



# NEWSLETTER

**"She gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him snugly in strips of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no lodging available for them."**

**Luke 2:7**



Christmas is a special time of year.

One of my favorite parts of Christmas are the lights – one because they are beautiful to look at and two because each light reminds me that Christ is the light in my life. Lights help me remember that Jesus is the Reason for the Season. The reason why we gather with family, exchange gifts, eat delicious food and listen to merry music.

But Christmas is not always enjoyed by everyone. Dealing with the death of a loved one, facing life after divorce or separation, coping with the loss of a job, living with illness or unhealthy family relationships can make Christmas difficult, lonely and painful.

In thinking about the various aspects of Christmas, I ran across an article by Yvonne Pratt. She provides a different perspective of Christmas.

## Important Dates

Advent Starts	December 1st
2 or More Pottery Painting	December 3rd
Wednesday Advent Services w/soup Supper	December 4th & 11th
Fly Lock in	December 13th
Brass Band	December 15th
Revelation Study	December 19th
Christmas program	December 18th
Soup & Sandwich	December 18th
Christmas program	December 22nd
Christmas Eve	December 24th
Christmas Day	December 25th
2 or more Bingo	January 6th
Churches United	January 19th
FLY @ Andes	January 26th
Farm Rescue	February 9th
FLY @ Andes	February 22nd

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God's message in the Christmas story is...

I am coming!

Coming to you as a human. I am your kinsman. I will be called Jesus, which means God saves.

I, God will live with you, close and intimate. You will be able to hear and feel and touch and see me for a little while.

I will love you with an everlasting love, just like I have from the beginning! And then I will sacrifice myself in your place because I want you to be with me forever. I want to share my riches and myself with you forever. I love you more than you can think or know! You are so precious to me, my child!

No matter what your December and Christmas brings, I hope you remember God's message in the Christmas story. You are loved.

Serving Christ,  
Pastor Lynn

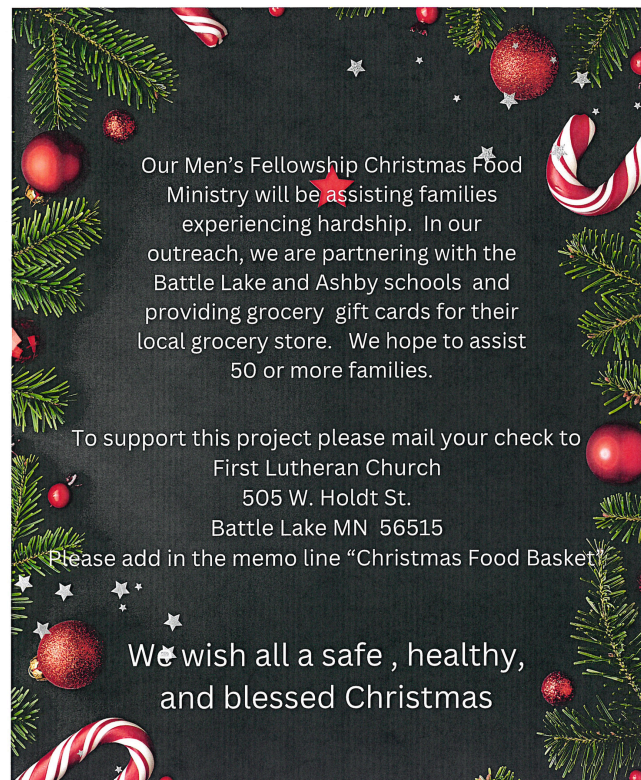
No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite.

Quote from Nelson R. Mandela, Former President of South Africa



**We would like to thank Pastor Mark Olson for his message in our church service November 17th.**

Noisy offering for the month of November has been going towards the Men's Fellowship Christmas Food Baskets.



Again this year we are working with the school on the program "The Giving Tree". There are instructions on what to do with the tags from the tree and when they have to be back to church or to the school to make someone's Christmas brighter.

December Noisy Offering  
is going to  
God's Global Barnyard.

