

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

www.flcssc.org
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First Lutheran Church

February 2025



God's Work. Our Hands.

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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 20.

CHURCH COUNCIL (*Executive Council)

*President	Bart Gotch 712/259-2001
*Vice-President	Ellen Prescott 712/333-1503
*Treasurer	Jim Hansen 402/404-4920
*Secretary	Scott Koeppe 712/389-2944
Clint Barrs	712/301-8951
Bob Barto	712/490-1676
Randy Grove	712/203-1365
Carli Lake	Youth Representative
Randy Rahn	928/551-2464
Terry Sorem	712/490-9271
*Pastor Patti Meyer	623/910-7859

PASTOR PATTI'S PONDERINGS

Cultivate Love through Epiphanies ... think ah-ha moments. Epiphanies are about manifestations, enlightenment, bringing light into our darkness. According to the Oxford Dictionary, Manifestation refers to an event, action or thing that is a sign that something exists or is happening.

And so, we look at stories during this Time after Epiphany to learn more about God through Jesus. We will experience miracles, watch on as Jesus is rejected and led to the side of the cliff, and be present in his teachings. We will learn what it means to be a disciple and even how to love; and in all this, we hopefully learn how strong, powerful and abundant God's love and grace is for us.

Our Synodical theme this month is "Cultivating Love through Epiphanies." And so, let's ponder through these weeks on how each story can enlighten us as to how God is at work in our lives and in the lives of the community we live in, here at First and our neighborhood.

And let's take it even a step further than that. And ask, "Am I sharing what I am learning with the rest of my world?"

Are you using some of the Faith Forward tools that I have shared to connect with others in your family ... or friends? Have you shared your faith with anyone lately? Have you used any of the prayer practices that I have introduced to you?

How are we Cultivating Love with one another and with our neighbors?

Can we, in this season of Epiphany, ponder on these stories we hear and challenge ourselves and one another to find new insights and wisdom? And then we can recognize the questions God might be providing and calling us to see and dwell in.

Questions for pondering: How are you sensing God active in your life? Is God calling you to sense and see something in new light? Is God calling this faith community to sense and see something in new light? Are you forever changed as a beloved disciple and Child of God?

In this month of February, we will observe some very special dates: Super Bowl, Valentine's Day and President's Day. Winter continues and maybe we experience the hope that comes as days begin to grow longer and spring starts to come near. How might these observations provide intentional opportunities in your life and in the life of our faith community for conversations, discoveries and epiphanies?

"Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you." (Isa. 60:1)

– Pastor Patti Meyer

THANK YOU to Branden Lieber and Chris Lofgren who recently went off Church Council. We deeply appreciate their time and dedication to First Lutheran Church.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

On behalf of the congregation and Council, I want to thank Pastor Patti for taking the time to meet our members, attend various committees, and lead us in our Sunday services. Pastor goes above and beyond by planning and preparing for our church services from her preparation through bulletins, music, and especially for her ponderings/messages as our spiritual leader. Her services have led our attendance to stabilize and moderately increase.

Thanks to the Church Council for their leadership and stewardship for the good of the church. Thanks to the congregational members for all that they do behind the scenes for the betterment of the church. I enjoy observing the friendly and welcoming atmosphere at First Lutheran Church. Please consider coming and sharing in the coffee gatherings before and after church service.

Being a person who deals with financials, I would be remiss not to mention our financials, 2025 budget and 2026 outlook. Thus far, 2024 has exceeded last year's budget which is great. Our 2025 budget utilized 2024 weekly giving along with a generous contribution of \$12,000 to be utilized for 2025 operating expenses. While that is an amazing gift, the church/congregation will be challenged to increase our weekly giving of \$2,315 to \$2,540 in 2026 to offset that generous gift.

Our congregation needs to consider establishing a growth trajectory for members and giving to sustain our current position while hopefully transitioning towards a long-term goal of hiring a full-time pastor. As we ponder on our long-term goals, please take some time to watch a video or read the book "Canoeing the Mountains" as it offers relatable issues from a Lewis and Clark perspective about the church and religion.

