

First Lutheran Church
3601 Dakota Ave
South Sioux City, NE 68776

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First Lutheran Church

February 2024



God's Work. Our Hands.

INSIDE

- February 2024 calendar
- Message from Pastor Patti
- Birthdays
- Anniversaries
- 2024 Lenten Journey
- Prayer Chain

Sign up for electronic giving at:

<http://giving.flcssc.org>

Download the EasyTithe app from the app stores.

Text give at:

402-557-0882



The deadline for the March Newsletter is February 15.

CHURCH COUNCIL (*Executive Council)

*President	Bart Gotch 712/259-2001
*Vice-President	Bob Barto 712/490-1676
*Treasurer	Jim Hansen 402/404-4920
*Secretary	Scott Koeppel 712/389-2944
Branden Lieber	712/259-4312
Chris Lofgren	402/580-6161
Randy Rahn	928/551-2464
Ray Schleusener	712/898-5464
Terry Sorem	712/490-9271
Pastor Patti Meyer	623/910-7859

PONDERINGS FROM PASTOR PATTI

Greetings and Grace to you all.

We just came through what I often call the longest month of the year (it at least feels like it this year with all the snow activity). And we enter into the shortest month of the year (one day longer this year since it's leap year). But even though it's the shortest month, we have major things to focus on this month.

First...we have the Asset Mapping sessions scheduled for Sunday, February 4 following worship; Saturday, February 10 at 10:00 a.m.; and Sunday, February 11 following worship.

Asset Mapping is all about identifying assets. But the process of this identification includes scripture deep-diving and communication. In our sessions we will look at scripture and let that scripture guide us into conversations about who we are and what we have to offer to the mission of First Lutheran Church. It is important that all voices participate in this project...to identify our mission more clearly, and

to identify what each of us might be able to "be" in and for that mission. Please sign up to study and explore together.

All voices are needed...please sign up for one of these sessions. You can either sign up on one of the sheets at the Welcome Desk or you can email me prdmeyer@gmail.com or call me 623/910-7859.

The second thing is that Lent is just around the corner. Ash Wednesday is February 14 already. We will gather that afternoon to begin the Lent season with a tradition of marking ashes and beginning our Lenten spiritual practices. I will have some heart ornaments on a tree in the Welcome Area for you to take home with you that afternoon. Each heart will have a Bible passage marked on it. This can be a Lenten focus passage for you to read as a devotion (daily or weekly) or that you can read as a family throughout your Lenten journey. I also have a scavenger hunt for you to work on throughout the Lenten season and for everyone who turns in a completed scavenger hunt, there will be a surprise for them.

Our focus in scripture for midweek worship will be from the Synod's "Go and for Lent" series. The stories for this series will be

- Week 1: Jesus with the Woman at the Well
- Week 2: Jesus with Zacchaeus
- Week 3: Jesus' story about the Good Samaritan
- Week 4: Observations from the Temple – Turning Over the Tables and/or Giving 2 Coins
- Week 5: The Road to Emmaus

And our series for Sunday mornings will be a focus on the life and faith of one of Jesus' most famous disciples. In Peter we see a person who is both steadfast and unsteady, a dear friend and a betrayer, a follower and a wanderer. In Peter, we often see ourselves. By following Peter's

(continued on next page)

(Pastor Patti's Ponderings continued)

journey, we watch the story of Jesus unfold through the eyes of a very normal human trying to figure it all out – just like us.

In this series, we want to affirm that faith is a constant journey of steadfast pursuit, one that ebbs and flows. We want to affirm that wandering is exploration, not necessarily distance from God. We want to affirm the ways Peter keeps going: he drops his nets, he walks on water, he runs to the empty tomb, he swims to the shore to meet the risen Christ. He keeps searching and yearning, and loving, even after missteps or mistakes. Ultimately, in Peter's story, we are reminded that God loves imperfect people – in fact, time and again, that's precisely who God claims and calls.

And that is what the whole season of Lent is about...recognizing our imperfectness, turning our lives to God, and being ready to be claimed and loved, becoming a disciple for Christ.

Pastor Patti

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Happy February – and it's Leap Year!

The Church annual meeting was held and elected six members along with the current three members which comprise of (alphabetically): Bob Barto, Jim Hansen, Scott Koepp, Brandon Lieber, Chris Lofgren, Randy Rahn, Ray Schleusener, Terry Sorem and myself.

I look forward to working with Pastor Patti, the Council and our membership for the benefit of First Lutheran Church. On behalf of the Council, we invite you to attend any or all of our Council meetings.