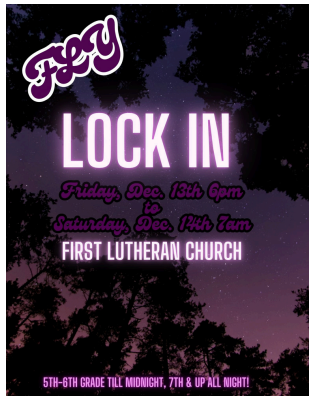


# UPCOMING EVENTS



**Tuesday, December 3rd** 2orMore Fellowship will meet at the Senior Center to do pottery painting. Come and make a Christmas gift or just come to paint and fellowship. Typically pieces range in price from \$15 to \$30. Event goes from 6p to 8p.

Advent Holden Worship Services on **Wednesday, December 4th and 11th**. A free will offering soup supper will be at 5:30p with worship service starting at 6:30p.



**Friday, December 13th** from 6p until Saturday, December 14th at 7am there will be a lock in for First Lutheran Youth (FLY). Students in 5th & 6th grade are invited to attend from 6p to midnight on Dec. 13th. Students in 7th grade and up are invited to stay all night.

WAFL will be doing their "It's a Super Christmas" program **Wednesday, December 18th** at 5:30p with a free will offering soup supper to follow. They will also have another performance on **Sunday, December 22nd** at the 10am worship service with the WAFL Christmas party to follow.



Christmas Eve Worship Services will be at 3p and 5p on **Tuesday, December 24th**. There will be a hot chocolate bar, kids activities/crafts, and family photos from 3p to 5p.

# UPCOMING EVENTS CONTINUED...



**Thursday, January 16th** 20rMore Fellowship will be meeting at The Woodshed Bar and Grill in Ottertail from 5:30p to 8p. Bingo will start at 6p for \$1 per card. Appetizers will be provided.

**Sunday, January 19th** Charlie Perhus, Chief Development Officer and Maverick Cashman, Community Outreach Director, will be here to speak about Churches United. Learn about their future and how we can help support them following worship service from 11:15a-11:45a.



**Sunday, January 26th** FLY will be going skiing and snowboarding at Andes Tower Hill in Alexandria. We will meet at the church at 2p and return by 8p. Please RSVP to [missi.abfalter@gmail.com](mailto:missi.abfalter@gmail.com) by Jan. 22. Cost is TBD.

What happens to the farm when the farmer is away? Come find out how the non-profit organization Farm Rescue helps farmers in need. Mike Youngblood will be speaking about Farm Rescue following worship service on **Sunday, February 9th** from 11a-11:30a.



**Saturday, February 22nd** FLY will return to Andes Tower Hill for Neon Night Tubing. We will leave church at 7p and return at 11p. Cost will be \$25/person. Please RSVP by Feb. 18th to [missi.abfalter@gmail.com](mailto:missi.abfalter@gmail.com).



## Holy Faith Continued...

This month in WAFL we have wrapped up our bible superheroes of the old testament with lessons on David, Rehoboam and Esther. The kids learned important lessons in kindness, listening to our elders, not giving into peer pressure, that our actions have consequences, standing up for what is right, and facing the things that make us scared.

This month in WAFL we also had our first WAFL worship service focusing on Rehoboam and doing our lesson together as a large group. Pete's 4th graders took the reigns to lead the worship service. They handed out bulletins, lit the candles, read the scripture, helped with prayers for the people and even the sermon. They did a fantastic job! WAFL will continue to have a worship service on the SECOND Wednesday of every month from 4:30p-5:10p. Any congregation members and family are welcome to attend.

Our next WAFL worship service will be Wednesday, December 11th and we will be learning about the unsung "heroes" the three Wisemen. December's worship service will be lead by Julie's 2nd grade class and is sure to be a good one. Can't wait to see you there.

I would like to extend a sincere thank you to everyone that took on the responsibility of praying for a WAFL student. As we face the daily life challenges that come with adulthood and growing older it can be easy to think a kid's life easy. But children face daily challenges all their own with family problems, friendships, bullying, school work, pressures of activities, social media stressors, etc... Kid's carry more burdens then we may realize.

