictures, new directory and 100 years of doing ministry. What a great year 2020 promises to be.

## Let Us Sing for You!

If you wish to have carolers come to your home please let us know, call the office and get on our list! We would love to visit you with song and fellowship. Caroling is on December 21st. We hope to visit you!

## Farewell

To the congregation of First Lutheran Church – After prayer and discussion, I have accepted another calling in Papillion as a Worship Leader for Contemporary Services, and on November 18, I submitted my resignation to the executive council. I will remain in the service of First Lutheran

Church until the 29<sup>th</sup> of December, fulfilling all expectations through the Christmas Season.

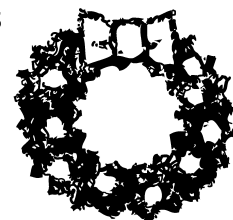
I pray for the success of FLC in all its endeavors. With prayer and hope, my desire is that the conflict plaguing FLC will cease. You have an amazing church and your future could be nothing short of fantastic. I beg you all to remember that true worship and living a real Christ-like life should be the focus and goal for every member. I write to everyone of you with love and hope for the future. Thank you for allowing me to worship with you for the last 2 1/2 years; it has been a blessing and has taught me much. You will remain in my prayers. Smile often, praise joyfully, practice the pause, live generously, do good, be kind, forgive often, love purely, sprinkle hope like confetti and live life with grace.

Joey Hartshorn

## Celebrate the Birth of Christ!

It's The Most Wonderful Time Of The Year!

First Lutheran Church and various churches in the South Sioux City and Sioux City area will be involved in our concert, a "Season of Carols" on December 15. Our program will begin at 4:00 p.m. and our fellowship team will be providing a ham dinner immediately after. We hope you can attend and celebrate Christmas with us through song, joy and fellowship. "For unto us a child is born."



Please sign up with the number of guests so we can ensure we have plenty of food. This invitation is open to all of FLC, your family, friends and the community. Come celebrate Christmas with your choir!

## Office Closed

The office will be closed Wednesday, December 25 in observance of Christmas and Wednesday, January 1 in observance of New Year's Day.

## **Acolytes Needed**

We need acolytes at each of the Christmas Eve services on December 24. If your child is available, please contact the office.

## **The Purpose of Christmas**

As we enter the Advent season, which starts Sunday December 1, we will explore together *The Purpose of Christmas*.

During the four Sundays of Advent, there will be a sermon series based upon Pastor Rick Warren's book, *The Purpose of Christmas*.

Books are available to read, follow along, to give away, to invite others to hear the Gospel in Christmas.

Thirty books have been purchased.

The books are free, just like we have done in the past. If you would like to offset the cost of these books, the suggested donation is \$12.00.

DO NOT let cost stop you from getting your copy. If you cannot afford one, just take it anyway.

If you would like to cover the cost for someone else, just pay extra.

This will be a great time as we read together and hear God's Word, the Son, come to us through the Holy Spirit.

May you experience the Emmanuel this Advent and Christmas.

## **Lutheran World Relief**

A special thanks to Randy Rahn and Ottie Gierman, who delivered the quilts and kits for Lutheran World Relief to St. John Lutheran Church In Norfolk on Monday, November 4.

A huge thanks to everyone who helped with kits, supplies for kits and monies, and to everyone who helped put the kits together and pack them on God's Work, Our Hands Sunday.

We shipped 59 school backpack kits, 24 quilts, 11 baby care kits, 33 personal care kits, five fabric kits and one box of soap with 124 bars.

## **UNL Campus Ministry**

All Nebraska Synod congregations have been asked to participate in giving towards a new campus ministry facility at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

At the October council meeting, a motion was made to give \$500 towards this in 2020 and 2021.

We would need to budget for this, unless there are people that would like to help contribute towards this now.

If you want to give specifically towards this worthwhile cause, please indicate so on your checks or in online giving.

## **Photos Needed**

We are putting together First Lutheran's 100 years in pictures that we will celebrate in the fall of 2020. If you have any pictures you would like us to include, please make copies (pictures won't be returned). Make sure to include the year, event and names of people. Please also include your name and phone number so we can contact you with any questions. Pictures can be given to Kathy Anders, Marla Bianchini, Judy Blessing the church office. Please have all pictures turned in by December 30.

## **The Book of Luke**

Here is a great way to prepare for Christmas:

The book of Luke has 24 Chapters.

If you were to read a chapter of Luke each day during December, you will be able to complete all of Luke before Christmas.

What an opportunity to prepare for Christmas, by reading the Gospel of Luke.