– Bart Gotch

"Though our feelings come and go, God's love for us does not."
– C.S. Lewis

LECTORS

February 2	Carli Lake
February 9	Ellen Prescott
February 16	Jill Gill
February 23	Sue Hunter

USHERS

February 2	Jean Hedquist Vicky Johnson
February 9	Ranelle De Jong Linda Fischer
February 16	Ottie and Jackie Gierman
February 23	Jill Gill Jarrod Knudsen

DECEMBER ATTENDANCE

December 1	50
December 8	49
December 15	60
December 22	59
December 24	105
December 29	43

QUILTERS NEEDS:

Sheets – full size or larger, used or new for backing.

New spools of neutral color thread, 250 or 300 yards for Lutheran World Relief Sewing Kits.

Helpers to put together quilts on the third Saturday of the month from 9:00 a.m. to noon. No skills required.

ACCEPTANCE

Whatever you send me, Lord, I will accept. My response may be clumsy, or even inept. But I know you want only the best for me, too. So with your help, I'll do what you want me to do.
– Peggy Ferrell

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

February 1 Zachery Kvidera
February 4 Kerri Rahn
February 5 Drew Benson
February 7 Jackie Gierman
February 8 Linda Swanson
February 9 Jessica Baker
February 9 Rita Legg
February 11 Linda Kendra
February 11 Kathy Muirhead
February 12 Brandi Johnson
February 14 Ruthie Ailts
February 21 Rita Todd
February 22 Tanner Koeppe
February 24 Terri Gotch
February 24 Jeff Todd
February 25 Tom DeRoos
February 27 Chris Knudsen
February 27 Angie Sorem

YOUTH BIRTHDAYS

February 27 Carli Lake

ANNIVERSARIES

February 29 Bob Bianchini and
Scott Koepsell

If we have missed any birthday or anniversary,
please let us know.

CIRCLE I did not meet in January due to freezing temperatures. We will meet in February on Monday the 17th at 2:00 p.m. All are welcome.

LYDIA will meet Thursday, February 13 at 6:30 p.m. Please join us!

WELCA EXECUTIVE BOARD will meet Tuesday, February 25 at 7:00 p.m.

“There is no exercise better for the heart than reaching down and lifting people up.”

– John Holmes

THANK YOU

I would like to thank you for your generosity during this holiday season. This year, because of donors like you, we were able to provide gifts to families and individuals whom have experienced violence in their lives.

We are so blessed to have community members like you support our mission to empower, educate and advocate for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. Thank you for making the holiday a little brighter this year to the clients we serve.

Sincerely,
Tammy Peterson, SA/DV Supervisor

THANK YOU

Congregation of First Lutheran,
Thank you so very much for your generosity in providing children with Christmas gifts this holiday season. With your kindness, 30 children from 13 families were able to enjoy some amazing, thoughtful gifts.

We would like to share some feedback from parents and children on how they were impacted by your generosity this holiday season:

I'm so grateful that they thought of our older kids, too. Sometimes it seems like the younger kids get a lot and the older kids miss out. It was a big relief to see such nice gifts and the thoughtfulness of this act. I am just so beyond grateful for people like them!

I didn't expect this much! Both of my kids received such nice gifts for Christmas. This generous act was such a relief as funds have been very tight!

Your friends,
The LSI (Lutheran Services in Iowa) Early Childhood Team in Sioux City, IA.:

Mallory Berkenpas
Alyssa Silver
Kellie Collins
Jennifer Paulsen
Gretchen O'Brien
Angie Scott

LENT IS FAST APPROACHING

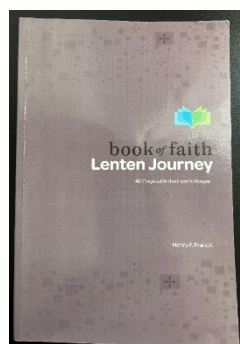
Worship Planning and Fellowship Committees met together in January to begin preparing for Lent, so we could give you a heads-up with our plans. Ash Wednesday is March 5 and there will be regular worship with communion at 6:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary.