Some WAFL students come from families that are active in church and some WAFL students come from families that don't practice or believe in God at all. While some kid's may already get prayed for daily from family other student's might not be getting prayed for at all. That is why it is our responsibility to make sure each and every child is getting prayed for and I greatly appreciate you taking on that task.

Finally, the WAFL students have been working with Billie Olson once a month to create collaborative art projects. The intention is to have an art auction in April where they will be selling the pieces of art they have been working on. The funds from the art auction will go back into the WAFL program. Billie has been coming up with some great ideas and ways to get the kids involved with the pieces.

# Holy Faith Continued

## WAFL Worship Service



Kasyn Kavanagh



Scarlet Anderson  
& Parker Bussa



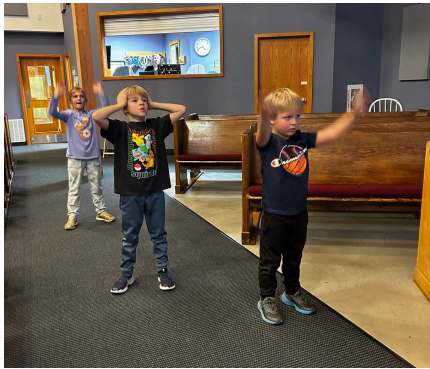
Parker



Missi & Kasyn



Brielle Olson  
& Austen Buehler



Archie Bussa,  
Crosby Cameron  
& Sloan Miller



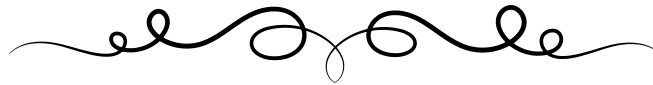
Cathy Englin,  
Chase Everts,  
Jack Cameron &  
Solvie Everts



Julie Gronbeck,  
Hayden Bussa,  
Jeri Wilmore &  
Pete Eggen



Oliver Fix &  
Keylan Tandberg  
November FLY  
event. Swimming  
& Pizza Ranch.



JOIN US FOR COFFEE , CONVERSATION, AND CHRISTMAS GOODIES EVERY FRIDAY IN  
DECEMBER TILL CHRISTMAS.

THE DATES ARE DECEMBER 6, 13, AND 20.

WE WILL MEET AT 10 AM IN FELLOWSHIP HALL AT FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH FOR  
ANYONE WHO IS STRUGGLING WITH LOSS OF A LOVED ONE, JUST FEELING LONELY,  
OR STRUGGLING TO GET INTO THE HOLIDAY SPIRIT. WE WILL REMINISCE ABOUT  
CHRISTMAS PAST, SHARE STORIES, AND JUST BE THERE FOR ONE ANOTHER. THE  
HOLIDAYS CAN BE A TOUGH TIME AFTER LOSS AND JUST KNOWING THERE IS  
SOMEONE ELSE STRUGGLING, MIGHT MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

I HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!  
JERI WILMORE, PARISH NURSE

# SHARE AND CARE GROUPS:

Group 1-(December, January & February) Missi Abfalter, Jessica Granby, Remi Alto, Myron Dahle, Meg O'Kane, Chrys Kirschbaum, Allison & Aaron Buehler, Jane Dixon, Wayne & Marilyn Horgan, Doreen & Doug Stave, Nancy Senyk, Linda & Gary Morical, Scot & Cathy Englin, Jackson & Betsy Everts, Inez Flores, Doug & DeeAnn Trosdahl, Jim & Carol Sagerhorn, Arlene Pieske, Jon Tamke, Beth & Lou Davis, Cindy & Jeff Harms, Tom & Ann Rasmussen, Mike Youngblood, Nancy & Dennis Quam, Jeff & Shelly Sagerhorn, Bonnie Pfeffer, Luke & Haley Himmelsbach, Norm Stolle, Warren & Carol Boese, Jenna Kavanagh, Roberta Skibness, Larry & Kim Charest.