Start on December 1 with Luke Chapter 1 and finish the book on Christmas Eve.

Happy reading, and may you experience the Holy Spirit this Advent season.

Peace

Pr. Doug

## Christmas Eve 2019

With the coming of Christ, God gave us the new beginning that we so desperately needed.

We can celebrate that new beginning every Sunday as we celebrate Christ's resurrection. However, Christmas is very special in what God gives us, Emmanuel (God with us). With that, this year we will be doing something a little bit different. We will have three opportunities for Christmas Eve worship. Yes, you saw that right, three opportunities. Worship and Music Team wanted to be able to provide as many worship times and styles as possible for the disciples of Christ.

Christmas Eve Worship Times and Styles:

### December 24<sup>th</sup> 5:00 p.m.

This will be a contemporary style of worship, as we have had the last two years. It will be led by our band and we will have a candlelight worship time. For those with little ones, and you want to get them in bed in time for the next morning, this is a good opportunity for you. We will look forward to seeing you then.

### December 24<sup>th</sup> 7:00 p.m.

This will be an organ led traditional based worship. Our worship will follow portions of the Lutheran Book of Worship setting two. For those who prefer the "traditional" sounds of the organ and the more "formal" Lutheran Book of Worship setting, this is the option for you. If you do not want to be out late at this time of year but still want this type of worship, we will see you then.

### December 24<sup>th</sup> 11:00 p.m.

This will be an organ led traditional based worship. Our worship will follow portions of the Lu-

theran Book of Worship setting two. For those who prefer the "traditional" sounds of the organ and the more "formal" Lutheran Book of Worship setting, this is the option for you. If you like to usher in Christmas while in the sanctuary, then this is the time for you. We will see you at this worship.

Peace and blessing during our Advent season.

Looking forward to seeing you during Advent and Christmas.

Pastor Doug

## Lights, Anyone?

Thank you for your wonderful generosity during our fellowship events this year. If you had not been part of fellowship events, then the generous donations could not happen. It is because you choose to be part of fellowship, which is what Jesus did often, that you had the opportunity to serve. It is in our fellowship time we get to grow in knowing each other. It is in fellowship that we learn to love one another as Jesus first loved us.

Lights.... I am sure at this point, you have to be asking what about the title? Well, it comes to two points. Fellowship points to our light into the world, Jesus. Fellowship gave you the opportunity to donate. Because of all the generous donations, the fellowship team was able to purchase new lights for the fellowship hall and the lounge. All lights are LED, as were the previous ones, but they are sunlight in color and a whopping 1,500 lumens. That is bright. Not as bright as our Light into this world, but bright indeed.

Thank you in the name of Christ our Lord, our Light, Jesus.

## Seeking the Spirit Within

Seeking the Spirit Within

April 16-17, 2020

St. Benedict Retreat Center, Schuyler, NE.

*"Seeking the Spirit Within* is the Nebraska Synod's response to an ever-increasing need for

qualified individuals to help provide spiritual direction and lead spiritual retreats."

If you are interested in learning more about Spiritual Directors, you are invited to attend this retreat to discern and learn about spiritual direction. In the words of St. Theresa of Avila:

"although many are called few are chosen." Have you been chosen?

You can learn more about it on the Synod web site.

<https://nebraskasynod.org/learn/resources/discernment/spiritualdirection/stsw.html>

## Christmas Caroling



Let's go CAROLING!! If you are interested in caroling please sign up and join us! We would love to have you! Caroling is on Saturday the 21st from 3-8 p.m. We would love to reach as many homes that we possibly can. Not only our

shut-ins but also whomever would like carolers that day! We hope you join us for a day of spreading joy with music.

## There is Joy in Hardship

**Kris Dill**

I'm sure you did exactly what I did when this title came to me. "Say what?"

You go through life skipping along and then out of nowhere "the sky is falling!" Am I right? Well, here is the amazing thing about that. The sky isn't really falling. WHAT??!! That's right, Chicken Little, we are all safe, really. I know it doesn't feel like it when it's happening. Maybe it's happening right now, and you feel lost. Who will save you?

God tells us in James 1:2-4 (Voice translation)

*2-4 Don't run from tests and hardships, brothers and sisters. As difficult as they are, you will ultimately find joy in them; if you embrace them, your faith will blossom under pressure and teach you true patience as you endure. And true patience brought on by endurance will equip you to com-*

*plete the long journey and cross the finish line—mature, complete, and wanting nothing. 5 If you don't have all the wisdom needed for this journey, then all you have to do is ask God for it; and God will grant all that you need. He gives lavishly and never scolds you for asking.*

So where is the joy in hardship? Hardship allows us to rely on God. There are lessons to be learned. I know it's hard to see in the midst of it all. Maybe you are about to lose your home, lost a job, or can't make ends meet. God will provide if you ask. God sends us help in unexpected ways when you ask for help. Trust that God will answer your cries, and God will.