I would like us to strive to be the Welcome Place. – Bart Gotch

*Life is our first gift,
Love is our second gift,
And understanding the third.*

WORSHIP AT FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

- February 4 5th Sunday after Epiphany
First Lesson: Isaiah 40:21-31
Second Lesson: 1 Cor. 9:16-23
Gospel: Mark 1:29-39
- February 11 Transfiguration of Our Lord
First Lesson: 2 Kings 2:1-12
Second Lesson: 2 Cor. 4:3-6
Gospel: Mark 9:2-9
- February 18 1st Sunday in Lent
First Lesson: Genesis 9:8-17
Second Lesson: 1 Peter 3:18-22
Gospel: Mark 1:9-15
- February 25 2nd Sunday in Lent
First Lesson: Gen. 17:1-7, 15-16
Second Lesson: Romans 4:13-25
Gospel: Mark 8:31-38

LECTORS

- February 4 Katelyn Lieber
- February 11 Brooklyn Sorem
- February 18 Chris Lofgren
- February 25 Tanner Koepp

If you would like to lector but haven't been contacted, please call Mary Wolf at 402/494-4697.

DECEMBER ATTENDANCE

December 3	52
December 10	56
December 17	64
December 24 a.m.	58
December 24 p.m.	126
December 31	40

SYMPATHY

We extend our sympathy and heartfelt prayers to Gary Hayes on the loss of his sister, Judy Kendell, who passed away on January 7.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

February 1	Zachery Kvidera
February 4	Kerri Rahn
February 5	Drew Benson
February 7	Jackie Gierman
February 7	Sadie Krontz
February 8	Linda Swanson
February 9	Jessica Baker
February 9	Rita Legg
February 11	Dale Kai
February 11	Linda Kendra
February 11	Kathy Muirhead
February 12	Brandi Johnson
February 14	Ruthie Ailts
February 21	Rita Todd
February 22	Tanner Koepp
February 24	Terri Gotch
February 24	Jeff Todd
February 27	Chris Knudsen
February 27	Angela Sorem

YOUTH BIRTHDAYS

February 27	Carli Lake
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ANNIVERSARIES

February 29	Rob Bianchini and Scott Koepsell
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If we have missed any birthday or anniversary, please let us know.

CIRCLE I

We had a nice Christmas meeting with a lunch. We had no meeting in January due to the weather. We will meet on February 19 at 2:00 p.m. Feel free to come and visit for dessert, fellowship and Bible study.

LYDIA GROUP

Our next meeting is scheduled for February 8 at 6:30 p.m. Please join us!

WELCA EXECUTIVE BOARD will meet February 26 at 7:00 p.m.

THANK YOU

We thank the following First Lutheran Church Council members whose terms recently ended: Mike Hunter, Tayden Kinnaman, Jarrod Knudsen and Jennifer Lieber. Their dedication to First Lutheran Church is deeply appreciated.

THANK YOU

With much gratitude we thank the women of Altar Care, Sandy Larson and Carol Zastrow, for all their work in preparing the church each week for worship. Great job!

THANK YOU

To: My First Lutheran Family,
I want to thank you for the lovely tray of fruit and the prayer book which Jackie and Ottie Gierman delivered to me yesterday. I was so happy to see them, and of course, I will enjoy the lovely fruit and prayer book. I wish you all much health and happiness during this Blessed Season and thereafter in the coming new year.
Sincerely, Cathie Galvin

THANK YOU

Dear Church Friends,
Thank you so much for the generous fruit plate. It was unexpected, undeserved, but deeply appreciated. Special thanks to Jackie and Ottie for delivering it. It will be enjoyed. Blessings for all involved. Christian love, Jane Krogh

THANK YOU for the fruit basket delivered to our family. First Lutheran friends have been so supportive during this time. Let's all remember our Christian beliefs and show the love to everyone at First Lutheran. —Trish and Bob Porter

PRAYER CHAIN

If you have a concern or need for which you would like prayer, please contact Sandy Larson at 402/494-2135 or Mary Wolf at 402/494-4697 or Pastor Patti at 623/910-7859.

2024 LENTEN JOURNEY AT FIRST

Lent is creeping right upon us. February 14 is Ash Wednesday. We will celebrate with worship with communion and the marking of ashes on our foreheads.

There will be hearts (in honor of Valentine's Day and the love of our Lord and Savior) on a tree in the Welcome Area. They each have a scripture verse(s) on them for you to keep as your focus verse for your Lenten journey. Learn it, memorize it, read it together as a family, meditate on it daily or use it in your favorite spiritual practice during the season of Lent.

There will also be a Lenten Scavenger Hunt that you can participate in for your Lenten journey. These will be available in the Welcome Area on the First Sunday of Lent (February 18). When all the boxes have been checked and you have completed the whole hunt, you can turn your paper in and pluck an egg from the tree (during Holy Week).