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First Lutheran Men's Fellowship met Thursday, Nov. 7, 2024 at the Shoreline with 15 members in attendance. The confirmation dinner was a success with 7 members volunteering to help serve and clean up. There was 42 people in attendance including 8 confirmands. The food shelf project received 24.5 pounds of donated food and \$57 cash in October. Jim Aamot and Scot Englin are co-chairing our Christmas Basket project in December. A big thank you to Barb Nelson for once again making cards for us. Our next meeting will be Thursday, Dec. 5, 2024 at the Shoreline.

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Our WELCA gathering  
at Good Sam  
November 17th, 2024



Women of the **ELCA** 

WELCA Board -- December 2nd at 1:00 pm  
Christmas Potlucks for our Circles this month.  
Lydia Circle -- December 10th at 9:30 am  
Naomi Circle -- December 10th at 10:00 am  
Mary Circle -- December 11th at 9:30 am  
Evening Circle -- December 15th at 6:30 pm



# Worship and Music



We would like to re-ignite our **Praise Worship Team**. If you would like to be involved in presenting the present day music for worship, please contact Laurie in the office. All ages welcome!



Autobiographies of Bell/Chimes Choir Members

## Nancy Quam

Nancy plays the low B4 and C5 bells and chimes. She had 1½ years of piano lessons, played drums and baritone in the school band and sang in the choir in both high school and college. She also plays guitar and ukelele. Her favorite kind of music is classical guitar, jazz, blues and old rock and roll. She is married to Dennis and they have three children. Her hobbies include gardening, playing music, yoga, hiking, traveling and attending plays and concerts. She grew up near Underwood and has a degree as a certified occupational therapy assistant.

## Holly Johnson

Holly plays the D5 and E5 bells and chimes. She took organ lessons, played clarinet in the high school band and sang in the choir. She grew up in Pine City and Battle Lake and has a BA degree in elementary education from MSUM. Her favorite genre of music is Christmas music. Her husband is Lynn and they have two sons and two grandchildren. She enjoys reading, outdoor activities, gardening and walking.

## Ann Rasmusson

Ann plays F5 and G5 bells and chimes. She took piano lessons and played the snare drum. She grew up in Jasper MN and attended Concordia College and graduated from NDSU. Her favorite song is "Lift High the Cross." She is married to Tom and they have two daughters and three grandchildren. She enjoys cards, reading, traveling, rock collecting and bird watching.

### Linda Manikowske

Linda plays the A5 and B5 bells and chimes. She has played piano, organ, marimba, bassoon and flute. She grew up in Breckenridge and graduated from college with degrees in textiles and apparel and education with a minor in music. She taught at both SDSU and NDSU. Her hobbies/interests include sewing, quilting, needlework and spending time in nature. She has two daughters and two grandchildren.

### Esther Saetre

Esther plays C6 and D6 bells and chimes. She played bass horn in band, sang in choir and has played handbells for many years. Her favorite piece of music is "In the Beginning Was The Word," a piece for handbells, flute and piano with narration. She grew up in Oklee MN and is married to Homer and they have a son Irvin. She graduated from Concordia College with a BS in Elementary Education and Socio-Psychology. She enjoys reading, flower and vegetable gardening and Hardanger embroidery.

### Maryjane Westra

Maryjane is currently playing the E6 bell but has played all of them in different choirs. She has played the harp, piano, guitar and ukelele and has 45 years of bell ringing, including directing. Her favorite musical pieces include "Bohemian Rhapsody" and anything by Chopin. She grew up in many different places and has a degree in social work. She has 9 children and several grandchildren. Her interests include sailing, traveling, Red Cross and eating.

### Darcy Cowing-Frank

Darcy plays the E6 bell. She played violin in high school and college, took piano and guitar lessons and also sang in the school choirs. Her favorite song is "How Great Thou Art." She grew up in Owatonna and has a BSN in Nursing, a masters and is now earning her ARRN. She works as a psychiatric nurse. She has three children. She enjoys reading, the theater, music and the lake in summer.

### Marilyn Horgen

Marilyn plays the highest bells – F6 and G6. She took piano lessons, sang in the choir in college and has played drums and handbells. Her favorite piece of music is "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring." She grew up in Canada, ND and MN. She has a BS in elementary education with art concentration from Concordia College. She is married to Wayne and they have four sons and 12 grandchildren. Her hobbies include gardening, reading, exercise, nutrition and art.