A good friend gave me sound advice one morning. You see, sometimes my sky falls, and I just don't want to get out of bed. During one of those times I was responding to a friend's text, telling her I wasn't even out of bed yet. She then texted me as sternly as a text can be and said, "Get up, get out of bed. I'm serious!" I'm glad I did. I started my day, and by night fall, I was more at peace. I still thought my sky was falling, but I don't have to hold it up, God did.

God will send what I need, when I need it. Yes, even in the form of a text. I have to trust, and so do you. You may not see the joy right away, but when you look back, and you will look back, you will see God's love and assistance. The joy can come through friends, new locations, new jobs and so many different ways. Will it be easy? No. Will you see change overnight? No. So, get out of bed and stop trying to fix it alone. Turn to God, ask and you will receive what you need for that moment. Keep asking, and you will find the joy.

Thank you, God for putting people in our lives, who you sent to work on our behalf.

## Mess

I'm going to be a mess today.

Not by any effort, but simply because I'm a mess.

I will be fragile today, small and incomplete.

I'll be broken a bit, not completely,  
 but enough. Damaged. Bent.  
 And you will love me.  
 I'm going to be no better  
 than the total failure I despise,  
 no more deserving than the worst of them.  
 And you will love me.  
 But then, I will be no less worthy  
 than the Virgin Mary  
 and you will love me.  
 Because your love has nothing to do with my de-  
 serving,  
 but your infinite goodness,  
 your infinite goodness,  
 your infinite goodness.

Steve Garnaas-Holmes  
*Unfolding Light*  
[www.unfoldinglight.net](http://www.unfoldinglight.net)

## December Flower Chart



**December 1 (Altar)** Given by Janell Sila in honor of her mom's 88th birthday on December 3.

**December 8 (Altar)** Given by Bill and Betty Bass in memory of their parents: Curly & Elma Bass and Clyde & Millie Wetrosky.

**December 15 (Altar)** Given by Mike, Sue and Kandy Hunter in honor of Kris Hunter's birthday.

**December 22 (Altar)** Given by Terry and Deb Kenny in honor of First Lutheran members.

**December 24 (Altar)** Given by Don and Lucy Gagnon.

**December 29 (Altar)** Given by Cathie Galvin in honor of her loved ones.



**DECEMBER 4—ADVENT WORSHIP @ 6:00**

**DECEMBER 8—FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST @ 9:30**

**DECEMBER 11—ADVENT WORSHIP @ 6:00**

**DECEMBER 13—SOUP KITCHEN**

**DECEMBER 14—LIVING NATIVITY from 5:00-7:00**

**DECEMBER 15—CHOIR PROGRAM @ 4:00 FOLLOWED BY FELLOWSHIP MEAL**

**DECEMBER 18—ADVENT WORSHIP @ 6:00**

**DECEMBER 21—CHRISTMAS CAROLING @ 3:00**

**DECEMBER 22—CONFIRMATION CLASS @ 11:30**

**DECEMBER 24—CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP @ 5:00 P.M., 7:00 P.M. and 11:00 P.M.**

**DECEMBER 25—OFFICE CLOSED**

**JANUARY 1—OFFICE CLOSED**

**JANUARY 1—FELLOWSHIP GAME DAY from 2:00-4:00**

**JANUARY 7—WOMEN OF THE ELCA GENERAL MEETING @ 7:00**

**JANUARY 26—CONFIRMATION CLASS @ 11:30**

**FEBRUARY 4—LIFETOUCH PHOTO SESSIONS from 1-8**

**FEBRUARY 5—LIFETOUCH PHOTO SESSIONS from 1-8**

**FEBRUARY 23—CONFIRMATION CLASS @ 11:30**

**FEBRUARY 26—ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP @ 12:00 & 7:00**

**MARCH 22—CONFIRMATION CLASS @ 11:30**

## Parking Lot

Our parking lot has been re-striped just ahead of the first major snow. Council discussed and asked for changes with better signage for entry and exit. High volume traffic times like Sundays, Special Events, Holidays, Weddings and Funerals can create traffic confusion. The single lane entry from Dakota Avenue to our large parking lot is now marked with an "Entry" sign and arrows on the concrete pointing in to the parking lot. The double lanes connecting to Dakota Avenue south of the single entry are marked with "Exit" signs and double arrows on the concrete pointing out to Dakota Avenue indicating keep to the left to go North on the Avenue and keep to the right to go South on the Avenue.