Midweek worship on March 12, 19, 26, April 2 and 9 will meet in the Fellowship Hall. There will be Soup and Dessert beginning at 5:30 p.m. (come when you can) and worship/study will begin at 6:00 p.m. This is set up so that if you cannot get there until almost 6:00, you can still grab a bowl and eat through the worship/study.

The Confirmation class is studying “The Lord’s Prayer” during the Lent season and so our Midweek gatherings this year will be a 40-day journey through Lent in the Lord’s Prayer. Each of the Confirmation students will take a turn to help with leading the weekly worship/study.

Please come and eat good food, support our Confirmation students, and learn more about the Lord’s Prayer through this study. I can tell you that I first attended this study back in 2009 and it changed how I pray. It changed how I “see” the words of the Lord’s Prayer. It changed me and my relationship with God. We will follow a book that has a devotion and study questions each day for the 40 days.

You can get a book and follow along as your Lenten devotion this year or you can just come and join in the discussions each week. There will be a sign-up sheet at the Welcome Desk if you would like a book and don’t want to order it yourself. (They run \$11.99 through Augsburg Fortress, but you might be able to find it for less on Amazon or one of the used bookstores online). This is a great devotional study through the Lenten season even if you don’t plan to attend the Midweek events.



LOVINGKINDNESS MEDITATION

Let yourself sit in a comfortable fashion. Let your body rest and be relaxed. Let your heart be soft. Let go of any plans or preoccupations.

Begin with yourself ... (because without loving yourself it is almost impossible to love others). Breathe gently and recite inwardly the following traditional phrases directed toward your own well-being:

May I be filled with lovingkindness.

May I be safe from inner and outer dangers.

May I be well in body and mind.

May I be at ease and happy.

As you repeat these phrases, picture yourself and hold that image in a heart of lovingkindness. Let any feelings that come forth permeate your body and mind.

When you feel you have established some stronger sense of lovingkindness for yourself, you can then expand your meditation to include others. Choose a benefactor, someone in your life who has loved and truly cared for you. Picture this person and carefully recite the same phrases, replacing “May you” ... for “May I” ...

Spend time wishing well to a wider circle of friends. Gradually extend your meditation to picture and include neighbors, community members, healthcare workers, marginalized people, people everywhere, all beings, the whole earth.

Finally, include the difficult people in your life, even your enemies, wishing they too may be filled with lovingkindness and peace. As you practice this meditation it will calm your mind and keep you connected to your heart.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

First Lutheran Church

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Pastor Patti Meyer

Phone: 623/910-7859

Email: prdpmeyer@gmail.com

FOOD PANTRY

First Lutheran Church continues to be the gathering place for the Food Bank of Siouxland. We have Food Pantry on the first and third Thursday of each month from 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. The Pantry served 60-80 families at the January pantries.

Thank you to the students from Gateway to Learning for the help with unloading the pallets of groceries onto the tables for distribution in the morning. Then, returning in the afternoon to help load groceries into the cars.

We invite anyone who is interested in helping, whether you can only help in the morning to set up or can only help in the afternoon to do the distribution of food, to come and be a part of this ministry.

A BIG THANK YOU goes out to ALL who show up to volunteer or has anything to do with supporting this ministry. This ministry would not be possible without all of your support.

This article was published on the Food Bank of Siouxland, Inc. Facebook page January 22, 2025:

FOOD BANK VOCABULARY

Do you know what these terms mean? In the world of food banking, we use a unique vocabulary that may be unfamiliar to some. Let's break down the difference between a food desert and a food swamp!

Food deserts and food swamps are classifications for the lack of nutritious foods in a specific area. Food deserts refer to areas with limited access to affordable and nutritious foods, typically where the nearest grocery store is more than 30 minutes away. Food swamps, on the other hand, describe areas with a high density of unhealthy food options and very few grocery stores. A common ratio for food swamps is four unhealthy options for every healthy option.