### Gail Malmgren Nelson

Gail directs the bells/chimes choir. She has played and taught piano and organ for many years and has also played flute, piccolo, harp and bagpipe. Her favorite genres of music include classical and the oldies. She grew up in many places in both MN and CA and finally in Battle Lake. She has an AA degree in business and a Chartered Life Underwriter degree from the College of Life Underwriters in Bryn Mawr PA. She is married to Barry and she has two sons and six grandchildren. Her hobbies include travel, reading and anything on the water, especially at her cabin.

# SEE WHAT OUR LIBRARY HOLDS

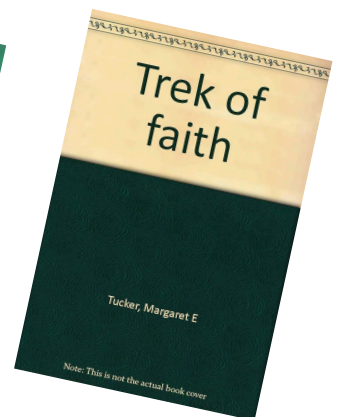
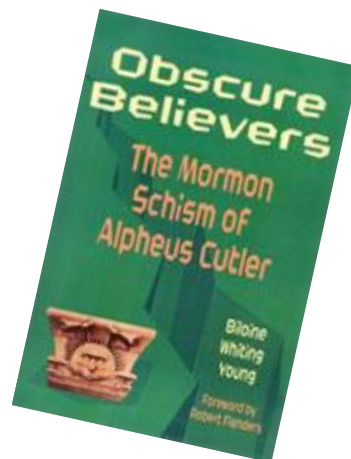
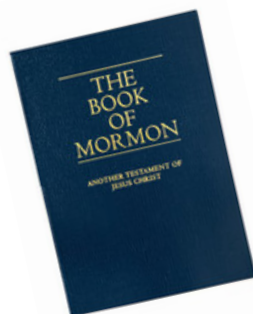
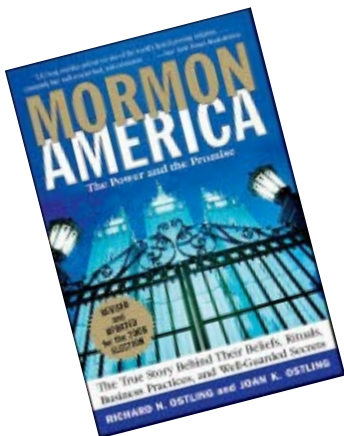
Stumbling on one interesting book can lead to another—and another—and another. While sorting through the donations for the fall festival book sale, I was drawn to the book “Trek of Faith” by Peggy Tucker. Local history intrigues me so I read this tale of Peggy’s annual vacation trip from Missouri to Ottertail County. Her husband’s forefather Winfield Gould settled near the Cutlerites of Old Town Clitherall and eventually became a part of their faith.

That story led me to “Obscure Believers, The Mormon Schism of Alpheus Cutler” written by Biloine Whiting Young. She traces the Mormon splinter group that took a different path from Brigham Young’s movement and migrated to Clitherall Lake in 1865 to witness to the local Native Americans, becoming the first white settlers in Ottertail county. Great-grandparents on both sides of my family arrived in 1872, and I can remember references to the Whitings and Fletchers and Murdocks.

Curiosity prompted me to devour “Mormon America, The Power and the Promise”. Written by non-Mormon journalists Richard and Joan Ostling, the book claims to be “the true story behind Mormon beliefs, rituals, business practices, and well-guarded secrets.” The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints is the third or fourth largest denomination in the United States. I challenge readers to learn about this fast-growing religious organization.

Our library also includes “The Book of Mormon, The Sacred Scriptures of LDS”, translated by Joseph Smith, Jr. over a period of years and first published in 1830.

KATHRYN RICKERS, Librarian





## Greetings from your Parish Nurse

We had our stroke education on Thursday Evening and what a great informative session. Things have changed in regards to the B/P parameters. I will try to summarize some of the information shared at this session.