—Mike Hunter

## Support, "Here Am I; Send Me!" (continued from page 3)

God was with Moses and Moses with God. God gave Moses all sorts of strengths. Even in his strength, he could not do it alone. The Israelites needed God and God chose Moses to help them. The Israelites looked to Moses to defeat their enemy. The Israelites fought and would win, as Moses kept his hands up. The enemy was kept at bay. The enemy could not win as long as the Israelites and Moses worked together, through the power of God.

The enemy takes on many forms, but behind the enemy is the one true enemy, the devil himself. The devil seeks for us to turn from God and sin and this we are divided. To fight against the devil, we must be united. Now is the time to be united. We must stand together, holding each other up in continual prayer. We must support each other, no matter what.

### Remember the words of Jesus

#### Luke 21:9-19

<sup>9</sup> "When you hear of wars and insurrections, do not be terrified; for these things must take place

first, but the end will not follow immediately."<sup>10</sup> Then he said to them, "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; <sup>11</sup> there will be great earthquakes, and in various places famines and plagues; and there will be dreadful portents and great signs from heaven.

<sup>12</sup> "But before all this occurs, they will arrest you and persecute you; they will hand you over to synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors because of my name. <sup>13</sup> This will give you an opportunity to testify. <sup>14</sup> So make up your minds not to prepare your defense in advance; <sup>15</sup> for I will give you words and a wisdom that none of your opponents will be able to withstand or contradict. <sup>16</sup> You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, by relatives and friends; and they will put some of you to death. <sup>17</sup> You will be hated by all because of my name. <sup>18</sup> But not a hair of your head will perish. <sup>19</sup> By your endurance you will gain your souls.

Standing up in the name of Jesus does not promise no pain, but it does promise that not a hair on your head will perish. We will each be given the words we need, when we need. All we need to do is stand up and listen, and the words will come.

Jesus comes into the world, Immanuel (God with Us) but also God for us. We are called to be witnesses to the Word, Jesus the Christ. In our witness, we are called to support all of God's people. We are called to stand up for the sake of the gospel, and Jesus will be with us the end of the ages.

Let us stand up for the gospel.

Let us support each other.

Let us love one another.

Let us say, "Here am I; send me!" (Isaiah 6:8)

The theme verse for 2020, in our 100<sup>th</sup> year as a congregation, will be "Here am I; send me!"

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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY																																																	
<b>1</b> 8:15am Worship 9:30am Sunday School 9:30am Prayer Gathering 10:30am Worship	<b>2</b> 6:30pm Boy Scouts	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> 5:00pm Worship & Music Meeting 6:00pm Worship 7:00pm Choir 8:00pm Spirit Connection Practice	<b>5</b> 8:00pm Breakfast w/the Pastors 2:00pm Food Bank 6:30pm Fellowship Meeting	<b>6</b> 8:30am TOPS	<b>7</b>																																																	
<b>8 Holy Communion</b> 8:15am Worship 9:30am Sunday School 9:30am Fellowship Breakfast 9:30am Prayer Gathering 10:30am Worship 5:00pm Bells/Choir/Band Christmas Party	<b>9</b> 6:30pm Boy Scouts	<b>10</b> 9:15am Circle II	<b>11</b> 6:00pm Worship 7:00pm Choir 8:00pm Spirit Connection Practice	<b>12</b> 8:00am Breakfast w/the Pastors 7:00pm Lydia Group	<b>13 Soup Kitchen</b> 8:30am TOPS	<b>14</b> 5:00-7:00pm Living Nativity																																																	
<b>15</b> 8:15am Worship 9:30am Sunday School 9:30am Prayer Gathering 10:30am Worship 11:30am Church Council Meeting 4:00pm Choir Program 5:00pm Fellowship Dinner	<b>16</b> 11:30am Circle I 6:30pm Boy Scouts	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> 6:00pm Worship 7:00pm Choir 8:00pm Spirit Connection Practice	<b>19</b> 8:00am Breakfast w/the Pastors 2:00pm Food Bank 7:00pm Dakota County Amateur Radio Club  <b>Newsletter Deadline</b>	<b>20</b> 8:30am TOPS	<b>21</b> 3:00pm Christmas Caroling																																																	
<b>22 Holy Communion</b> 8:15am Worship 9:30am Sunday School 9:30am Prayer Gathering 10:30am Worship 11:30am Confirmation Class 6:00pm Christmas Sing-Along	<b>23</b> 6:30pm Boy Scouts	<b>24 Christmas Eve Holy Communion</b> 5:00pm Worship 7:00pm Worship 11:00pm Worship	<b>25 Christmas Day</b>  <b>Office Closed</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> 8:30am TOPS	<b>28</b>																																																	
<b>29</b> 8:15am Worship 9:30am Sunday School 9:30am Prayer Gathering 10:30am Worship	<b>30</b> 6:30pm Boy Scouts	<b>31 New Year's Eve</b>			<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="7">January 2020</th> </tr> <tr> <th>S</th> <th>M</th> <th>T</th> <th>W</th> <th>T</th> <th>F</th> <th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td>6</td> <td>7</td> <td>8</td> <td>9</td> <td>10</td> <td>11</td> </tr> <tr> <td>12</td> <td>13</td> <td>14</td> <td>15</td> <td>16</td> <td>17</td> <td>18</td> </tr> <tr> <td>19</td> <td>20</td> <td>21</td> <td>22</td> <td>23</td> <td>24</td> <td>25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>26</td> <td>27</td> <td>28</td> <td>29</td> <td>30</td> <td>31</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	January 2020							S	M	T	W	T	F	S				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31		
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# Thanks to our December Volunteers