FOOD BANK OF SIOUXLAND

First Lutheran Church continues to be the gathering place for the Food Bank of Siouxland. The food bank is open the first and third Thursday of each month from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. Besides the food distribution in the afternoon, help is needed from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. when the truck is unloaded.

FOOD PANTRY

Our Church's food pantry is available the second and fourth Wednesday of each month. Hours are from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. and again from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. Donations are always accepted for this project – either in the form of grocery items or monetary. All grocery items must be non-perishable.

“In the coldest February, as in every other month in every other year, the best thing to hold on to in this world is each other.”

– Linda Ellerbee

FEBRUARY – “GO AND HAVE THE CONVERSATION”

If you have been following along with the monthly “Go and” Synod theme this year, January was about finding rest in God, and February is about having the conversations. Conversation is an exchange involving active listening as well as taking turns sharing ideas and stories. It can be easy for us to fall into monologuing, lecturing or tuning out especially when we think we know the answers. As a result, we often avoid having difficult conversations. Faith-filled disciples are called to be honest and engage with each other in Christ-like love.

Questions to ponder on:

- What is your prayer as you consider engaging in a hard conversation?
- When was a time you had a hard conversation?
- What did it feel like? What did you learn from it?
- What is the conversation that you need to *GO* have and with whom?

Prayer: Engaging God, who is not afraid of any conversation, give me the words, wisdom and heart to join in difficult conversations. Amen.

REFOCUS FOR LENT

Give up complaining – focus on gratitude.
Give up harsh judgments – think kind thoughts.
Give up worry – trust God to provide.
Give up discouragement – be full of hope.
Give up bitterness – turn to forgiveness.
Give up hatred – return good for evil.
Give up anger – be more patient.
Give up pettiness – become more mature.
Give up jealousy – pray for trust.
Give up gossiping – control your tongue.
Give up sin – turn to virtue.
Give up giving up – persevere.

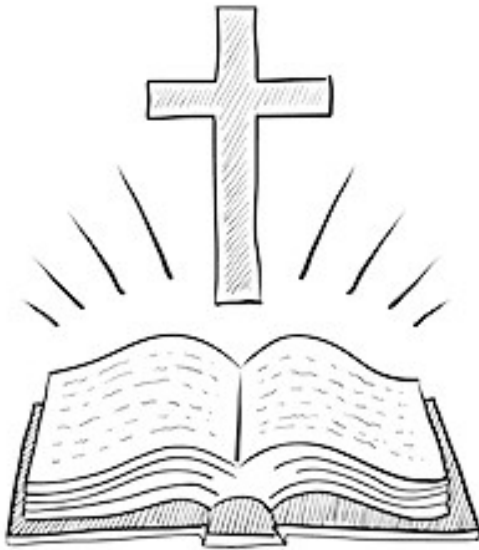
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February 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Food Bank 1:00-2:00 p.m.	2	3
4 Sunday School 9:00 a.m. Worship 9:30 a.m. Asset Mapping 10:30 a.m.	5 Fellowship Mtg. 6:30 p.m.	6	7	8 Lydia 6:30 p.m.	9	10 Asset Mapping 10:00 a.m.
11 Sunday School 9:00 a.m. Worship 9:30 a.m. Asset Mapping 10:30 a.m.	12	13	14 Ash Wednesday Food Pantry 9:00-11:00 a.m. 5:00-7:00 p.m. A.W. Worship 5:30 p.m. (Communion)	15 Food Bank 1:00-2:00 p.m.	16	17
18 Sunday School 9:00 a.m. Worship 9:30 a.m. (Communion) Council Mtg. 10:30 a.m.	19 Circle I 2:00 p.m.	20	21 Soup/Rolls 5:00 p.m. Lenten Worship 5:30 p.m. (In Fellowship Hall)	22	23	24
25 Sunday School 9:00 a.m. Worship 9:30 a.m. Confirmation Class 10:30 a.m.	26 WELCA Executive Board Meeting 7:00 p.m.	27	28 Food Pantry 9:00-11:00 a.m. 5:00-7:00 p.m. Soup/Rolls 5:00 p.m. Lenten Worship 5:30 p.m. (In FH)	29		

Ash Wednesday

DIRECTIONS: Find and circle the vocabulary words in the grid.
Look for them in all directions including backwards and diagonally.



ABSTAIN, ALMSGIVING, ASH WEDNESDAY, ASHES, BLESS, CHRISTIAN, CHURCH, CROSS, DESERT,
DUST, EASTER, FASTING, FOREHEAD, FORTY DAYS, JESUS, LENT, MASS, MORTALITY, PALM SUNDAY,
PENITENCE, PRAYER, PURPLE, REPENTANCE, SACRIFICE, SHROVE TUESDAY, TEMPTATION

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