### Stroke Risk Factors:

High blood pressure (hypertension)-New parameters are 120/80 -low risk

High Cholesterol (hyperlipidemia)-<200 is low risk; 200-239 moderate risk;>240 high risk

Diabetes-know your blood sugar levels; encouraged to keep them level without fluctuations- it is best to have levels 80-100.

Atrial Fib (A-Fib)-irregular heartbeat-if on medication for A-Fib, don't suddenly stop taking it

Sleep Apnea-If you have sleep apnea, this puts you at high risk

Smoker or second-hand smoke exposure -- daily smoking or exposure this puts you at high risk for stroke; if sometimes or trying to quit can lower risk to moderate

Exercise or lack thereof-if rarely or sometimes the risk factor for stroke is moderate to high

Obesity-overweight places you at a high risk for stroke

Family history of stroke can place you at a higher risk for stroke; know your family history

Hypertension is still the leading cause of stroke. Always take your B/P on a bare left arm (closer to the heart) if at all possible. I always said that a thin long sleeve was ok, but I was told it is not. Always have a short sleeve on when having B/P checked.

We discussed the importance of lifeline testing. These are \$75 tests that check the carotids, the aorta, and the lower extremities for blockages in the arteries which could lead to a stroke. I always heard they were not any good, but this educator had several examples where these tests saved people from a stroke. So, when you get those little cards in the mail announcing lifeline testing, I would encourage you to take advantage of them. Fergus has them periodically. I will definitely take advantage of this offering.

Finally, knowing the signs of a stroke could save a life. B.E.F.A.S.T is the acronym to remember. Balance, sudden loss; Eyes, sudden vision changes; Face, does it look uneven? Sudden drooping on one side; Arm, does one arm drift down; Speech, does it sound strange, or are the words not making sense; Time, every second brain cells die, call 911. The other T is a terrible headache of sudden onset. Knowing these signs and acting fast can save a life. Remember the word sudden.

Take care, my friends. Jeri



## Thank You!

There are 105 bibs ready to go to the Children's Homes in Jamaica and there are 75+ totes that are ready to go to the staff of these homes. Great job done by the ladies that sewed all of these.



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## Financial Updates

We just wanted to update the congregation  
on our  
great progress for the mortgage reduction.

Our Mortgage balance as of October 31, 2024 is at  
\$22,589.75.

This amount does include our matching funds at the  
\$45,000.

There is still another \$5,000 that we are very close to  
be matched.

Thank you so much for your generous giving!

October 2024 Finances:      YTD Budget Tracking:

Income    \$ 30,815

Budget    \$401,349    77%

Expenses \$ 31,900

Budget    \$401,349    85%

Net        -\$ 1,085

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH BATTLE LAKE  
Summary of Unapproved COUNCIL MINUTES 11-12-24

Approval of Financial Report and Recommendations: giving increased in September, allowing the office to pay some bills that had been deferred. We are still 8% below budget  
Faith Formation Report: 1) WAFL Worship will take place monthly at 4:30pm on the 2nd Wednesday of each month. 2) A point system is being implemented to encourage participation by WAFL and Confirmation students in other activities at church. 3) EGGO will end when Chosen ends. 4) Monday Night Youth Group will end now due to lack of interest. 5) A new youth committee, Handy Helpers has formed. The core group consists of those kids who were most recently confirmed. 6) Prayer Warrior Program: adults in the congregation are asked to "adopt" a child and pray for them daily.

**Old Business:**

Debt Elimination: The mortgage balance: \$22,588. \$5,000 remains available for matching funds and \$4,100 has been received to be matched. How should we celebrate when it is paid off? What should our next goal be for our congregation? What is the passion of the church? Where is the Holy Spirit leading us?

Credit Line for FLC: a \$50,000 credit line has been established for use in financial emergencies.