<u>December 1</u>	<u>December 8</u>	<u>December 15</u>	<u>December 22</u>	<u>December 29</u>
<u>First Sunday of Advent</u>	<u>Second Sunday of Advent</u>	<u>Third Sunday of Advent</u>	<u>Fourth Sunday of Advent</u>	<u>First Sunday of Christmas</u>
<b><u>Lectors:</u></b> 8:15 am George Weiland 10:30 am Janet Tondreau	<b><u>Lectors:</u></b> 8:15 am Mike Hunter 10:30 am Sue Hunter	<b><u>Lectors:</u></b> 8:15 am Mike Hunter 10:30 am Pam Knudsen	<b><u>Lectors:</u></b> 8:15 am Ellen Prescott 10:30 am Kathy Blair	<b><u>Lectors:</u></b> 8:15 am Mike Hunter 10:30 am Sue Hunter
<b><u>Cantor:</u></b> 8:15 am Linda Johansen	<b><u>Cantor:</u></b> 8:15 am Chris Knudsen	<b><u>Cantor:</u></b> 8:15 am Tim Niemeyer	<b><u>Cantor:</u></b> 8:15 am Brandon Trautwein	<b><u>Cantor:</u></b> 8:15 am Joey Hartshorn
<b><u>AV Operators:</u></b> 8:15 am Trevor Brass 10:30 am Mike Hunter	<b><u>AV Operators:</u></b> 8:15 am Scott Koeppe 10:30 am Jenni Durant	<b><u>AV Operators:</u></b> 8:15 am Janell Sila 10:30 am Trevor Brass	<b><u>AV Operators:</u></b> 8:15 am Mike Hunter 10:30 am Janell Sila	<b><u>AV Operators:</u></b> 8:15 am Janell Sila 10:30 am Jenni Durant
<b><u>Acolytes:</u></b> 8:15 am Brooklyn Sorem  10:30 am Julie Geveshausen Justin Lake	<b><u>Acolytes:</u></b> 8:15 am Jacob Gill  10:30 am Tyrese Gill	<b><u>Acolytes:</u></b> 8:15 am Katelyn Lieber  10:30 am Brooklyn Sorem	<b><u>Acolytes:</u></b> 8:15 am Julie Geveshausen  10:30 am Jacob Gill Tayden Kinnaman	<b><u>Acolytes:</u></b> 8:15 am Tyrese Gill  10:30 am Katelyn Lieber
<b><u>Ushers:</u></b> 8:15 am Marla Bianchini Jarrod Knudsen  10:30 am	<b><u>Ushers:</u></b> 8:15 am Marla Bianchini Jarrod Knudsen  10:30 am	<b><u>Ushers:</u></b> 8:15 am Marla Bianchini Jarrod Knudsen  10:30 am	<b><u>Ushers:</u></b> 8:15 am Marla Bianchini Jarrod Knudsen  10:30 am	<b><u>Ushers:</u></b> 8:15 am Marla Bianchini Jarrod Knudsen  10:30 am
<b><u>Altar Care:</u></b>	<b><u>Altar Care:</u></b>	<b><u>Altar Care:</u></b>	<b><u>Altar Care:</u></b>	<b><u>Altar Care:</u></b>