WORSHIP AT FIRST LUTHERAN

- February 2 Presentation of Our Lord
First Lesson: Malachi 3:1-4
Second Lesson: Hebrews 2:14-18
Gospel: Luke 2:22-40
- February 9 Fifth Sunday after Epiphany
First Lesson: Isaiah 6:1-13
Second Lesson: 1 Cor. 15:1-11
Gospel: Luke 5:1-11
- February 16 Sixth Sunday after Epiphany
First Lesson: Jeremiah 17:5-10
Second Lesson: 1 Cor. 15:12-20
Gospel: Luke 6:17-26
- February 23 Seventh Sunday after Epiphany
First Lesson: Genesis 45:3-11, 15
Second: 1 Cor. 15:35-38, 42-50
Gospel: Luke 6:27-38

SUNDAY SCHOOL continues on Sundays at 9:00 a.m. Please encourage all young people to come for a lesson and interesting stories from the Bible. Come, join the fun and bring a friend!

ALTAR CARE ANNUAL REPORT 2024

Altar Care prepares the altar for the Sunday and special services.

In 2024 we had the Communion chalice refurbished due to pits and tarnish.

Pastor Patti held a meeting to make Communion bread. After this meeting, I explained the duties of Altar Care.

Bitter Sweet was contacted and set up to provide altar flowers as purchased by members of the congregation.

Volunteers are needed to help with Altar Care. Please prayerfully consider this request!

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Zastrow

February 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 Sunday School 9:00 a.m. Worship 9:30 a.m. (Communion)	3 Closed AA 6:00-7:00 p.m. Fellowship Mtg. 6:30 p.m. Beginners' Line Dance 7:00 p.m.	4 Advanced Line Dance 7:00 p.m.	5	6 Food Pantry 1:00-2:30 p.m. Couples' Line Dance 7:00 p.m.	7	8
9 Sunday School 9:00 a.m. Worship 9:30 a.m. Confirmation Class 10:30 a.m.	10 Council Retreat 5:30-8:30 p.m. Closed AA 6:00-7:00 p.m. Beginners' Line Dance 7:00 p.m.	11 Advanced Line Dance 7:00 p.m.	12	13 Lydia 6:30 p.m. Couples' Line Dance 7:00 p.m.	14	15 Quilting Group 9:00 a.m. to Noon
16 Sunday School 9:00 a.m. Worship 9:30 a.m. (Communion) Council Mtg. 10:30 a.m.	17 Circle I 2:00 p.m. Closed AA 6:00-7:00 p.m. Beginners' Line Dance 7:00 p.m.	18 Advanced Line Dance 7:00 p.m.	19	20 Food Pantry 1:00-2:30 p.m. Couples' Line Dance 7:00 p.m.	21	22
23 Sunday School 9:00 a.m. Worship 9:30 a.m. Confirmation Class 10:30 a.m.	24 Closed AA 6:00-7:00 p.m. Beginners' Line Dance 7:00 p.m.	25 WELCA Exec. 7:00 p.m. Advanced Line Dance 7:00 p.m. Amateur Radio Club 7:00 p.m.	26	27 Couples' Line Dance 7:00 p.m.	28	

Valentine

word search

h c u p i d c h i e s n o e f i s h o a r
e h a t h s i r h a t h e p k u s r a s w e i n s l h
e o c h o s i r h a t h e p k u s r a s w e i n s l h
d y o l i r h a t h e p k u s r a s w e i n s l h
s h a t h e p k u s r a s w e i n s l h
h t h e p k u s r a s w e i n s l h
h p k u s r a s w e i n s l h
k s r a s w e i n s l h
s r a s w e i n s l h
e s w e i n s l h
b e i n s l h
n s l h

- arrow
- candy
- chocolate
- cupid
- February
- flowers
- friends
- happy
- heart
- hug
- kiss
- love
- pink
- red
- roses
- sweetheart
- valentine