**New Business:**

Potential Van Purchase: Pastor Lynn and Rob purchased a passenger van for \$1000... a 1998 12-passenger van with 184,000 miles. Rob has made several improvements to make it road-ready for the church, if we want to purchase it for transporting kids and adults to destinations within 50 miles of Battle Lake. The council proposed buying the van for \$2500 to cover the costs of improvements made by Rob and allow a little profit for them as a thanks for searching for and finding us a vehicle. M/S: Margaret/Joan. Carried.

Online Worship Enhancement: Pastor Lynn reported on worship attendance trends in recent years: 2022 Average Worship in the Pews: 83. Online: 87. 2023: Average in the Pews: 96. Online: 95. 2024: Average in the Pews: 110. Online through June 9: 119; since making the service available on Laurie Z's Facebook page in mid-June, YTD online attendance has risen to an average of 239 viewers. (Average online views from June 14 – Nov 3 averaged 365) As a result of this increase, Pastor Lynn is thinking we need to identify ways to include that online audience in our community.

# December 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
9 am Eggo & Chosen 10 am Worship with Communion 11 am Fellowship 1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent	9 am Quilters 1 pm WELCA Bd.	6 pm 2 or More Fellowship @ Pottery painting @ Sr. Ctr.	3:15 pm WAFL 5:30 pm Confirmation 5:30 pm Soup Supper 6:30 pm Advent Service 7:30 pm NA @ Sr. Ctr.	8 am TOPS 8:30 am Men's Fellowship	8 pm AA & Al-Anon	Battle Lake Craft Fair 9 am to 3 pm
9 am Eggo & Chosen 10 am Worship 11 am Fellowship	9 am Quilters 2:30 pm Finance	9:30 am Lydia 10:00 am Naomi 2 pm Song Select 3 pm Worship & Music 5:30 pm Faith Formation 6:30 pm Council	9:30 am Mary Pastor Text Study 3:15 pm WAFL 5:30 pm Confirmation 5:30 pm Soup Supper 6:30 pm Advent Service 7:30 pm NA @ Sr Ct	8 am TOPS	8 pm AA & Al-Anon FLY lock-in 6 pm to overnight	Santa Days @ Lakes Area Community Center 1:00 pm
9 am Eggo Chosen 10 am Worship 11 am Fellowship 6:30 pm Evening Circle	9 am Quilters 10:30 am Staff Newletter articles Due	17	10 am Good Sam Communion 3:15 pm WAFL 5:30 pm Confirmation 5:30 pm WAFL Christmas program Soup & Sandwich meal to follow 7:30 pm NA @ Sr. Ctr.	8 am TOPS 1:00 pm Revelation Study	8 pm AA & Al-Anon	10 am Lake Ave. Apts. Communion
9 am Eggo & Chosen 10 am Christmas program/Communion 11 am WAFL Christmas party	9 am Quilters	23 Christmas Eve Services with Communion, Treats, activities and photos	25 Christmas Day Office Closed	Office Closed	8 pm AA & Al-Anon	28
9 am Eggo & Chosen 10 am Worship/Hymn Sing 11 am Potluck	9 am Quilters	31				

First Lutheran Church  
505 Holdt St. West  
Battle Lake MN 56515  
218-864-5686  
[www.blfirstlutheran.org](http://www.blfirstlutheran.org)



Address Service Requested  
Newsletter

**Sunday Worship 10 AM**

**Communion 1st & 4th Sundays**

**Coffee/Fellowship 11 AM following service**

**Online worship @ Youtube-First Lutheran Church Battle Lake and Facebook**



**FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
BATTLE LAKE

First Lutheran Church Staff

Pastor: Pastor Lynn Melchior : [pastorlynn@blfirstlutheran.org](mailto:pastorlynn@blfirstlutheran.org)

Office Secretary: Laurie Hanson-Zelinsky: [office@blfirstlutheran.org](mailto:office@blfirstlutheran.org)

Parish Nurse: Jeri Wilmore: [parishnurse@blfirstlutheran.org](mailto:parishnurse@blfirstlutheran.org)

Faith Formation: Missi Abfalter: [waf@blfirstlutheran.org](mailto:waf@blfirstlutheran.org)

Website: [www.blfirstlutheran.org](http://www.blfirstlutheran.org)